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IRP Book Review: *Paper Towns*

Have you ever felt as if you always knew someone without knowing them? Glancing from afar, imagining them as the person you *want* to see and think you know? Well come join John Green who writes the story of Quentin Jacobsen in *Paper Towns*; a book that has charted to #5 on the New York Times Best Seller and was awarded the Edgar Award for best young adult novel. *Paper Towns* is most relatable to teenagers as are his other works of art such as *Looking for Alaska* or *The Fault in Our Stars*. Green is known for his modern style of writing, easily connectable to anyone's life.

Paper Towns guides us into the life of Quentin Jacobsen, a boy that's spent majority of his stale life imagining his one perfect moment in his Happily Ever After Tale accompanying Margo Roth Spiegelman. He knew he loved her, or at least his *idea* of her since they were little. The beginning of the book starts with young Quentin and young Margo stumbling upon a dead body in a park. This body terrifies Quentin but completely draws in Margo. As they grow older they grow apart. Now in their senior year of high school Margo is the Queen Bee, and Q's best friends are in the band; needless to say making eyesight with anyone socially above them was monumental.

One night while Quentin's in bed and the neighborhood is asleep, Margo climbs over from her house to his and shows up at Quentin's window. Baffled, Quentin opens the window and Margo invites him on a night of revenge with her. He originally says no, but when the girl of your every thought asks you for anything you know what your answer really is. That night they completed every "mission" and Quentin had the time of his life. He wasn't sure what was going

to happen the next day; Would they talk to each other in school now? Are they good friends again? Would they laugh about it? Well Quentin never gets the chance because Margo never shows up.

As has happened before, Margo has disappeared. Every time she disappears she leaves a trail of clues for her parents to find her. This time Quentin realizes the clues are for him, so he and his two best friends Ben and Radar, and Margo's best friend Lacey follow the bread crumbs to find her. During this search is when Q begins to realize that Margo isn't who he thought she was, and this is what draws him in. Every clue opened up a different side of her that he felt the need to understand, and he wouldn't stop until he did.

Personally I can completely connect to the book. I think we've all had that experience when you think you know someone from afar and realize they weren't what you were expecting. I think that's also why I liked Margo's character the most. Her mysterious personality always keeps you guessing. Every word she says becomes of sort of piece to the puzzle that is Margo. *Paper Towns* is very much about identity and finding not only yourself, but what other's have to offer as well.

I thought *Paper Towns* was very exemplary because you can so easily become captivated in a story that's not even yours. The style of writing that John Green puts forth brings you in no matter what it is he's writing about. I didn't find many weaknesses as I did disappointment. The disappointment was more of a strength because as you're reading, you're expecting Quentin to find Margo and for them to make-out and have a happily ever after moment. The ending of course was much more different, but still as satisfying; and that's hard to do in a novel. The mystery, the love story, and the thriller parts were what kept me in as a reader. I'd recommend it

to any reader. *Paper Towns* reminds you to not forget to really *live* your life and do what you weren't planning on before.

"Forever is composed of Nows."

-Emily Dickinson

Creative Portion

The creative portion of my project is a quote by Emily Dickinson “*Forever is composed of Nows.*” spoken in the book by Margo Roth Spiegelman to Quentin. I thought this quote was so important in the book because it was all about Q finding himself and doing the things he never dared to do before. It also represents the theme of Margo’s life and her free spiritedness.

Personally why I chose to do this as my creative part is because I would like this quote to be my first tattoo. The picture *is* of me, and on keynote I put the letters there using separate text boxes for each one and angled them to resemble a tattoo. Those couple of words were so simple, but bring out the theme of the book perfectly. They mean to me as they did to Margo which was to do what you want while you can; enjoy every moment because you can’t have a forever without having a now.