

Invisible Authority: Women's Ethical Labour and Tragic Outcomes in Danmei novels

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ABSTRACT

Chinese literature has often portrayed women as figures of sacrifice and care rather than active decision-makers. In contemporary Danmei (gay) literature, attention is usually focused on male–male relationships, cultivation power, and sect politics. This paper examines, *The Grandmaster of Demonic*

Cultivation (Mo Dao Zu Shi) by Mò Xiāng Tóng Xiù, a well-known Danmei novel, to show that women still play a crucial role in shaping the story's tragic outcome. Focusing on Wen Qing and Jiang Yanli, the paper argues that women's decisions made through love, responsibility, and feelings directly influence the course of events. Although the novel centers on a male same-sex romance, women function as ethical agents whose choices sustain social order, and also allow injustice to continue. Using a post-feminist approach, the paper shows that women in Danmei literature are not merely background figures, but active forces whose actions shape tragedy.

Keywords: Post-feminism, Endurance, Golden core, Tragedy, Women.

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