

Mari evans' "i am a black woman"

[Sociology](#), [Women](#)



Mari Evans' "I Am a Black Woman"

"Mari Evans is one of the most energetic and respected poets of the Black Arts movement" (1850). The themes of her poems are very direct, but the simple lyrics make the poem eloquent (1850). "Lost love, a lost Africa, failed relationships between a black woman and black men" are usually the tails of her poems (1850). Yet she also portrays that "losses summon from us the courage to struggle, to continue in the face of adversity and pain" (1850). 'I Am a Black Woman' whose title poem first appeared in Negro Digest, links the themes of black enslavement and impoverishment with the global oppression of the wretched" (1850). "The volume ["I Am a Black Woman"] heralded the arrival of a poet who took her subject matter from the black community, and who celebrated its triumphs, especially the focus on the beauty of blackness that characterized the black arts and civil rights movements." (Gale) Therefore, understanding Mari Evans' themes and tone fuels the greatness of "I Am a Black Woman". Mari Evans' usually deals with the despair and loss of the African American citizen in her literary work. In "I Am a Black Woman", Evans chooses to tell the story of the black woman. She portrays the roles and relationships of the black woman. Evans' includes the story of all black women's pain, their fight for civil rights, the black lover, and the black mother.

The narrator of this poem describes, in lines 1-4, the pain black women experience because they are a black woman:

I am a black woman
 the music of my song
 some sweet arpeggio of tears
 is written in a minor key
 The "music of my song/some sweet arpeggio of tears"
 tells of the internal struggle of being a black woman. Also what it means to

be a black woman. Evans' portrays the despair felt from her husband's death in lines 11-12 when the narrator describes more pain " I saw my mate leap screaming to the sea/ and I/with these hands/cupped the life-breath/? from my issue in the canebrake". The mother receives more grief in lines 14-15 " and heard my son scream all the way from Anzio/for Peace he never knew". Evans' tells of the pain of the black mother. The mothers who birth the black children whose rights are being spit on and dragged through the dirt. The mother whose black sons who fights in wars for a country that despises the black skin that they have at birth. This also portrayed in lines 16-17 " learned Da Nang and Pork Chop Hill/? in anguish". Evans' theme of the pain of the black woman is clearly shown.

Evans' shows the blues of being a black woman in stanza's one and two, but in the last stanza she shows that even threw the pain and anguish black woman are still strong: I am a black woman tall as a cypress strong beyond all definition still ? defying place ? and time and circumstance ? assailed ? impervious indestructible. Look on me and be renewed Evans' chooses a public persona to work through her understanding of what it means to be black in the Western world, and she hopes to inspire others through their witnessing her quest. In line 29, the narrator indicates that as black women are imperious and one can not set their boundaries. Black women can not be boxed into situations based on circumstance because the odds can be defied place time and the black women's indestructibility. The narrator is saying look at me defy the odds and anyone can be renewed because of the triumph from my despair. The narrator has most clearly defied the odds because of all the stress and drama that is in her life and she still stands

strong. The tone changes from stanza to stanza in the poem, " I Am a Black Woman.

The tone in the first stanza is filled with stress and she uses humming to relieve the stress. She is actually crying in the first stanza. The tone of the second stanza is despair. She watches her mate and son die along with important figures like Nat Turner. In stanza two the narrator indicates, " Now my nostrils know the gas/ and these trigger tire/d fingers". Again the tone is despair because she attempts and contemplates suicide. However, stanza three's tone is about renewal , inspiration, and strength. She indicates to look at me and my struggles and still I stand strong like a cypress tree. The tone of the poem is sad at the beginning and inspirational at the end. Evans remains strong to her themes of negative love affairs between black men and women and a global perspective in her writing of " I Am a Black Woman. However, the tone changes in this poem, and the lyrics are simple. An ultimately she provides encouragement and hope, which is still done in her poem " I Am a Black Woman. Therefore, understanding Mari Evans' themes and tone fuels the greatness of " I Am a Black Woman".

Reference

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