



The Color of Earth

Kim Dong Hwa , Lauren Na (Translator)

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First love is never easy.

Ehwa grows up helping her widowed mother run the local tavern, watching as their customers - both neighbors and strangers - look down on her mother for her single lifestyle. Their social status isolates Ehwa and her mother from the rest of the people in their quiet country village. But as she gets older and sees her mother fall in love again, Ehwa slowly begins to open up to the possibility of love in her life.

In the tradition of *My Antonia* and *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*, from the pen of the renowned Korean manwha creator Kim Dong Hwa, comes a trilogy about a girl coming of age, set in the vibrant, beautiful landscape of pastoral Korea.

The Color of Earth Details

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Download and Read Free Online The Color of Earth Kim Dong Hwa , Lauren Na (Translator)

From Reader Review The Color of Earth for online ebook

BookishStitcher says

A beautiful Korean manhwa, Korean version of a Japanese manga, about a young girl growing up into a young woman and thus deepening the bond she shares with her young widowed mother. This story was very well done, and I look forward to reading the other two in the trilogy.

Joshua says

Typically stories about growing up leave me either bored or annoyed and this probably because my own development was obnoxious. I hated being a kid, and I hated being a teenager even more, and for that reason I was stunned by the fact that I absolutely loved this book.

The Color of Earth isn't just a story about personal development, it's an earthy exploration of developing sexuality, attraction, and the complexity of human emotion. Every page of this book is beautifully rendered alternating between minimalist moments of Ehwa and her mother, or else the captured beauty of Korea. And throughout this graphic novel Kim Dong Hwa captures the language and rhythms of a people just living and growing and trying to manage the changes taking place in their life, and the new desires and comforts that come with it.

Ehwa is a young woman discovering her body and whether it's learning about the differences of human genitals, the discovery of her menstruation, observing the budding of her own attractions to the young men she encounters, or else trying to understand her mother's attractions to a traveling salesman this book was a beautiful meditation about puberty and coming of age. And any book which manages to take this time and make it into something so beautiful is just incredible.

Sincerae says

The Color of Earth is for older teens and adults, a coming of age story. It's a graphic novel done in the manhwa style who is the Korean equivalent to manga.

I give this book five stars because I loved the mother-daughter relationship, the use of poetry in portions of the novel, and some of the artwork was stunning and lyrical. I would love to read the rest of the trilogy because I want to find out what happens to Ehwa and her mother.

In a nutshell The Color of Earth represents to me the beauty and coarseness of real life.

Colleen Venable says

I imagine if Judy Bloom lived in rural Korea this would be the book she wrote. Really stunning.

Marissa says

It is hard for me to know exactly how to rate this trilogy. There's clearly something lost in the cross-cultural translation since so much of this trilogy circles around the cultural beliefs and ideas about sexuality that existed during a specific era in a small Korean village. Not having access to that context, I'm sure my perspective on the series may lack some broader insight. I also totally have no background knowledge on how women's sexuality is regarded in Korea currently. From the introduction to the book, it sounds like it was taken as being pretty feminist in its home country and as a Western feminist reading it here, I appreciated some of the feminist friendly components of it. For one thing the story of the trilogy does entirely revolve around the changes and growth the two main female characters, a mother and daughter, experience over the course of the story. Despite being within the romance genre in many ways, the relationship between the mother and daughter is the most central element and it is significant that at the ending of the series (cue Spoiler), the mother's longing for her lover is replaced by her longing for her daughter.

The other unusual thing about this series, is how intensely it focuses on a girl's sexual development in a way that is not intended as exploitative and objectifying. Instead it really does focus more on her thoughts and feelings and experiences in a way that seems fairly true to her perspective. Though there are male love interests in the story, we always stay inside of the mother or daughter's point of view and there was something very refreshing about seeing male love interests treated the way female love interests usually are. They motivate a lot of the action in the novel, but the fact of who they are as characters is largely irrelevant. They are love interests and not really more than that, which is something you don't see very often.

