

BOOK REVIEW OF *THE PIGMAN'S LEGACY* BY PAUL ZINDEL

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1. INTRODUCTION

A. BACKGROUND OF THE WRITING

Friendship is unique. It does not only occur to the people in the same age, but also to the people in different age. As a social being, human cannot live alone so that they should make a relationship with others.

Beside friendship, love is also unique as it can occur unexpectedly. Love can happen to a couple in a short time or after a long period of time. *The Pigman's Legacy* is a book that tells us about a unique friendship and love.

It tells us about two high school students named Jon Conlon and Loraine Jensen and their relationship with a stranger named Parker Glenville, who illegally stays in their best friend's house, Mr. Pignati. Glenville is sick old man who is running from a tax collector because he cannot pay the tax of the property he has.

B. THE PURPOSES OF THE STUDY

In this project, the writer reviews *The Pigman's Legacy* to reach the following purposes.

1. To analyze friendship and love theme in Paul Zindel's novel *The Pigman's Legacy*.
2. To describe the strengths and weaknesses of Paul Zindel's novel *The Pigman's Legacy*

C. PAUL ZINDEL AND HIS WORKS

Based on Paul Zindel official website, *paulzindel.com*, Zindel grew up on Staten Island with his mother and sister. When he was young, his father left his family. Her mother struggled to raise them to keep them together by moving from one apartment to another apartment.

Zindel's works started by writing his first play in high school. There, some of his classmates got the impression that he had a good sense of humor. Therefore, a group of students government officers asked him to create a hilarious sketch for an assembly to help them raise money.

Zindel went to Wagner College on Staten Island to study Chemistry. There, he found a mentor named Edward Albee who taught him Creative Writing. Albee was one of Zindel inspirations in writing plays. During his last year in college, he wrote his second original play.

After college, Zindel worked for Allied Chemical as a technical writer. But after six months, he decided to leave that job to teach Chemistry in a high school. During his ten years teaching, he continued to write plays. His first staged play was "The Effect of Gamma Rays on Man-in-the-moon Marigold". The editors of Harper & Row, Charlotte Zolotow, saw the television production of "Marigold" and search him out. Then, she got him to write his first novel, "The Pigman".

In 1969, he resigned from the high school and started to read books for young adult readers. He found that most of them had no connections to the teenager's life he knew. He thought that he knew what the kids wanted from a book, then he made a list and followed it to show that those kids and teenagers were not alone. Apparently, he was able convinced his kids and teenagers readers that he was on their side and started to write from the kids and teenagers point of view.

2. SUMMARY OF *THE PIGMAN'S LEGACY*

The Pigman's Legacy by Paul Zindel serves a story about two high school student named John Conlon and Lorraine Jensen and their relationship with a stranger named Parker Glenville, who illegally stays in Mr. Pignatis's house. Mr. Pignati has already died for four month when John and Lorraine inaccidentally visit his empty house. Surprisingly, they find a strange old man inside his house. It turns out that it is Mr. Glenville, a sick old man who is running from tax collector.

At first, Glennville calls himself Gus, which is actually the name of his dog. He tells them that he is a good friend of Colonel Glenville, who is knighted by Sweden Prince for the subway system he has designated for Stockholm. According to him, Glenville has already died because of a train accident.

When, Glenville asks John and Loraine to get a black trunk filled with valuable old rare coins from his house, there is a dog came out to welcome him. He calls the dog Gus. Glenville says that his name is Gus because he does not want people to know him as he is hiding from tax collector.

A day after that, they know that Glenville has a serious illness so that they ask Dolly Racinsky, the cleaning service of their school's cafeteria who is a former dietician assistant at the Hill View Hospital on Staten Island, to take care of him. One day, Glenville is in a serious pain so that he pushes John and Lorraine to take him to the hospital right away. At the

hospital, doctors says that his digestive system has a terrible shock so that they need to run some tests on him. Suprisingly, Glenville says that he is alright so that he decides to leave the hospital. The four of them run away from the hospital because Glenville is afraid if the hospital knows who he is.

