

BOOK REVIEW OF *CEWEK PALING BADUNG DI SEKOLAH*

by Enid Blyton

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I. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Writing

A children adventure novel by Enid Blyton, *Cewek Paling Badung di Sekolah*, the Indonesian version, caught the writer's attention from its unique cover and the title. This unique cover and title made the writer curious about the story of the book. *Cewek Paling Badung di Sekolah* told us about an experience of a little girl named Elizabeth Allen. This book also gave some explanations about everything happened to Elizabeth in school. The reason for choosing this book as the final project is due to its good messages, moral values, and social values that are good for our life. Book is one of the best media to send messages and information to others. We can learn a lot about life from this book. This book teaches us to respect others. We can not only think about ourselves. So the writer tries to review this book to improve his skill in American Studies project. The writer can learn a lot of things and values from this book because this is a good book to read.

1.2. Objective of the Writing

- **To give summary of *Cewek Paling Badung di Sekolah***

The summary of *Cewek Paling Badung di Sekolah* will explain the reader about some important events that happened in this book. The summary also will help the reader to understand what happened inside the

story of the book. Hence, the reader will find it easy to understand.

- **To review *Cewek Paling Badung di Sekolah*, especially to give explanation about the values inside this book**

Since the unique cover and the title of the novel caught the writer's attention, the writer decided to review the book to know whether the unique cover and the title have the same uniqueness as the story of the book. The review includes the moral values that we can learn from this book because mostly in every children book has moral values to teach for the reader. There are also useful things that are beneficial for our lives. In doing so, the writer would reveal the strengths and the weakness of the book in order to know whether *Cewek Paling Badung di Sekolah* is a good book to read or not.

1.3. Short Biography of the Writer

Born in 1897 in South London, Enid Mary Blyton was the eldest of three children, and showed an early interest in music and reading. She was educated at St. Christopher's School, Beckenham, and - having decided not to pursue her music - at Ipswich High School, where she trained as a kindergarten teacher. She taught for five years before her 1924 marriage to editor Hugh Pollock, with whom she had two daughters. This marriage ended in divorce, and

Blyton remarried in 1943, to surgeon Kenneth Fraser Darrell Waters. She died in 1968, one year after her second husband's death.

Enid Blyton was a prolific author of children's books, who penned an estimated 800 books over about 40 years. Her stories were often either children's adventure and mystery stories, or fantasies involving magic. Notable series include: The Famous Five, The Secret Seven, The Five Find-Outers, Noddy, The Wishing Chair, Mallory Towers, and St. Clare's.

According to the Index Translationum, Blyton was the fifth most popular author in the world in 2007, coming after Lenin but ahead of Shakespeare.

II. SUMMARY OF THE BOOK

The Novel of *Cewek Paling Badung di Sekolah* told us about an adventure of a girl named Elizabeth Allen. She was a very beautiful, smart, and rich girl but she was very naughty because she was the only child of her parents.. All of her homeschooling teachers and her babysitter, Ms. Scott, complained about how naughty she was. Then her parents decided to send her to a boarding school called Whyteleafe. Whyteleafe was a very fine school, all children loved it, except Elizabeth. Her adventures began here, at Whyteleafe.

Whyteleafe had unique rules, such as the students only got two shillings of pocket money everyweek, the students who got money from their parents had to put their money into the *Big Box*. Besides the school also held a Grand Meeting once a week, the purpose

was to listen to every complaint and glide from each student. If there was a student that made a mistake, the Grand Meeting would give punishment to pay the fine. The rules looked very special because the Headmaster was not the person who gave penalty but the students themselves.

Actually, Elizabeth was a smart girl. In arithmetic, she was able to read and spell very well even Ms. Ranger, her arithmetic teacher admired her. But she remembered to be naughty, soon she threw eraser and little folded paper to her friends. When she threw it, a paper missed and hit Ms. Ranger. Ms. Ranger got angry and Elizabeth had to go out from her class.

The first Grand Meeting came. At first, Elizabeth didn't want to attend, but she was curious about the meeting and decided to attend it. When the meeting was in progress, Elizabeth made a mischief. She didn't put her money into the Big Box. Ruth, one of Elizabeth friend, took Elizabeth wallet and put her money into the box. For the penalty, Elizabeth didn't get any pocket money for this week. Day after day, Elizabeth kept on her plan. She will make a mischief if there was a chance. Almost every student hated and intimidated to tell her to the Grand Meeting.

The second Grand Meeting came. Elizabeth realized that she had to get the punishment because was very naughty and also went to the village alone, it means that she broke the rule. She acted that she did not care about it, but actually she had to admit that the school made her happy because she finally had a best friend

and she loved many activities in school such as drawing, playing music, and riding horse. The other students told the judges that Elizabeth had been a very bad girl, and she deserved to get some punishments. But the judges declined, saying that the true cause of Elizabeth's amoral behaviors were because of her uneducated parents. Elizabeth got angry when she heard what the judges had said about her parents, and she promised them that she would start being the most polite girl in school instead of being the naughtiest one, to prove to them that what they had said about her parents were wrong. And the judges promised her in return that she would be sent home immediately after she had accomplished her mission on being the best student in school. Elizabeth got punishments from school, she didn't get pocket money, and things that made her sad that she couldn't attend her favorite classes.

