



**BOOK REVIEW OF NICHOLAS SPARKS'**

***A WALK TO REMEMBER***

A FINAL PROJECT

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
For S-1 Degree on American Cultural Studies  
in English Department Faculty of Humanities  
Diponegoro University

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**2017**

## **PRONOUNCEMENT**

The writer states sincerely that this project was compiled by her without doing plagiarism and without taking the results from other research in any university. Furthermore, the writer states that she did not take the material from other publications or someone else work except from the references mentioned in the references.

Semarang, June 2017

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## MOTTO AND DEDICATION

*Life is very interesting. In the end some of your greatest pains become your greatest strengths.*

*(Drew Barrymore)*

*Just when the caterpillar thought the world was ending, she turned into a butterfly.*

*(Proverb)*

*This paper is dedicated to*

*Whoever will read it*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The writer is so grateful for all God's blessing. With His help, the writer can finish this project entitled "Book Review of Nicholas Sparks' *A Walk to Remember*". On this opportunity the writer would like to thank all people who have contributed to the completion of this final project.

The writer's deepest gratitude and appreciation is expressed to Drs. Jumino, M.Lib.,M.Hum as the writer's project advisor who has given guidance, helpful correction, advice, suggestion, and moral support during the writing this project until completion. The writer's deepest gratitude also goes to the following people who have given support:

1. Dr. Redyanto M. Noor, M.Hum, as the Dean of Faculty of Humanities Diponegoro University.
2. Dr. Agus Subiyanto,M.A, as the Head of the English Department, Faculty of Humanities, Diponegoro University.
3. All the lecturers in the English Department, especially in the Literature Section, who have given theirprecious knowledge.
4. The writer'sbeloved family, her faithful departed mother Kusni, her father Subagyo, and her older brothersMamad and Candra.Her Husband IanCahyanto and her little angel Gezallel Don Salvito. Thankyouforthe love and support;
5. Her class coordinator Nabila Nailatus Sakina. Thank you for the encouragement and time to review this final project;

6. Her friends in C class who have given the best experiences in friendship.
7. Everyone who cannot be mentioned one by one, for always supporting her to finish this project.

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

Finally, the writer expects that this final project will be useful to the reader who wants to learn something about reviewing a novel and to understand a little bit more about *A Walk to Remember* written by Nicholas Sparks.

Semarang, June 2017

Tri Evina Kus Andriani

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## **BOOK REVIEW OF NICHOLAS SPARKS' A WALK TO REMEMBER**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Background of the Study**

Literature is a creative activity, a series of work of art. In addition, literature, which have various characteristic features such as originality, artistry, beauty in content and expression. Literature is not just a document of facts, it is not just the collection of real but that it may happen in the real life. We cannot deny that it is the media of communication (Wellek and Warren 1976: 90). Novel, as a form of literature, is simply a fictional story that usually reflects human life, so the readers will get many of moral messages behind the story.

*A Walk to Remember*, a novel about romantic love story written by Nicholas Sparks, tells the reader how true love begins. Love begins with hate, sympathy, and commitment. This novel also teaches that love can change a person's bad to be good.

Love is able to make life colorful, loving, understanding, tender and happy. It is capable of arousing life in the spirit of achieving the satisfaction of love itself. Good love will bring someone into a life full of happiness, while bad love will have a negative impact also on a person as well as a miserable life. True love will appear over time in joy and sorrow, because true love cannot be measured only by an endearment. However, there is no unflawed relationship in this world.

The problem in this novel is when Landon started to fall in love for Jamie Sullivan, he began to learn the truth that the woman he dearly loved suffered from a pain. The story in this novel is very touching and has a lot of meaning in each story. The reason why the writer reviews the book for her final project is to introduce the readers about the meaning of true love through this novel.

## **1.2 Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to review the Nicholas Sparks' novel *A Walk to Remember*, and to explain three intrinsic aspects of the novel, namely character, theme and setting. In addition, the strengths of the novel, the theme of love its effects will also be discussed. With this review, the writer wants to give potrait of a love story to the readers.

## **1.3 Nicholas Sparks and His Works**

Based on his official website in [www.NicholasSparks.com/](http://www.NicholasSparks.com/), Nicholas Sparks, an American best writer and novelist, that was received a full of track scholarship to the University of Notre Dame. He wrote his first novel *The Passing*, though it was never published.