Since Dolly knows that Glenville has a diverticulosis, she organizes Glenville's food so that he will not feel the pain again. After getting better in Dolly's hand, Glenville asks everybody to go to Atlantic City because he wants to have some fun.

At first, Loraine disagrees with the plan considering Glenville's health. Nevertheless, they agree to go to Atlantic City after John borrows his father money, Loraine breaks his piggy bank, and Glenville trades all of his rare silver coins from the black trunk.

In Atlantic City, they go to a casino. Glenville gives John a hundred dollars to get some fun and play some games. At first, Loraine is not comfortable of this casino and the way John bet his money. At the end, she joins John playing the slot machine. They win some dollars on that game. Glenville himself win a lot so that he wants to buy jewelery for Dolly. Yet, Dolly refuses it because she wants him to save the money. Then, Dolly asks john to keep Glenville's money.

After promising to meet again in an hour, Glenville and Dolly leave to get a lunch on Calypso Lounge. John wants to play more games since he wants to win more money for Glenville. John is playing a game on a blackjack table although Loraine tries to stop him. It becomes worse when John loses all of Glenville's money on the game. He feels guilty so that he cannot say anything to Glenville. Nevertheless, Glenville and Dolly tell them that it is alright although their faces look dissappointed when they know it.

All their way home, John has nothing to say because he is feeling ashamed for what he has done. However, Glenville, who owns the money, looks fine as he enjoys his time with Dolly. He even asks her to visit his house before they go back to Mr. Pignati's house. Suddenly, Glenville feels the pain again. Without hesitation, all of them go straight to the hospital.

In the hospital, Dolly says that she is already knows that Glenville does not have much time to live again like what he tells her at their first meeting. However, Glenville feels so happy because, in his last time, he has John, Lorraine, and of course Dolly, who saves him from being alone. He even asks Dolly to marry him who makes John and Lorraine immediately search for a priest and take the priest to marry Glenville and Dolly at the hospital. After their marriage, Glenville dies with a relief feeling that he has a wonderful journey with strangers who love him.

What has come to John, Lorraine, Glenville, and Dolly makes John and Lorraine realize that Mr. Pignati does not only leave them a good story of their friendship in the past but also a continuing good story of another friendship, and love, with another person. The friendship and love is The Pigman's Legacy.

3. REVIEW OF *THE PIGMAN'S LEGACY*

A. STRENGTHS

1. THEME

The most interesting point of this book is the unique friendship among the four characters and the unique love stories between John and Lorraine as well as between Glenville and Dolly which happen in Mr. Pignati's house. That is why the novel is called *The Pigman's Legacy* as the whole story happens in the the Pigman's house or Mr. Pignati's

house. The first unique friendship lays between John, Lorraine and Mr. Pignati. John and Lorraine are teenagers, while Mr. Pignati is an old man. But their friendship grows strong because Mr. Pignati treats them as friend and family so that both John and Lorraine keep remember him long after his death.

The second unique friendship lays between John, Lorraine, and Glenville. Again, John and Lorraine are still teenagers although they had already gained more age since Mr. Pignati's death. Unlike Mr. Pignati, Glenville is a strange and a sick old man wh illegally stayed in Mr. Pignati's house, a house he does not have a right to stay. He is hiding there been he is running away from tax collector. But their friendship also grows strong because Glenville also consider them as friend and family.

Meanwhile, the first unique love happens between John and Lorraine without realizing that they actually love each other. After they know each other so long, it is Glenville's love to Dolly that finally makes John and Lorraine realize about their love. A love that makes them stayed together for so long.

The second unique love happens between Glenville and Dolly. It is more unique than the love of John and Lorraine, because they meet each other only for a while after John and Lorraine introduce her to Glenville. Her care for Glenville in his last time makes him fell in love with her. It is a different way of falling in love. While John and Lorraine need a long time to find love, Glenville only needs a little time to ask Dolly to marry him.

Through this novel, Paul Zindel, who aims this book for kids and teenagers, realizes that what they face in real life is those two themes. Therefore, he wants to show friendship and love in a unique way.