With that said, however, knowing this was written by a man and ended up being popular among adult male readers, did make me uncomfortable in some moments wondering about the subtext and how easily some of the things in the book might lend themselves to pedophilic fantasies, but that may just be the feminist bitterness/paranoia talking more than the work itself. I would also say there are A LOT of floral/plant metaphors for sex, which I'm sure is connected to the abundance of plant and floral imagery that's used in traditional Eastern love poetry. Not being Asian and familiar with that tradition, I don't really like it when women's sexuality is compared to flowers and generally handled in such an over-idealized way. Western feminism talks a lot about how when women's sexuality is compared to flowers and nature it is often done so in a Western context as a way of trying women closer to nature, as opposed to culture. It also can emphasize women as being less rational, more passive, more wild, and more pure in the sense that they have less subjectivity and desire. With that said, I am aware though that there are particularly Western forces (Judeo Christian religious beliefs for starters) which contribute to that kind of interpretation in a Western context, which don't apply here. I did find it interesting how at least the mother's sexuality outside of the bonds of matrimony was supported in the narrative, even as she encouraged her daughter not to sully herself by "ripening early."

I enjoyed the story and the characters and I think it was definitely worth reading, but admittedly I felt myself struggling with that Western feminist lens throughout.

Sesana says

I still haven't read much manhwa. Something tells me that this isn't typical. It's a slow, reflective coming of age story, surprisingly frank in how it shows a young girl's sexual awakening. This certainly won't be for everyone. The characters are drawn in a very mannered style, the whole thing is quite slow to unfold, and it verges on navel gazing at certain points. That said, it's refreshingly honest, and the backgrounds, especially the flowers, can be breathtaking. I'm not sure if I liked it well enough to finish the trilogy, but I do have a lot of respect for what the artist was trying to accomplish here.

Seth T. says

[Girl in a field of grasses and flowers? Ban it!]

A couple weeks ago it was Banned Books Week, a national celebration of those works that have been challenged by adults who believe in sequestering away literature that does not adequately line up with their particular ideological yardstick. It's rare that these challenges are meant as outright bans. Rather than seek to remove a work completely from the range of literature available to a society, these challengers wish to keep the targeted books from the access of young readers—children whom they do not feel are ready to engage the maturity of the work within.

This kind of thing isn't rare to our society. Our theaters restrict six-year-olds from seeing Rated-R films unaccompanied by an adult guardian. We, as a society, have chosen to prohibit junior highers from purchasing pornography. Websites that offer sexually explicit materials provide at least tacit barriers to prevent the young and the innocent from enjoying the adult fare within. That we even term such entertainments as "adult" gives evidence to the general consensus that there are things that are for children and things that are not.

Still, when it comes to literature, we (as a society) tend to hold to a set of rules. We fear the removal of books for what it says about a formerly free society. We've been nursed at the tit of *Fahrenheit 451*. We associate the ban of books with Nazis and totalitarians and fundamentalist religious weirdos. When we hear of libraries whose books have been challenged, our hackles raise and we express righteous indignation against the backwards moralist who would dare target a particular work—forgetting that we live peaceably day-in and day-out with the MPAA, an organization that with capricious arbitration polices the availability of the cinematic literature.

We should not be governed by fear. We should take every opportunity to approach the news of a "banned" book rationally. We should examine what *banned* means in the reported instance. We should inquire whether the issue is an outright ban (as in several cases involving "adult" comics in Canada and Australia) or if it's merely a lone challenger to a school system's library. Or maybe it's even a simple issue of shelving a book like *Blankets* in the children's section of a library. We need to consider the reason for the challenge. Was it for racially charged language, as in *Huckleberry Finn*'s era-appropriate use of "nigger"? Was it for ideological differences, such as Athanasius' conflagration of books that strayed from his view of orthodoxy? Or was it for what a society deems to be obscene content, as when *Lady Chatterly's Lover* encountered abiding censorship across the English-speaking world? The nature of the charge, the environment in which the challenge was given, and the recommended sanction are essential in considering the legitimacy of our concern for the removal of books.