*A Walk to Remember* was the third novel that Sparks wrote in 2000 which was published by Warner Books and Grand Central. He already published eighteen novels and two non-fiction books. Several of his novels success to become international bestsellers, and were translated into more than fifty languages. Ten of his romantic-drama novels have been adapted to film with multimillion-dollar box offices grosses and became popular competing with other Hollywood films.

## **2. SUMMARY OF THE BOOK**

When Landon was 17 years old, he met a girl named Jamie Sullivan, one of his friends at school and also the daughter of a pastor, Hegbert Sullivan in Beaufort. Jamie was the girl who always carried the Bible everywhere she went, she always wore a cardigan and skirt with her hair in a bun and ancient look that made none of the students in the school wanted to be friends with her, because Jamie had always been considered strange by her friends. Although none of her friends at school liked her, Jamie still became a good person, she would smile even if she got a strange look from her friends and always helped anyone in need. She was also active in helping children in orphanages.

Their school held a homecoming dance. As chairman of the organization, Landon had inevitably to come to the party. However, he did not have a partner. He imagined that he would be laughed at and ridiculed by his friends if he did not bring a partner. Landon finally decided to take Jamie as his partner in the dance, but with one condition proposed by Jamie that Landon had not to fall in love with her. After the dance party, Landon and Jamie became closer as they participated in a drama performance. The drama was written by Hegbert and was inspired by his life story, about a father who wanted to buy a Christmas gift for her beloved daughter. Jamie played a character who became an angel who helped the father in the drama while Landon was the one who played the father.

Gradually, their relationship became closer, along with this boy, who always took Jamie home after rehearsals finished. Landon used to hate it when his friends made fun of him for being close to Jamie, yet he had fallen in love with

Jamie. On the night of the performance, he tried to look as good as possible, he even pronounced his lines very well. When he looked at Jamie wore a white dress that hung down to her feet with her hair straggling exactly like an angel, so he gradually began to realize his feeling. Landon, the man who once often mocked the outside appearance of Jamie was now harboring feelings for Jamie after further recognizing the girl. He began to not care about the views and opinions of his friends about Jamie. He loved Jamie, and after gathering all the courage. Finally, this boy expressed his feelings to Jamie and it was welcomed by the girl.

Landon began to feel a strange thing happened to Jamie, that girl was getting thin and weak. Until his bewilderment was answered when Jamie revealed that she suffered from leukemia disease. Since that time their happy days began to shroud in sadness. Jamie quit from school, her body was getting weaker day by day, until she could only lie in bed. Jamie's neighbors often came to visit, because when healthy Jamie always provided aid to anyone in need. Jamie's friends at school also visited her to apologize for all the bad treatment at Jamie.

Landon did not know what he should do for the happiness of Jamie. He had asked his mother, but he still could not find the answers, then he continued to search for answers as to what he should do to make beloved Jamie happy.

Landon then remembered with thanksgiving to Jamie that the most desirable in life is to get married and was attended by hundreds of people. He also asked for the blessing of Hegbert and their parents to marry Jamie. Although initially London's willingness to marry Jamie was opposed by Hegbert and his parents, the determination and love were so great that finally they allowed Landon

to marry Jamie. Weddings were held and attended by hundreds of people who packed the church, that's what made the last days in the life of Jamie to be so perfect.

### **3. REVIEW OF THE BOOK**

#### **3.1 Intrinsic aspects**

##### **3.1.1 Theme**

Theme is the main idea of a story, which is believed and used as a source of stories. Perrine says, that theme is the main thing seen by the readers of a story. If the theme is interesting, it will deliver more value to the story (1988:90).

The writer founds that love is the main theme in this novel of *A Walk to Remember*. Based on the *Triangular Theory of love* by Robert J. Stenberg, the kind of love in this story is a romantic love (1986:124). In this theory, romantic love is between intimacy and passion. This is because it is characterized by the presence of both sexual passion and emotional intimacy. Romantic love also the type of love that a couple feels when their relationship is blossoming; they are drawn physically to each other, but also feel like best friends and enjoy spending time together.

As romantic love lacks serious commitment, it is more prevalent in the teenage and young adult years. Romantic Love results from full of combination along the story where Landon start to fall in love with Jamie, and it is shown in the quotation below:

It wasn't that long, and it certainly wasn't the kind of kiss you see in movies these days, but it was wonderful in its own way, and all I can remember about the moment is that when our lips first touched, I knew the memory would last forever (Sparks, 2000 : 171).

Based on the quotation, the reader can find out how Landon shows his feeling to Jamie and how the interaction between them. In addition, the reader will

also know how the sincere Landon's love for Jamie is, because Landon will always remember that event forever.

