

## CHAPTER THREE

### CONCLUSION

After analyzing the theme through portrayal of the protagonist in Rainbow Rowell's *Fangirl*, I would like to make some conclusions in this chapter. The protagonist in the novel is Cath Avery, an eighteen-year-old teenager who suffers from Social Anxiety Disorder (SAD). At the beginning of the story, she is portrayed as someone who is unsociable and insecure.

Cath is unsociable. It can be seen since the beginning of the story when she rejects Wren's and Courtney's invitation to go to a party as she does not want to meet people she does not know there. Cath's being unsociable can also be seen when she refuses to have dinner together with Reagan in the dining hall of their dormitory as she feels anxious to be in a new place and meet new people. Furthermore, Cath shows her unsociable characteristic when she once again refuses Reagan and Levi's offer to go to a bar together.

Besides unsociable, Cath is also portrayed as insecure. This characteristic can first be seen when she compares her appearance and personality with Reagan's and feels that she is lacking in many aspects. Cath also shows her insecurity when she subtly

rejects her professor's suggestion to write stories using her own characters instead of borrowing her characters from Simon Snow series. Cath still feels that her characters are not good enough even if her professor has praised her previous work. That shows her insecurity with her writing skills. In addition, Cath's being insecure can be seen through her perspective on her relationship with Levi. Although Levi himself has convinced her that they are suitable for each other, Cath believes that their relationship will not run smoothly as they have nothing in common.

However, Cath gradually changes after constantly being reached out by her friends. The first person who reaches out to Cath is Reagan. Since the beginning of the novel, Reagan keeps approaching Cath, talking to her, and inviting her to various events. Reagan's actions eventually enable Cath to get used to seeing people and become better at socializing. Other than Reagan, Levi also reaches out to Cath by accompanying and helping her on several different occasions. Levi's presence and assistance gradually make Cath open up and be a better person.

Afterwards, Cath becomes sociable. This characteristic can first be seen when Cath accepts Levi's invitation to go to his dorm to accompany him and meet his friends. Cath also shows her sociable characteristic when she suggests that she and Levi should go on a double date with Wren and Alejandro. Furthermore, Cath's being sociable is seen when she takes initiative to ask Levi to meet up with her during summer holiday.

Other than sociable, Cath also becomes self-assured. This characteristic can first be seen when she refuses Reagan's offer to doll her up for a date with Levi. Cath's refusal shows that she has become self-assured with her appearance. Cath's being self-assured is also seen when she finally tries to write a fanfiction using her own characters instead of borrowing from Simon Snow series. Cath's decision indicates that she has

become self-assured with her writing skills.

Based on the portrayal of Cath, it can be seen that the theme of the novel is “the continuous support from close friends might help one who suffers from social anxiety disorder to change for the better.” At the beginning of the novel, Cath is portrayed as unsociable and insecure. These are actually some characteristics that are usually displayed by a person who suffers from SAD. However, after being reached out and supported by Reagan and Levi, Cath gradually becomes sociable and self-assured. This change of characteristics indicates that Cath has been much better at dealing with her SAD. Thus, it can be concluded that the continuous support from her close friends is what enables Cath to change for the better.

After conducting an analysis on this novel, I am of the opinion that Rainbow Rowell as the author has succeeded in conveying her message to the readers through the portrayal of Cath as the protagonist. As can be seen in the analysis, Cath’s characteristics are really life-like; people who suffer from SAD in reality do possess those characteristics displayed by Cath in the novel. This realistic portrayal of the character enables the readers to sympathize with the character and eventually grasps the message the author wants to convey – that the continuous support from close friends might really help those who suffer from SAD.

In general, analyzing this novel has broadened my knowledge about SAD and the people who suffer from it – what they think, what they feel, and how they perceive the world outside their comfort zone. This novel also makes me realize that there is hope for people with SAD to recover although it needs time and process. In addition, it shows me the importance of reaching out to others in need – that a small support from

one individual might change other's life. In the end, I believe that these valuable insights are what make this novel worth reading and analyzing.