So it was with interest that I read that the second book on the ALA's list of most challenged literature last year was Kim Dong Hwa's *Colors* trilogy (made of of *The Color of Earth*, *The Color of Water*, and *The Color of Heaven*). The Korean series had been on my to-read queue for a bit over a year now, but new releases and returning to old favourites seemed to be forever pushing it back. When I saw that it had been so frequently challenged, I thought it would make a great second half of my Banned Books Week week of reviewing. And it would have been. Unfortunately,¹ *Building Stories* happened and there was no longer any reason to hope that I'd get around to the books in anything resembling a timely manner. Still, after *Building Stories* finally unsunk its tenterhooks from my span of attention, I had Kim's trilogy waiting and though it's no longer timely, I don't care. I've thrown caution to the wind to bring you the PG-est book about teens discovering the sexiness of sex ever.

[I'm with you Ehwa. That girl is the crazy sauce.]

Which is, apparently the chief reason this series has been challenged over and over again. The teens being teens part, not the PG-ness of the books. It seems those who would challenge the book are happy to overlook how very little hard knowledge Kim's trilogy could impart on those who don't already know what he's talking about.

Kim cloaks his coming-of-sexual-age story in Mather-Natural metaphor. Flowers and beetles and butterflies and summer breezes and fresh rains and chestnuts. These kinds of images dominate both the visual and textual space of Kim's story. There is not a single discussion of the male-female dynamic (whether overtly sexual or merely in regard to the difference between the sexes) that doesn't wade chest high in rather florid use of natural imagery. Everything is so very poetic—and therefore, so very obscured.

You know how in Austen Powers, Elizabeth Hurley holds halved melons in front of her chest? Or obscures her breasts by pouring from a pitcher of milk? It's like that but less obvious. A chili pepper stands in for a little boy's penis.² A lone persimmon seed plays the part of the little man in the boat. Gourd flowers represent a woman's sexy feelings in the night. There's all kinds of talk about blooming and blossoming and the rejuvenation of the spring rains. In one phantastic episode, a man skinny dips in a lushly reeded pond nestled sweetly between two softly rolling hills. In fact, while every chapter has its governing metaphor which gets played with throughout, chapters generally also have between one and five additional metaphors going on at the same time.

Kim's book is all about avoidance.

[I know some men who are like naked tiger lilies in their hearts too. But let's not dwell on it.]

The *Colors* trilogy is the story of Ehwa's awakening to her womanhood, specifically in its physical presence as a distinction between the male and female bodies. At the start of *The Color of Earth*, Ehwa is seven and first encounters penises when she sees some neighbourhood boys peeing off an embankment. This begins a series of conversations with her mother, a widowed innkeeper with a reputation for being the town tart (even though she's entirely monogamous for the space of the trilogy). Through these dialogues and over the course of the next decade, Ehwa's mother gradually unveils both the physical and emotional use for Ehwa's womanhood. But never directly. Her mother speaks in deep metaphor and it's almost entirely up to a sexually precocious neighbourhood girl, Bongsoon, to introduce Ehwa to the actual physiology of her own parts and

pieces.

*[I'm going to pretend I have no idea what you guys are talking about.
Actually, that might be true.]*

The mother/daughter relationship here is fascinating to consider as a template for child-rearing. This takes place probably³ at the end of the 19th century in Korea, so obviously there are going to be any number of cultural differences and things the contemporary Western reader will find primitive or distasteful (such as the clear patriarchy advocated in the mother's advice). The mother is clearly in a position of authority over Ehwa, but simultaneously cultivates a friendship based on trust and love. Ehwa, for her part, trusts her mother much more readily than I think many contemporary children would rely on and confide in their own parents. At the same time, she can be canny and withdrawn—especially if she has been embarrassed by her actions (such as when tricked into revealing her crushes on two local boys). I'm pretty sure that the care invested in the relationship between Ehwa and her mother was my favourite part of the books.