### **3.1.2 Plot**

Plot is a sequence of events in a cause-effect arrangement of the novel. It is an essential element of a novel. Without a plot, the structure of the novel is impossible. According to Bocker (1963:154), "Flashback is an interjected scene that takes the narrative back in time from the current point in the story".

*A Walk of Remember* uses the flashback plot that will further explanation in the strength of the book.

### **3.1.3 Character**

Morner and Rausch define stated that character is "a person in a literary works" (1991:31). Describing character of someone figures can be viewed from many aspects, namely through: Dialog figures, Explanation of figures, and the physical depiction of figures as well as the responses of other characters. All of the characters that we see do not mean that they did antagonist for real in their real life. The characters of *A walk to Remember* discuss are;

#### **3.1.3.1 London Carter**

London is the main character in this novel. He is identified as round character because of how his character developed and changed overtime. In the beginning of the novel, London is a trouble-making teenager who likes playing around with his friends. He often goes to parties and drunk. He labels himself as a rebel and not especially good at anything. London also just wants to be friends with the popular course. He agree to become the president of the student body just because

his father said that it will give a boost to his resume and get into the University of North Carolina. Before he met Jamie, he was a typical playboy who always teases and flirts many women. But once they know each other, the behavior of London changes drastically, even he is willing to sacrifice anything for Jamie. Through the humble and nice girl, Landon learns how to give without wanting something in return and he also begins to understand what compassion and faith are.

“Jamie was more than just the woman I loved. In that year Jamie helped me become the man I am today. With her steady hand she showed me how important it was to help others; with her patience and kindness she showed me what life is really all about. Her cheerfulness and optimism, even in times of sickness, was the most amazing thing I have ever witnessed” (Sparks, 2000 : 234-235).

Now London becomes polite to everyone and someone that believes in miracles.

“Jamie also taught me the value of forgiveness and the transforming power that it offers” (Sparks, 2000 : 235).

### **3.1.3.2 Jamie Sullivan**

Jamie Sullivan is the minor character of this novel. She is devoted Christian and always carries the Bible wherever she goes. Jamie is not a popular girl, her tendency to not stand out makes her less attractive and interesting than any other girls in school. She usually wears old brown cardigan with her hair puts in a bun. Actually Jamie knows London since they are in second grade, but they barely talk to each other. She is cheerful and happy in every situation, always ready to help people although who hate her. She is also full of compassion, understanding, positive and religious.

“With her steady hand she showed me how important it was to help others; with her patience and kindness she showed me what life is really all about. Her cheerfulness and optimism, even in times of sickness, was the most amazing thing I have ever witnessed” (Sparks, 2000 : 234-235).

Though Jamie is the best student in the class, she will not be able to attend college due to her terminal illness. Her only dream is to having a joyful wedding before she dies. In the last year of her life, she helps other people to find the true essence of life, and spend her days surrounded by her family and friends.

### **3.1.3.3 Hegbert Sullivan**

Hegbert Sullivan is Jamie’s father and he is the local Baptist minister. He is a strict old man with no tendency to smile. He is very protective of Jamie and doesn't like Landon or his family. This man also is a playwright on every Christmas show at the Beaufort Playhouse. Hegbert didn’t like so much to London, because he know who London is. Everytime London comes to their house, Hegbert only allows London to sit and chat outside with Jamie, he is also always keeps an eye on movement of London from inside the house.

“In church Hegbert was a fairly snappy dresser, but right now he looked like a farmer, dressed in overalls and a T-shirt. He mentioned for me to sit on the wooden chair he’d brought in from the kitchen. “I’m sorry it took a little while to open the door. I was working on tomorrow’s sermon,”he said” (Sparks, 2000 : 49).

Hegbert’s attitude during this time he is only for his daughter, Jamie. Jamie’s mother died in childbirth and hegbert has raised Jamie on his own. As time goes by, London shows Hegbert that he is serious and responsible which is manage to soften Hegbert’s heart and finally he is given the permission to take Jamie’s hand in marriage.

### **3.1.4 Setting**

Setting is needed in every part of story, because it is background for the story. Setting helps with plot, determines and describes character also provides a landscape that binds everything into context and meaning. Potter says, “The actions of the characters take place at some time, in time, in some place, amid some things, these temporal and spatial surrounding are the setting” (1967:27). According to the explanation, setting is about environment surrounding the characters in the story that characters have. There are three important points in terms of setting, place, social setting and time.

