

## Eleanor and Park

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Rainbow Rowell.

Copies at Atascocita Springs Elementary

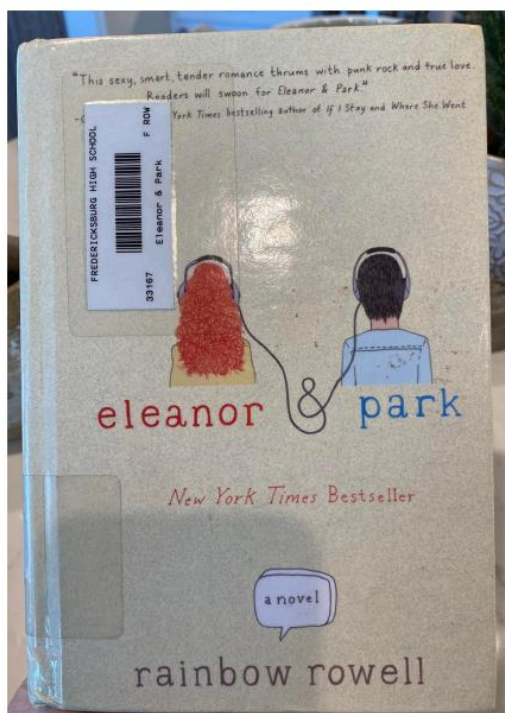
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## Eleanor & Park- Rowell

Some Concerns: Sexual content, Bigotry, Racism, violence, drunk driving

"Your stepfather's been looking for you," Tina said. "He's been driving around the neighborhood all goddamn night."

"What did you tell him?" Eleanor said. *Did Tina do this? Is that how he knew?*

"I asked him if his dick was bigger than his truck," Tina said. "I didn't tell him anything."

"Did you tell him about Park?"

Tina narrowed her eyes. Then shook her head. "But somebody's going to."

*suck me off*

## park

XTC was no good for drowning out the morons at the back of the bus.

Park pressed his headphones into his ears.

Tomorrow he was going to bring Skinny Puppy or the Misfits. Or maybe he'd make a special bus tape with as much screaming and wailing on it as possible.

He could get back to New Wave in November, after he got his driver's license. His parents had already said Park could have his mom's Impala, and he'd been saving up for a new tape deck. Once he started driving to school, he could listen to whatever he wanted or nothing at all, *and* he'd get to sleep in an extra twenty minutes.

"That doesn't exist!" somebody shouted behind him.

"It so fucking does!" Steve shouted back. "Drunken Monkey style, man, it's a real fucking thing. You can kill somebody with it..."

"You're full of shit."

"*You're full of shit,*" Steve said. "Park! Hey, Park."

"*Stepdad!*" Steve shouted, throwing a beer can across the garage. "Your fucking *stepdad*? Do you want me to kill him for you? I'm gonna kill Tina's, anyway. I could get them both in the same day. Buy one, get one . . ." He giggled. "Buy one, get one . . . free."

Tina opened a beer and shoved it into Eleanor's lap. Eleanor took it, just to have something to hold. "Drink up," Tina said.

Eleanor took a sip obediently. It tasted sharp and yellow.

"We should play quarters," Steve slurred. "Hey, Red, do you have any quarters?"

Eleanor shook her head.

Tina perched next to him on the arm of the couch and lit a cigarette. "We had quarters," she said. "We spent them on beer, remember?"

"Those weren't quarters," Steve said. "That was a ten."

Tina closed her eyes and blew smoke at the ceiling.

Eleanor closed her eyes, too. She tried to think about what she should do next, but nothing came to her. The music on the car radio switched from Sabbath to AC/DC to Zeppelin. Steve sang along; his voice was surprisingly light. "Hangman, hangman, turn your head awhile. . . ."

Eleanor listened to Steve sing song after song over the wet hammer of her heartbeat. The beer can went warm in her hand.

*i know your a slut you smell like cum*

fist." But Park hoped nobody would. The guy who Steve hit couldn't open his eyes for a week.

Park tossed Tina her balled-up homework. She caught it.

"Park," Steve said, "tell Mikey about Drunken Monkey karate."

"I don't know anything about it." Park shrugged.

"But it exists, right?"

"I guess I've heard of it."

"There," Steve said. He looked for something to throw at Mikey, but couldn't find anything. He pointed instead. "I fucking told you."

"What the fuck does Sheridan know about kung fu?" Mikey said.

"Are you retarded?" Steve said. "His mom's Chinese."

Mikey looked at Park carefully. Park smiled and narrowed his eyes. "Yeah, I guess I see it," Mikey said. "I always thought you were Mexican."

"Shit, Mikey," Steve said, "you're such a fucking racist."

"She's not Chinese," Tina said. "She's Korean."

"Who is?" Steve asked.

"Park's mom."

Park's mom had been cutting Tina's hair since grade school. They both had the exact same hairstyle: long spiral perms with tall feathered bangs.

"She's fucking hot is what she is," Steve said, cracking himself up. "No offense, Park."



## PROFANITY & VIOLENCE

Profanity is frequent and varied, and includes the following terms: *a-*, *b-tard*, *b-ch*, *c-t*, *d-n*, *d-k*, *fag*, *the f-word*, *h-*, *h-spawn*, *p-*, *p-y*, *s-* and the *f-word* with mother. The names *Jesus* and *God* (sometimes paired with *d-n*) are misused. Racial slurs and other coarse language are also used.

Park fights Steve after he and Tina mock Eleanor on the bus. He kicks Steve in the face, sending him to the hospital. Park's face is badly bruised as well.

Eleanor and her siblings imagine violent ends for Richie. Richie fires his gun at some teens, trying to scare them. Richie is violent, unstable and verbally abusive. He throws heavy objects at the wall, abuses Eleanor's mother, writes sexually explicit notes in Eleanor's schoolbooks, and threatens and attempts to physically harm Eleanor.



Steve offers to kill Richie and says that he plans to kill Tina's stepfather one day. After Eleanor is safely in Minnesota and her mother and siblings have moved away, Park confronts Richie, who in a drunken stupor has fallen to the ground. Park wants to kill him, but just kicks dirt into his mouth instead.

## SEXUAL CONTENT

Eleanor and Park's relationship becomes increasingly physical. Handholding progresses to kissing and then kissing deeply. They begin lying on top of one another while caressing each other under their clothes, and eventually removing layers of clothing. They stop just short of intercourse because Park refuses. He doesn't have a condom. These scenes are written in a detailed, emotionally charged way.

Park remembers kissing girls when he was younger but not feeling anything and wondering if he was gay (although he didn't want to kiss boys either). His parents ask him if he's wearing eyeliner because he wants to be like a girl, but Park insists that he just wants to be himself. He kisses another girl after a year of not hearing from Eleanor.