Not being a fan of poetry in its textual form, I came to find that visual poetry doesn't strike me so deeply either and much of the probable delight of Kim's series was lost on me. Certainly many of the images were carefully considered and, taken on their own, I found myself admiring their beauty. I simply (and I feel somewhat the Philistine for admitting this) often grew bored in their preponderance. I wanted to get back to the dialogue and all its glittering metaphorical excess.

[Poor dumb fireman.]

As to the sexuality in these books (from which most of its challenges are reported to have grown), it's pretty tame. The MPAA is pretty arbitrary in its rating system, but if this was a movie in the pre-PG13 '80s, it would almost certainly merit a PG rating. Today, it'd probably sit pretty at a PG13. This is just about the most explicit image in the book. And regardless, Kim's story of this girl (based apparently on his mom's or grandmother's own life story) is never titillating.⁴

Did these books merit their challenges? Probably not. I suppose if they were shelved in the children's section next to *Bone* and *Tintin* and *The Life and Times of Scrooge McDuck*, that would have been an awkward taxonomy. But these would be perfectly at home in Young Adults or, as my library shelves them, in Teen. It's not as if the broad approach in Kim's book will have teenage boys furiously googling "persimmon seed girls -fruit" while their parents are at Bible Study.

Note

I remembered a while back reading some of the entries in a Manga Movable Feast that concerned Kim's books. They were largely negative and felt Kim's focus on Ehwa's sexual awakening and the way it is portrayed to be generally sexist and promoting of male fantasy. I approached the books believing I'd be reading a particularly chauvinist work as well as something scandalous enough to be The Second Most Challenged Book of 2011. It felt bizarre to have such a vastly different reading experience on both counts.

While I can see someone being perturbed by Kim's single-minded focus on conversations that chart solely the track of Ehwa's evolution from girl to woman, really, I don't think any reader should come away from the story imagining that's all Kim believes there was to Ehwa's life. More, it's just that's the story he was telling.

Likewise some people might be bothered by *Oishinbo*'s deliberate and unswerving attention to talking only about food All The Time, but that's the story Kariya and Hanasaki are telling so get off their backs already. I think to be disappointed that Kim doesn't spend more time developing the rest of Ehwa's life and interests is less to be unhappy with this particular book and more to be unhappy with the particular subgenre this book occupies. Which is fair. I just want us to be clear about what bothers us.

In any case, I recommend reading some of the criticism of this book and taking in a number of perspectives. While I believe that many of Michelle and Melinda's complaints listed in the article linked above (and in their other writings on the books) are based on probably rushed readings of the text⁵ ⁵ In the hyperbolically titled "The Color of Hate" Melinda ridicules a page in which Ehwa's mother waxes metaphorical while wondering when a wandering butterfly might alight on her daughter for rest, saying that the page is about "attracting penises butterflies penises." The thing is though: the books never use butterflies as anything other than metaphors for men and the joy romantic relationships with those men might bring. There are other metaphors for the phallus, for sure, but that Melinda misreads here made me distrust her narrative. Especially when one is already unhappy with a story, it's easy to force uncharitable readings on a text. I do it and you do it—and I believe this is what happened here. , they do still have a number of interesting criticisms to contribute.

Footnotes

- 1) You'll understand here, I hope, that when I say "unfortunately," I'm actually just lying to you. There was nothing unfortunate about reading/experiencing/being mauled by Chris Ware's behemoth. Sorry, Dong Hwa. Sorry.
- 2) Okay, maybe not a whole lot less obvious.
- 3) I believe this is right but it may also be set in the early 20th century. There is nothing overt within the text to give away its precise setting.
- 4) I suppose it might prompt girls to figure out where their persimmon seed is, but *C'mon, it's not like those exist anyway...*

[Review Courtesy of Good Ok Bad]

Preethi says

There is something about Mothers and daughters and the friendship they get to share. To show that delicately and the differences they have in personality and yet the closeness they share, so beautifully with an almost lyrical tone must be the work of a master artist and storyteller.