#### **3.1.4.1 Setting of Place**

The story’s setting of a walk to remember is taken place in Beaufort High school, Beaufort, North Carolina, which the author told in the first chapter:

“It wasn’t until the class started that I noticed something unusual. Though Beaufort High School wasn’t large, I knew for a fact that it was pretty much split fifty-fifty between males and females, which was why I was at least ninety percent female. There was only one other male in the class, which to my thinking was a good thing, and for a moment I felt flush with a “look out world, here I come” kind of feeling. Girls, girls, girls . . . I couldn’t help but think. Girls and girls and no tests in sight ” (Sparks, 2000:19).

At this point, we knew that the location of this novel story is in the Beaufort High School that the story began. The second place is also intens mostly takes place in the orphanage which stated in the quotation below:

“We got to the orphanage just about the time it was getting dark. We were a couple of minutes early, and the director was on the phone. It was an important call and he couldn’t meet with us right away, so we made ourselves comfortable. We were waiting on a bench in the hallway outside his door, when Jamie turned to me. Her Bible was in her lap. I guess she wanted it for support, but then again, maybe it was just her habit” (Spark, 2000:97).

At this point, the author wanted to show the second place was happen in the orphanage. The third place is in the Jamie's house, where Jamie is treated and Landon who always faithful to accompany her.

“Though he still didn't like me in the house if he wasn't there, he nonetheless allowed me to come in. I knew that part of the reason had to do with the fact that he didn't want Jamie to get chilled by sitting on the porch, and the only other alternative was to wait at the house while I was there. But I think Hegbert needed some time alone, too, and that was the real reason for the change. He didn't talk to me about the rules of the house—I could see them in his eyes the first time he'd said I could stay. I was allowed to stay in the living room, that was all” (Sparks, 2000:210-211).

From the explanation above, Hegbert still didn't like Landon. If Jamie didn't get sick, Hegbert would not allow Landon to get in their house, because the conditional of Jamie, he allowed Landon to come in.

#### **3.1.4.2 Setting of Time**

This novel about Landon telling of his past, in Beaufort, North Carolina forty years ago, in 1958, where in North Carolina is developing: roads narrow and some become gravel, suburban sprawl has been replaced with farmland. It was summer that occurred in the month of April to October.

“In 1958, Beaufort, North Carolina, which is located on the coast near Morehead City, was a place like many other small southern towns. It was the kind of place where the humidity rose so high in the summer that walking out to get the mail made a person feel as if he needed a shower, and kids walked around barefoot from April through October beneath oak trees draped in Spanish moss ” (Sparks, 2000/1).

The quotation is said by Landon in the first Chapter. He tells about setting of time *A Walk to Remember* that happened in 1958. The author chooses the summer of 1958 because it reflects the story's happen that occurs at that time.

### **3.1.4.3 Social setting**

Social setting in this novel we can see from the life of Landon and Jamie who live in different environments. In the story shown that Jamie and Hegbert Sullivan comes from an ordinary family, in contrast to Landon who comes from rich family. Both Landon and his mother have a good sense of fashion. Landon's mother is also smart in choosing home properties. It can be seen from their nice and luxurious home property.

“Since she'd told me about her illness, Jamie had stopped wearing her hair in a bun, and it was still as stunning as it had been the first time I'd seen her wear it down. She was looking at the china cabinet—my mom had one of those cabinets with the lights inside—when I reached across the table and took her hand” (Sparks, 2000:208).

In that part we could see that their status social is totally different. Even so, Landon and his family would still accept Jamie under any circumstances. It can be said that Landon did not see social status.

## **3.2 Strengths of the Book**

Strength in this book lies on two things which are plot and moral value of the story.

### **3.2.1 Plot**

The first strength of this book is the plot of the story is well described. The plot of this story is flashback. Appropriate to the title of the novel *a walk to remember*, at the beginning of the story, Landon who is fifty-seven years old recounted memories of his past while living in Beaufort, which the author tells in the last chapter.

“As I walk the streets of Beaufort forty years later, thinking back on that year of my life, I remember everything as clearly as if it were all still unfolding before my very eyes” (Sparks,2000:233).

Offering material support means that Landon tried to remember about his past and tell about how the story’s happened.

Landon told the story about how he met Jamie Sullivan and changes his live better, like he said in the quotation below:

“Jamie was more than just the woman I loved. In that year Jamie helped me become the man I am today. With her steady hand she showed me how important it was to help others; with her patience and kindness she showed me what life is really all about. Her cheerfulness and optimism, even in times of sickness, was the most amazing thing I have ever witnessed” (Sparks, 2000:234-235).