2. SETTING

Another interesting point of this book is the setting. The main setting is Mr. Pignati's house. The place when everything starts. The first place where Mr. Pignati, John, Lorraine, Glenville and Dolly meet each other. First, John and Lorraine create a wonderful friendship with Mr. Pignati. Second, John and Lorraine create a unique adventurous friendship with Glenville. Third, Glenville and Dolly create a unique love just after John and Lorraine introduce her to him.

Another interesting setting is Atlantic City, the place where John, Lorraine, Dolly and Glenville experience a life adventure. John learns something important about life when he lost all of Glenville's money on a Blackjack game. Instead of getting mad, Glenville and Dolly say that it is no problem because their love to John and Lorraine can beat their anger and disappointment.

The most romantic setting is the hospital where Glenville suffers his last Diverticulosis after their trip to Atlantic City. In this place, Glenville who is counting his last breath, proposes Dolly to marry him. In this place, John and Lorraine realizes that beside friendship, they already possess for such a long time, they also share love in a unique way. In this novel, Paul Zindel create those three setting as simple settings but it contains a lot of stories and memories.

3. CHARACTERS

Another interesting point of this book is the characters. On every chapter, Zindel shows John and Lorraine's point of view about life. They show their own feeling and opinion on every event that they experienced along the story as teenagers. Zindel shows John and Lorraine's transformation from teenagers who love to experience new things to adult who understand about love and responsibility. It is good for teenagers to read this novel so that they can learn to be a better teenager.

B. WEAKNESSES

1. PLOT

Besides two strengths above, this story also has two weaknesses that makes common readers especially kids and teenagers confused. First, Paul Zindel tells the story in a quite quick way. Every events on the story only needs one or two short chapters to finish. It makes the readers confused as there are too many things in a chapter. The readers might have to read it more than once to get the messages or the value of the novel because there are so many things in it. They have to understand a chapter first before continuing to another chapter with different things to understand.

2. UNUSUAL / UNKNOWN WORDS

Beside the fast telling story, this novel also contains difficult or unknown words, especially for kids and teenagers, such as ‘apparition’ which means ‘ghost’ or ‘platonically’ which means ‘speculative’ or ‘theoretical’. It might make the readers confused and they have to search for the meaning of those words.

According to the writer, regardless of the story which runs too fast and the difficult or unknown words that makes the readers have to read more to get the message of this novel, *The Pigman's Legacy* is a good book for the readers, especially for kids and teenagers. It contains a unique friendship and love which is packaged in an adventure so that it is suitable for kids and teenagers who are still eager to do an adventure to get a life experience. Paul Zindel also writes a novel in a good manner to be followed by kids and teenagers that makes this novel worth to read by all kids and teenagers all over the world.

Perhaps, if Zindel tells the story a bit slower and gives extra explanation about the difficult or unknown words, the readers, especially kids and teenagers, will enjoy the story more and understand the message easily.

4. CONCLUSION

Paul Zindel wrote a novel filled with an interesting theme, friendship and love, in “The Pigman’s Legacy”. This is a fiction novel that tells us a story of unique friendships among John Conlon, Lorraine Jensen, and Mr. Pignati as well as among John Conlon, Lorraine Jensen, Parker Glenville, and Dolly Racinsky. It also tells us a story about unique love between John and Lorraine as well as between Parker Glenville and Dolly Racinsky. The novel begins after John and Lorraine inaccidentally saw Glenville in their old friend’s house named Mr. Pignati. The adventure starts when they follow Glenville’s life journey.

The strengths of this story are its theme, setting, and characters. Those themes are the unique friendships among the characters and the love between the characters. Those settings are Mr. Pignati’s house, Atlantic City and the Hospital. Those characters are John Conlon, Lorraine Jensen, Parker Glenville, and Dolly Racinsky.

However, this book also have weaknesses such as its fast plot and its difficult or unknown words. If Paul Zindel tells the stories a little bit slower and gives extra explanation about these difficult or unknown words, the readers might enjoy more to read this book to get the value of this story.

According to the writer, “The Pigman’s Legacy” is a recommended novel to read by people, especially kid and teenagers, so that they can learn the essential of friendship and love.

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