



BOOK REVIEW OF *ELEANOR AND PARK*

WRITTEN BY RAINBOW ROWELL

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PRONOUNCEMENT

The writer states truthfully that this project is compiled by him without taking the result from other research in any university, in S-1, S-2, and S-3 degree and in diploma. In Addition, the writer ascertains that he does not take the material from other publications or someone's work except for the references mentioned in bibliography.

Semarang, December 5th 2015

Rendy Azwari

MOTTO AND DEDICATION

“I have no special talents. I am only passionately curious.”

(Albert Einstein)

“The only way to do great work is to love what you do.”

(Steve jobs)

“You can be a big fish in the small pool more than be a small fish in the big pool.”

(Aji baskoro)

*This final project is dedicated to
the writer's beloved parents, family, and friends.*

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The writer realizes that this project is still far from being perfect. The writer, therefore, will be glad to receive any constructive criticism and recommendation to make this final project better.

Finally, the writer expects that this project will be useful to the reader who wishes to know the review of the novel *Eleanor and Park* written by Rainbow Rowell.

Semarang, 5th December 2015

The Writer

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I. INTRODUCTION

According to Sudjiman (1986: 68), literature is oral or written work which has special characteristics, such as originality, artistry, and beauty of content and expressions. Literature is created by the imagination of a man. The imagination comes from the pictures of events and life which is then incarnated into words. Literature itself consists of some kinds, which are poetry, novel, short story and drama.

In this study, the writer will discuss a novel entitled *Eleanor and Park* written by Rainbow Rowell. According to <http://www.nytimes.com/best-sellers-books/young-adult/> this novel was published in 2013 then became New York Times bestseller list. The theme of the novel is romance due to the love story of the main characters.

Eleanor and Park is a love story between Asian American boy and White American girl. Besides love story, it also deals with issues such as child abuse and bullying, which become interesting parts of the novel. Aside from reviewing the issues of child abuse and bullying, the writer also wants to discuss words that need extra references to understand them. Furthermore, the writer also wants to figure out the ending of this novel.

1.1 Purpose of writing

In this paper, the writer wants to show the interesting story between two people who do not have the same race, yet they fall in love. The purposes of the paper are as follows:

1.1.1 To give an analysis about the causes why Park Loves Eleanor.

1.1.2 To give an analysis about the ending of *Eleanor and Park*.

1.2 Biography of the author

According to www.litlovers.com/Rainbowrowell/Biography Rainbow Rowell is an American author of young adult and adult contemporary novels. Her first novel is *Attachments*, published in 2011. In 2013 Rowell published two young adult novels: *Eleanor and Park* and *Fangirl*. Both were chosen by the *New York Times* as being some of the best young adult fiction of the year. *Eleanor and Park* was also chosen by Amazon as one of the ten best books of 2013.

According to Rowell, 2015 <http://macmillan.com/mobile/book/eleanorpark> beside those achievements, *Eleanor and Park* also gets many awards such as: All About Romance (AAR) Annual Reader Poll for Best Young Adult Romance (2014), Michael L. Printz Award Nominee (2014), YALSA Teens' Top Ten (2014), Milwaukee County Teen Book Award (2014), Michigan Library Association Thumbs Up! Award (2014), Amelia Elizabeth Walden Award (ALAN/NCTE) (2014), Boston Globe-Horn Book Award (2013), Abraham Lincoln Award Nominee (2015),

DABWAHA Romance Tournament Nominee for Best Young Adult Romance (2014), Goodreads Choice for Best Young Adult Fiction (2013), YALSA Best Fiction for Young Adults (Top Ten) (2014), Green Mountain Book Award Nominee (2015).

1.3 Organization of the writing

INTRODUCTION:

It deals with background of the study, purpose of writing, biography of the author and organization of the writing.

SUMMARY OF THE NOVEL:

In this section, the writer gives summary of *Eleanor and Park* by Rainbow Rowell. (2013)

REVIEW OF THE NOVEL:

It deals with discussion of the theme and the main characters. This section also gives the explanation about the terms and the ending of the story of the novel.

CONCLUSION:

This is the summary of the previous Chapter.