The quotation above telling the reader that Landon is very love to Jamie and how Jamie changed his past to be a better person today. Although this novel uses flashback plot, it is still able to make the readers understand the story easily.

### **3.2.2 Moral Value of the Story**

There are many moral values that were so thoughtful, touching and very useful for readers, namely live in love and respect each other, loyalty and religious message.

This book teaches people to live in love and respect each other.

“While we read the Bible, people would knock at the door at least three times every day. People were always dropping by, some with food, other just to say hello. Even Eric and Mrgaret came over, and though Jamie wasn’t allowed to let them in, she did so anyway, and we sat in the living room and talked a little, both of them unable to meet her gaze” (Sparks, 2000:211).

From the quotation above the reader can see how people caring and respect to Jamie. They are come to visit the dying Jamie and apologize for their past bad treatment. Jamie also forgave them even though they were little awkward.

A loyalty is the most visible moral message in this story which stated in the quotation below:

“I know that some of you may wonder if I was doing it out of pity. Some of the more cynical may even wonder if I did it because she’d be gone soon anyway and I wasn’t committing much. The answer to both question is no. I would have married Jamie Sullivan no matter what happened in the future. I would have married Jamie Sullivan if the miracle I was praying for had suddenly come true. I knew it at the moment I asked her, and I still know it today” (Sparks, 2000:234).

At that time, Landon shows to the reader that he is very loyal to Jamie. Though Jamie is dying, but London never left her. He always accompanied her in the hospital when Jamie had cancer. Landon also disregarded Jamie’s deteriorating condition, even he wanted to marry her to make Jamie’s wishes come true and hope that Landon will able to accompany her to the end of her life.

Finally a religious message contains that is very touching, where Jamie had been aware Landon to trust in God and miracles.

“So that night I opened the Bible that Jamie had given me for Christmas and began to read. Now, I’d heard all about Bible in Sunday school or church, but to be frank, I just remember the highlights—the Lord sending the seven plagues so the Israelites could leave Egypt, Jonah being swallowed by a whale, Jesus walking across the water or raising Lazarus from the dead. There were other biggies, too. I knew that practically every chapter of the Bible has the Lord doing something spectacular, but I hadn’t learned them all. As Christians we learned heavily on teaching of the New Testament, and I didn’t know the first things about books like Joshua or Ruth or Joel. The first night I read through Genesis, the second night I read through Exodus. Leviticus was next, followed by Numbers and then Deuteronomy. The going got a little slow during certain parts, especially as all the laws were being explained, yet I couldn’t put it down. It was a compulsion that I didn’t fully understand” (Sparks, 2000:201-202).

The paragraph above explain to the reader that Jamie was gave her Bible to Landon so he can pray and understand the contents of the Bible.

“I breathe deeply, taking in the fresh spring air. Though Beaufort has changed and I have changed, the air itself has not. It’s still the air of my childhood, the air of my seventeenth year, and when I finally exhale, I’m fifty-seven once more. But this is okay. I smile slightly, looking toward the sky, knowing there’s one thing I still haven’t told you: I now believe, by the way, that miracles can happen” (Sparks, 2000:240).

At that point, Landon tells that he is never forgotten about Jamie and his past and believe miracles can happen.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

*A walk to remember* is a romantic novel by Nicholas Sparks. This novel also known as best-selling and even have made the film version. In addition to the romantic, the story is truly touching novel where innocent girl, geeky, kindly, patient, full of compassion, understanding, positive and religious, named Jamie Sullivan for the first time falls in love with Landon Carter, the main character, who rich and famous that always making trouble.

Nicholas Sparks', *A Walk to remember*, has some strenghts. It presents an interesting plot and moral value. The plot in this novel is well described. The plot of this story is flashback. It is appropriate to the title of the story. At the beginning of the story tells how Landon Carter who remembers about how he meets with Jamie Sullivan until he falls in love with her. Landon always remembers about Jamie and never forgets his memories with her. In addition, *A walk to remember* by Nicholas Sparks having good moral value such as: teaching people to live in love and respect each other. Loyalty is the second moral that we can learn from this novel. Through this main character, Landon shows his sacrifice to Jamie. Although Jamie is dying, Landon still faithful to accompony her, even he marries Jamie. Beside, the religious message contained there in was very touching, where Jamie has been aware Landon to trust in God and miracles.

This romantic novel, is a recommended book to read by the readers. The novel has a lot of meaning messages that are very touching.

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