Each panel is like a painting - extremely beautiful, detailed and expressive. And it feels like you could hang each page on a wall because it is a thing of beauty. Tearing your eyes away from each page will be an ordeal, trust me!

Warm, light, happy and contented is what this book made me feel. Books like this reaffirm my belief that

graphic novel as a medium does more to storytelling than plain words, by showing the reader something beautiful they needn't and couldn't imagine.

The subject itself is so feminist set in a traditional backdrop reminding us all about the countless women who would've spent their lives waiting like Ehwa's mother... Cannot wait to get to part 2!

Meagan says

Well, I don't need to wonder why this landed on the frequently challenged books list anymore. Any book that deals with puberty and sexual development is well-nigh doomed to find a place in Banned Books Week.

What I find so ironic about this book is that I question how broad an audience it would have found in this country in the first place if it weren't for the outcry. I certainly wouldn't have picked it up. (Oh, book banners. The stuff you get me to read.) While a lot of the illustrations are truly beautiful, I didn't really connect with the story. It could be a cultural thing, or it could just be that I no longer find young people learning about all the puberty stuff all that compelling. Or even really all that interesting. It was an awkward thing to live through - I don't need to read about other people's awkward too.

At any rate. Because of the book banners' outcry I'm sure this will have a place on the shelf much longer than it might have. Congrats, guys! Way to find a book new readers!

Sweetdhee says

gelisah....

ehwa

gelisah saat kutemukan adanya perbedaan
ada sesuatu yang mereka punya
kami tidak
ada sesuatu yang kami punya
mereka tidak

gelisah saat kudengar nyanyian sumbang
yang mengandaikan ia bagaikan kumbang
TIDAK!!
ia bukan kumbang
ia adalah bunga labu
yang aromanya tertebar menarik perhatian
tapi hanya untuk yang tertuju
agar selalu merindukannya
dan selalu kembali dengan luapan cinta

gelisah
di tengah hujan kebimbangan meraja
hollyhock yang tumbuh perlakan

telah terselimuti tiger lily yang merekah di seluruh pegunungan
dan saat Camellia membawa perpisahan
aku makin gelisah

aku mulai ranum merekah
dan hujan pun kembali menyentuh dasar hati
memaksaku untuk menerbarkan bibit tiger lily yang baru

namun ternyata
ada akar yang harus kupangkas
agar bibit itu bisa mulai tumbuh segar

benarkah dia akan tumbuh segar?
atau hanya akan pergi karena akar lama tak benar2 terpangkas?
akankah hujan membawa jawaban?

gelisah...

dhee

aku melihat dua insan polos yang guratannya berada di halaman awal
aku jatuh cinta pada kegelisahan di raut wajah mereka

namun semakin carik demi carik kertas ini tersibak,
alih-alih, aku yang menjadi gelisah

entah karena ornamen-ornamen sakral perempuan yang diceritakan dengan kepolosan yang indah namun
menggelikan

entah karena tiap bingkai yang tercipta dari gambar-gambar indahnya
entah karena melimpahnya puisi tentang kami,
wanita
bunga
hujan
dan kegelisahan kami

entah..
yang jelas aku gelisah
karenamu kah?
entah..

asiiik, dikasih seorang teman yang baik hati
makasih yaaa
blush-blush

Bill says

I found myself marveling at some of the illustration in this book while being perplexed at a considerable amount of it. I never could seem to come to terms with what Kim was doing with the combination of simple (and at times what seemed to me simplistic) drawings and the elaborate scenes of nature and the countryside that recur throughout.

What I found most unsatisfying was the storyline. Is this all there was to these two people's lives--thinking about men? I haven't done much looking around for other reviews of this book (which gets pretty high ratings overall), so I am not sure what others have thought of this man's take on these women's sexual and gender perspectives.