II. SUMMARY OF THE NOVEL

Eleanor is an American teenager with red curly hair. She is 16 years old. She comes from a broken family. Her parents get divorce, and her father leaves the house. On the other side, her mother decides to remarry a man named Richie who is too poor to build a family. Eleanor and her four young brothers and sisters are forced to move into a tiny house in which they have to sleep in one cramped room. Her step father is very grumpy. He does not like everything that Eleanor does. Eleanor also does not like him. She thinks that Richie is an alcoholic grumpy guy who does not love his family and is the person who brings Eleanor's family into miserable life. It makes her became an introvert, but she always tries to cheer up people around her. Eleanor does not only suffer in her family but also in her school, because she is not only a new kid at home, but also a new kid at school. She becomes the prime target for any bully, especially by Tina and Steve.

Park is a 16 years old boy. He is a half Korean from her mother and American from her father. His father wants Park to learn Taekwondo like his young brother Josh. Contrary to Eleanor, Park's family is a good family. His parents are so affectionate to their two sons.

On the first day at new school, Eleanor gets into the bus and sees no one gives a seat for her, so she decides to stand. The bus driver tells her to sit down because

there were many available seats. When Eleanor asks for a seat, no one would share the seat with her, instead she is mocked by her friends on the bus. Finally, Park let her sit beside him, but they do not make any conversations.

After few days, Park realizes that Eleanor often watches him reading a book on the bus but he does not know how to start the conversation. Finally, Park gives some of his comic books to Eleanor to read. They start to talk to each other and commence the conversation. Park brings Eleanor a stack of comic books for her and also allows her to listen to music through his music player. After that, their friendship begins as they talk about their mutual love of music and comic books.

One day, After Taekwondo lesson, Park decides to come to Eleanor's house. Richie opens the door, and then Park takes Eleanor out that night. Richie gets angry when Eleanor comes back home. Her mother tries to convince her not to get involved with a boy because she thinks that it would enraged Richie. Next day, Park asks for an apology because what he did last night brings Eleanor to the trouble. Eleanor asks Park's number, so she can use her step-father's phone to call him. Park gives Eleanor his number. They talk on the phone that night and Park confesses his love to Eleanor.

Next day, when Eleanor and Park talk on the bus, they hear Steve mocking Eleanor with "Go Big Red!" Park gets angry at him because he always mocks Eleanor with that call. When they get out of the bus, Park tells Steve not to mock Eleanor, and suddenly he uses his taekwondo moves on Steve. He also asks him to stay away from Eleanor. After that, Park gets suspended from school because

of his action. His parents get angry and believe that Eleanor gives a bad influence on him. They also prohibit him to meet Eleanor, but it does not make Eleanor away from Park. Eleanor realizes that Park is the man who can protect her, and she believes that Park does not judge people from their cover.

In the last chapter of the novel, it is narrated that Eleanor gets home late that night, and she hears Richie's yell and her mother's cry. When she walks into her room, she notices that her comic books are ripped. Richie finds out Eleanor and Park's relationship. Eleanor realizes that she is in danger, so she decides to run away from her house, and walk over to Park's house. Eleanor tells him that she has to go to Minnesota where her uncle lives in. Park takes his father's car and asks for permission that he must take Eleanor away from his father. The next morning, they arrive at St. Paul, Minnesota. Park drops her off. Before leaving and saying goodbye, Park promises that he will send a letter for her. After Eleanor starts living with her uncle and aunt, none of Park's letters are read by Eleanor. She does not write him a letter for a long time. In the end, Eleanor writes him a letter, and it is a postcard with only three words.

III. REVIEW OF THE NOVEL

In this section, the writer wants to discuss why Park loves Eleanor and to analyze about the ending of *Eleanor and Park*.

3.1 The Process how Park falls in love with Eleanor

The dominant aspect in this novel is the representation of love which does not depend on physical appearance. For example, Park loves Eleanor not because she is beautiful but she is a weird girl. As time goes by, Park considers that Eleanor's uniqueness becomes her attraction. It can be seen from this quote:

The girl just looked like exactly the sort of person this would happen to. Not just new -- but big and awkward. With crazy hair, bright red on top of curly. And she was dressed like . . . like she wanted people to look at her. Or maybe like she didn't get what a mess she was. She had on a plaid shirt, a man's shirt, with half a dozen weird necklaces hanging around her neck and scarves wrapped around her wrists. She reminded park of scarecrow or one of the trouble dolls his mom kept on her dresser. Like something that wouldn't survive in the wild. (Rowell, 2013: 7)

The quotation shows that Park sees Eleanor wearing weird clothes, coming up into bus. Generally, as the new student at school, she should wear appropriate clothes, instead she wears "a plaid shirt, a man's shirt, with half a dozen weird necklaces hanging around her neck and scarves wrapped around

her wrists.” Those clothes are not appropriate to her. Park thinks that Eleanor wants everybody on the bus to look at her.