I also found the insertion of the recurring two crude men a cumbersome and obvious/stereotyped way of addressing traditional/macho roles. I felt that this device oversimplified gender roles because these two are such obvious targets.

In all, I was largely unmoved by these characters and their situations. I'll give the next in the series a try though. I remember sitting through part 1 of Kobayashi's *The Human Condition* and thinking why am I going to continue through 7 more hours of this only to be absolutely mesmerized by it as a magnificent film experience by the time it was over. So, maybe something will grab me more in the subsequent pages of this rather epic series.

lita says

"Untuk apa membeli sesuatu yang pasti akan mati" – The Painted Veil

Sebagai penggemar bunga, saya tak pernah bisa memberi jawaban pasti bila ada teman yang menanyakan kegemaran saya ini. Terutama bagi teman-teman yang tahu kalau saya berlangganan bunga. Setiap lima hari sekali, satu buket besar bunga pasti akan datang ke rumah, yang kemudian saya taruh dalam vas-vas besar di beberapa sudut. Sebuah pemborosan di mata beberapa teman yang tak suka dengan bunga.

Tapi kemudian, buku *Warna Tanah* ini memberi ide bagaimana saya menjawabnya:

Bunga dan wanita tak ada bedanya. Wanita juga merekah. Kau bisa melihat tanda-tandanya. Melihat bagaimana tubuhnya berayun seperti ranting-ranting lentur pohon dedalu di bulan Juni.

Bunga bisa menjadi simbol bagi pribadi seorang perempuan. Ehwa, tokoh utama dari cerita ini, digambarkan sebagai sekuntum bunga *hollyhock*:

Ehwa sekarang berumur 13 tahun. Ia menjelma jadi sekuntum bunga, menggetarkan udara. Mulai sekarang, setiap kali basah kuyup oleh hujan, tubuhmu akan merekah bagaikan kelopak merah jambu bunga hollyhock.

Sementara bagi ibu Ehwa, janda pemilik kedai minum yang selalu digoda oleh pelanggannya, bunga labu adalah bunga yang tepat untuk merepresentasikan dirinya:

Di dalam sekuntum bunga labu/ Kerinduan lebih luas daripada nirwana/ Di dalam sekuntum bunga labu/ Penantian lebih lama daripada malam/ Di puncak gerbang/ Di puncak genting/ Sebuah lentera dinyalakan/ Seorang wanita siap dengan dandanannya dan menantikan sang kekasih dengan penuh hasrat.

Bunga juga bisa mewakili kekerasan hati perempuan yang jatuh cinta namun bertepuk sebelah tangan:

Kamelia benar-benar bunga yang tahan cuaca. Mereka nyaris kelihatan seolah-olah begitu tak sabar menantikan seseorang. Namun mereka sangat lelah dengan penantian itu hingga berubah jadi merah. Itu sebabnya Kamelia juga bunga yang konyol – kamelia satu-satunya bunga yang cintanya bertepuk sebelah tangan. Tak peduli betapa indah bunga kamelia menghias dirinya, tak satu pun kupu-kupu akan mendarat di kelopaknya, bahkan sampai kuntum bunga terakhir telah merekah. Ketika kupu-kupu keluar, bunga-bunga ini sudah terlelap. Sebab hanya ketika kupu-kupu tertidur bunga-bunga ini menjadi hidup.

Puisi demi puisi mengalir dan menjalin satu cerita dalam buku ini. Tidak hanya tentang bunga, tapi juga tentang hujan:

Bukan hanya hujan yang berderai di luar. Melainkan sungguh suara langkah kaki seseorang. Pasti begitu. Jika tidak, bagaimana aku dapat menjelaskan kegelisahan yang kurasakan di dalam hatiku dari suara hujan musim semi ini?.

Semua simbol yang hadir dalam cerita ini menjelaskan diri dan perasaan perempuan secara apik. Bahkan tentang hasrat dan bagian tubuh paling pribadi mereka. Sehingga saya tak segan untuk merekomendasikan buku ini sebagai bahan pendidikan seks untuk anak-anak. Karena, simbol-simbol yang digambarkan dalam buku ini bisa menjelaskan hubungan antara laki-laki dan perempuan secara tersirat, namun jelas maknanya.

Selain bunga dan hujan, ada satu hal lagi yang membuat saya jatuh hati pada buku ini: resep lulur dari kacang merah tampaknya boleh juga buat dicoba...hehehe...(lits)

Hadiyah ultah dari Roos. Makasi yaaaaaa :)*peluk-peluk*

Ceritanya baguuus....tapi musti baca sekali lagi buat bisa bikin repiu :P

Makasi ya, Roos. Me like-me like *niruin gaya Momo: lovestruck-lovestruck*

Damon says

Quite a sweet story. A lot of flowers but all in black and white illustrations.

nat says

Aku suka membaca novel grafis. Namun aku cenderung membacanya lebih lama dibanding membaca novel biasa, karena menikmati guratan-guratan gambarnya.

Novel ini indah, mengguratkan karakter-karakter di dalamnya dengan lembut, tak banyak arsiran atau goresan, lebih berupa garis-garis yang sekali jadi. Aku tak terampil menggambar, namun aku menikmati gambar dan lukisan, walaupun bukan dengan mata seorang kritikus seni.

Kim Dong Hwa awalnya kusangka adalah seorang perempuan, karena pendekatan feminisnya dalam menulis novel ini. Setelah membacanya hingga tuntas, aku baru tahu jika dia adalah seorang lelaki, yang ternyata begitu menyelami sisi-sisi emosional seorang perempuan dan isyarat-isyarat fisik dari seorang perempuan, ditinjau dari sudut pandang lelaki.

Sosok lelaki ditampilkannya secara berimbang dalam novel seri pertama ini. Ada lelaki yang suka mengumbar kata-kata kurang sopan saat melihat perempuan yang memukau secara fisik, ada lelaki yang mampu menaklukkan perempuan dari keindahan tutur kata dan pemikirannya, ada lelaki muda yang baru mengenal wanita hingga mulai terbuai dalam perasaan yang seharusnya tidak dia pelihara sebagai biksuni muda, dan ada lelaki terpelajar yang memukau banyak perempuan muda.

Sosok perempuan dewasa ada dalam ibu Ehwa yang walaupun seorang janda ditinggal pergi oleh suaminya, mampu membesar Ehwa dengan cara yang baik, asuhan yang benar, kelembutan bersikap, dan cinta yang ternyata masih ada -- dipendam dan ditumbuhkannya pada seorang yang tak disangka.

Ehwa tumbuh dalam lingkungan desa yang tenang, dengan seorang Ibu penyayang dan teman-teman bermain yang usil dan mulai bertambah nakal menjelang remaja. Namun Ehwa tetap memiliki kepolaan dan ketulusan, hingga akhirnya bunga-bunga di hatinya mulai bermekaran saat ia mengenal 2 pria muda dalam masa remajanya.

Perempuan atau wanita itu seperti bunga..

Aku teringat saat masih beranjak remaja, aku mencari-cari bunga apa yang akan menjadi bunga favoritku ? Aku rasa banyak perempuan muda yang memikirkan ini saat masa kanak-kanaknya. Ibuku menyukai lily putih. Banyak perempuan menyukai mawar, namun entah mengapa aku tidak terlalu menggemari mawar. Akhirnya aku memilih bunga sederhana sebagai bunga favorit... Alasannya karena bunga itu sederhana..he..he..

Aku sangat menikmati novel grafis ini. Bagaimana Ehwa bertumbuh musim demi musim menjadi lebih dewasa...dengan berbagai isu seputar kewanitaan di sekitarnya..dengan pergumulannya sendiri mencari makna cinta dan belajar mengenali lingkungannya..