It felt wrong to sit next to somebody every day and not to talk to her. Even if she was weird (Jesus was she weird. Today she was dressed like a Christmas tree, with all this stuff pinned to her clothes shapes cut out of fabric, ribbon. . .) The ride home couldn’t go fast enough. Park couldn’t wait to get away from her, away from everybody. (Rowell, 2013: 24)

From the quotation above, it can be seen that almost every day Eleanor goes to school wearing weird clothes that makes everybody wants to look at her even though she is mocked and bullied by the other students. The quotation also shows that Eleanor and Park do not talk to each other.

The other representation that love is not always about someone’s physical appearance is seen when Park starts to lend his comic books and walkman.

The next morning, when Eleanor got on the bus, there was a stack of comics on her seat’ she picked up and sat down. He was already reading. Eleanor put the comics between her books and stared at the window, for some reason, she didn’t want to read in front of him. It would be like letting him watch her eat. It would be like.... Admitting something. (Rowell, 2013: 41)

The quote states that Park wants to know Eleanor further. Park knows that Eleanor often watches and reads the book that he reads. It is because Eleanor is lonely, and she does not have close friend in her new

school so she spends her time reading books. Furthermore, Park has not made any conversation with her yet. Therefore, Park lends her the comic books is his way to approach Eleanor.

The other quotation below shows that Park wants to approach Eleanor:

When they got back on the bus, she took his Walkman without arguing, and without making him put it on for her. At the stop before hers, she handed it back. You can borrow it,' he said quietly' Listen to the rest of the tape.

"I don't want to break it"

"You're not going to break it"

"I don't want to use up the batteries"

"I don't care about the batteries" (Rowell, 2013: 56)

The quotation states that Park tries to lend his walkman to Eleanor because he knows that Eleanor likes music. When Park tells her about the band that he heard, Eleanor always laughs.

As time goes by, Park is attracted to Eleanor's weirdness and feels differently toward Eleanor. It can be seen from Park's defense when the school friends have mocked and bullied Eleanor. Especially for Steve who mocks louder than everybody does. It can be seen from the quotation below:

Park said something, but she couldn't hear him, because now the kids in the back were chanting. Steve was standing at the back of the aisle, waving his gorilla arms like a conductor.

Go big. Red

Go. Big Red.

Go big. Red

She look around. Everyone was saying it. (Rowell, 2013: 132)

Because of that, Park does not put up with Steve's mocking Eleanor, and he wants to give some lessons to Steve through fighting. It can be seen from the quotation below:

She heard Park say, 'I'm sick of your mouth.'

And she heard Steve says, 'Are you serious with this?'

He pushed Park hard, but Park didn't fall. Park took a few steps back, then cracked his shoulder forward, spinning into the air and kicking Steve right in the mouth. The whole crowd gasped. (Rowell, 2013: 134)

The quotation states that Park gives his protection to Eleanor from the other school friends who want to mock and bully her. It was done because Park does not want anybody mocks and bullies Eleanor anymore. Because of that Eleanor realizes that Park is the man who can protect her, and she believes that Park does not judge people from their physical appearance.

From the other quotation, it can be seen that Park starts to love Eleanor because of her personality and weirdness.

'Are you kissing me because I look like someone else?' You don't look look someone else. Plus, that's crazy.' Do you like me better like this?' she asked. 'Because I'm never going to look like this again.'

‘I like you the same . . . I kind miss of your freckles.’ He rubbed her cheeks with his sleeve. ‘There’ he said. (Rowell, 2013: 221)

From the quotation above, it can be seen that Park does not look from someone’s physical appearance because when Eleanor gets some make up, Park already misses Eleanor freckles and going to rub it with his sleeve. It can be concluded that Park loves Eleanor from his heart.

The next quotation also shows that Park loves Eleanor not because of her physical appearance:

“When he saw Eleanor walking toward him on Monday morning, Park wanted to run to her and sweep her up in his arms. Like some guy in the soap operas his mom watched. He hung onto his backpack to hold himself back. . . it was kind of wonderful” (Rowell, 2013: 171).