Tak sabar menunggu seri selanjutnya, "Warna Air" :)

Roos says

Buku ini membuatku merindukan seseorang yang masih dalam mimpiku. Buku ini juga membuatku merindukan aroma tanah saat bercengkerama dengan hujan, serta wanginya bunga-bunga yang bermekaran di setiap musimnya.

KIM DONG HWA. Pertama membaca buku Graphic Novel seri Chinken Soup, langsung membuatku jatuh cinta pada karya-karya ilustrasinya. Terkenal akan kemampuannya di dunia *Manhwa* atau *Manga* di Jepang. Pak Kim, tidak saja menyajikan gambar yang cantik tapi juga kisah yang menyentuh di buku Warna Tanah ini, dan ternyata Trilogi (dengan Warna Air dan Warna Surga), mempersempitkan proses kedewasaan baik pikiran dan tubuh seorang perempuan dari kecil hingga belasan. Dan Pak Kim, kembali membuatku makin mengagumi dan mencintainya.

Kisah unik mengenai kedalaman ikatan antara si gadis kecil Ehwa dan Ibunya seorang Janda di Namwon, membuatku terkagum-kagum. Mereka bertumbuh dan berubah seiring berjalannya musim-musim yang mereka hadapi, saling mendukung satu sama lain saat menghadapi tetangga-tetangga ataupun pelanggan kedai minum si Ibu yang tidak pernah ramah.

Aku menyukai gambar cantik Ehwa juga bunga-bunga, pohon, kupu-kupu, tanah dan hujan di buku ini. Bisa dibilang Pak Kim melukis kehidupan para perempuan disini dengan bunga berikut hujan. Kisahnya bertutur dengan kata-kata yang indah, berbunga-bunga tanpa meninggalkan kesan yang berlebihan. Ada beberapa dialog antara Ehwa dan Ibunya yang bagus atau lebih tepatnya cantik dan pintar seperti:

Wanita dan bunga hanya merekah ketika mereka mendambakan sesuatu atau seseorang. (Hal.110)

Atau Ibu Ehwa yang menanam Tanaman Labu dan selalu menyukai bunganya.

Dari jutaan bunga di dunia, tak ada yang seperti bunga labu. Bunga labu merekah hanya ketika semua orang telah tertidur. Menghias dirinya dengan warna putih yang diciptakan debu bulan, bunga labu dengan penuh hasrat menantikan kekasihnya sepanjang malam. (Hal.76)

Juga saat Ibu Ehwa mendapati anak gadisnya yang selalu gundah setiap kali melihat bunga *Tiger Lily*.

Tiger lily adalah satu-satunya bunga yang dengan senang hati menghadap ke arah matahari dan mekar meskipun tidak ada siapa-siapa di sekatnya untuk menyaksikan. (Hal.111). Aku juga sangat suka kata-kata Ibu Ehwa yang ini: Kalau kau tahu-tahu menyukai bunga, itu artinya ada rahasia di dalam hatimu.

Juga percakapan Kakek Dorbang dengan Ehwa mengenai Pohon Ginko di Hal.45, *Pohon ginko sangat menakjupkan. Hanya dengan menatap si pohon lelaki di sana, pohon perempuan ini langsung berbuah.. Nah loh, bisa bayangan apa yang ada di pikiran Ehwa kecil mendengar kata-kata si kakek ini khan?*

Ehhhhmm, entahlah tapi perasaan jadi berbunga-bunga setiap kali membaca buku ini, tidak bisa ditaruh semenit pun, selama perjalanan ke Depok hari minggu kemarin, pikiran selalu tertuju pada buku ini. Pokoknya buku yang bagus. Tidak sabar menunggu buku kedua dan ketiganya... Semoga tidak lama.

Dan sebagai penutup sebait puisi dariku,
Kusimpan sepiku, di gurun, di kaki gunung, dan di bayang-bayang wajahmu..

Sekian, selamat hunting dan membaca bukunya!