The quotation states that Park always wants Eleanor to be by his side. Parks thinks that Eleanor likes one of the characters of the opera who has good personality and wonderful life.

Another evidence that Park loves Eleanor not because of her physical appearance: “*Eleanor was right. She never looked nice. She looked like art, and art wasn’t supposed to look nice; it was supposed to make you feel something*” (Rowell, 2013: 168). From the quotation, it shows that Park imagines that Eleanor’s weirdness is like an art. He thinks that Eleanor exists to be loved. She has good personality inside her that, so that Park feels love to her. From this quotation the writer realizes that this quote from the author

proves that love does not only come from what we see, but from what we feel as well.

Park's love to Eleanor does not only come from her appearance but also from her like in music. As a teenager, Park's hobby is listening to music, contrary from his young brother who likes Taekwondo, he spends his time to read novel and to hear music like Eleanor does. Both of them also have the same style of music. It can be seen from the quotation below:

She looked up at his face, even though she knew ow that was going to feel, like someone was hooking her insides out through her chest. No. it was awesome. I didn't want to stop listening. That one song – is it “Love Will Tear us Apart”?’ Yeah, Joy Division.’

Oh my God, that's the best beginning to a song ever.’

He imitated the guitar and the drums.

Yeah, yeah, yeah, she said. I just wanted to listen to those three seconds over and over. (Rowell, 2013: 59)

The quotation states that Park is very happy, because he finds someone who loves same music as him. Music is also the first case in which they become close to each other. It also can be seen in the cover of the book. The cover of the book shows Park and Eleanor listen music from the same tape.

3.2 The Ending of The Story

The writer also wants to discuss the ending of the story. The readers who want to read this novel are expecting a happy ending, because Eleanor and Park are young teenagers who deserve to be happy. Moreover, the readers expect a happy ending because *Eleanor and Park* is the novel about love. It can be seen from the events when both main characters in the novel are often through the hard ways and many conflicts to reach their love. However, the ending of the story makes a plot twist that makes many readers confused. It can be seen in the ending quotation of the novel:

Eleanor didn't go prom with him. Cat did, cat from work. She was thin and dark, and her eyes were as blue and flat as breath mints. When park held Cat's hand, it was like holding hands with the mannequin, and it was such a relief that he kissed her. ... He sat up. He smiled. Something heavy and winged took off from his chest. Eleanor hadn't written him a letter, it was a postcard. Just three words long. (Rowell, 2013: 325)

From the quotation above, it is said that Eleanor sends him a three words long postcard. The three words can be something good or bad. However, the three words can be bad things. The bad things come from Park's side, it because Park has the hard ways to get Eleanor's love, such as: he must involve in a fight with Steve and oppose his mother to stay away from Eleanor, and also

he still struggles to reach Eleanor's love although her father does not want Eleanor to get closer to her friend especially to a man. This proves that Park really loves Eleanor so much, but the three words show how absurd their relationship is after what Park is going through. If Eleanor really loves Park, she will give Park assurance about their love, instead of writing him three words long postcard.

From the Eleanor's side, she has the reason why she just writes the three words long postcard after many mail that was sent by Park. She does not want Park to continuously get hurt because of her, Eleanor knows that it is difficult to unite their love, moreover their family status are different. Therefore, Rowell thinks that every people who read this novel have their own perspective to think how the novel must end.

IV. CONCLUSION

Eleanor and Park is a novel written by Rainbow Rowell. It presents love story between Asian American and White American. It deals with issues of child abuses and bullies towards Eleanor because she has big body and red curly hair. This novel also tells how the two main characters struggle through the hard ways to reach their love. It deals with Park's fighting with Steve and the differences between Eleanor and Park's family.

The novel has important values which can be learned. It is about loves. The main character, Park Sheridan, does not see Eleanor from her appearance but from her personality. Eleanor is a tough cheerful girl to face every mocks and bullies. The most important thing is always about how Park assumes that Eleanor is like an art because art is not supposed to look nice, but it can make everybody feel love.

For the novel itself, *Eleanor and Park* is a good example of showing unconditional love because it teaches us how to respect people and not to judge people by physical appearance. Nevertheless, this novel contains some negative values, such as the slang words which come from the mockeries. Therefore, the

readers must be able to determine which values are good or which values are bad to be applied in real life.

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