Elizabeth's behaviors grew better by the days. The other students had started to like her, and the number of friends that she had increased dramatically. She also befriend her prefect friend, Nora, and soon the whole school was also friends with her. The judges saw the progress that she had made, and they finally decided to fulfill Elizabeth's wish; to be sent home straight away to her family. So when the last meeting was held, the judges would ask Elizabeth whether she wanted to leave this school or not.

The last Grand Meeting before the last mid semester held. The judges asked Elizabeth whether she wanted to leave this school or

not. Surprisingly, Elizabeth told them that she wanted to stay, saying that she loved this school and did not want to part from any of her new friends. At the end of the semester, when her mother came to pick her up, Elizabeth told her that she still wanted to go to Whyteleafe next year. Her mother was very stunned at the drastic changes of her daughter's attitudes, but nonetheless, she was very pleased. Finally, Elizabeth Allen, who used to be the naughtiest girl in her school, was now the honor student of Whyteleafe. The story ended when Elizabeth, Joan, and both of their mother took a walk together in mid semester holiday.

III. REVIEW OF THE BOOK

3.1. Theme

Theme is a common thread or repeated idea that is incorporated throughout a literary work. A theme is a thought or idea the author presents to the reader that may be deep, difficult to understand, or even moralistic. The major theme of the book itself was about the mischieves done by the main character, Elizabeth Allen. Actually, Elizabeth was a nice and smart girl. She was naughty because her parents spoiled her so much as the only child. Her parents sent her to a boarding school named Whyteleafe. Then she did some mischieves in order to make the school drop her out because she did not like to study at Whyteleafe.

3.2. The Strengths of the Book

3.2.1. The Cover of the Book

Cover is the outside part of the book that usually made of thicker paper. This is the front part of the book. The cover is one of the most important parts in book because it

represents the story of the book. The cover can tell the reader about how is the story inside the book.

In *Cewek Paling Badung di Sekolah*, the cover is created very unique and attractive. The author puts a background with blue colour which represents that it is an attractive book. Blue like a fantasy, blue like a sky, and blue like happiness. Blue is a bright color for a bright story especially for children story because children like bright colours. The ability of bright colors to grab a person's attention maybe a naturally programmed reaction in both children and adults.

Besides, the cover also made like children style. The unique picture, a little girl in front of a school. The picture made like a hand drawing. There is a little girl who fold her hands and look at the school. Her face showed that she is very optimistic with a little smile like she plans to do something in school. This will make the people who look this book asked themselves. What will she do? What will happen to her? This is the great idea to catch people's attention to read this book. Like the book said, "If you want to know deeper about me, you have to read me." This means that the story inside the book will be very interesting. It will attract people curious and want to read the book because most people judge the book from its cover.

The writer thinks that he loves this book at the first sight. The cover is one of the strengths of this book. It is the most important selling components to this book. It attracts young reader with its bright color and fun character. If children do not

like the cover, they probably will not read this book. The design of beloved books they read over and over again will help strengthen their reading and vocabulary skills.

3.2.2. The Title of The Book

The title also considered as one of the most important think to attract people to read a book. Love at the first sight also can be caused by the title of the book. More interesting title the authors made, more reader they will get. The writer thinks the title *Cewek Paling Badung di Sekolah* is a good title to get people's attention. This will be very interesting for people to read and to follow the story. The title also printed like a hand writing not in formal style. The author printed the title with fun character, white color in front of the blue background. Perfect color and size of the title give more attention to the people who see it. The title also easy to read although we are six feet away. Unique style for unique story. This is showed that the author was a very creative person. The people who see the title will guess about what happened before reading the book after they saw the title. What a great idea that the author has. This is worked on the writer because the writer also attracted to read the book after seeing the title.

The title '*Cewek Paling Badung di Sekolah*' looks very good because it will make people curious about it and persuade them to buy and read the book. It gives more attention to the buyer, if they do not like the title, they will not look any closer at the book. The title not only represents the book's

contents, but is clear and comprehensible to the potential buyer. By reading the title, children will use their imagination to guess what will happen to the character. It will improve children imagination.

3.2.3. Major Values in *Cewek Paling Badung di Sekolah*

There are some values in *Cewek Paling Badung di Sekolah* that the author wants to tell to the reader. First, the personality of the children can be affected from their environment. Basically, Elizabeth was a kind and smart girl. She was beautiful and like to help the other. She also cares about her animals. She became a naughty girl because her parents spoiled her so much. She used to be very naughty and selfish. Her naughtiness was a result from her spoiling parents. *“Kau terlalu manja. Kau pikir kau boleh berbuat apa saja sekehendak hatimu. Memang, Kau anak tunggal. Ayahmu dan aku terlalu mencintaimu, terlalu banyak memberimu apa saja yang kau minta, terlalu banyak memberimu kebebasan.”* (pg 8). After Elizabeth studied in Whyteleafe, she slowly changed into a polite girl, respect her friends, and like to help the other. She didn't a selfish girl anymore. This is showed that school could change someone personality. *“Elizabeth, Kau sungguh tampak berubah,” kata Nyonya Allen akhirnya.* (pg 259)

Second, the author wants to say that education is very important. We not only get education from school but school also teaches us how to share with the other, to make friends, to respect, and to help others. There are many new things that we can find

in school. We also can get many new friends and experiences.

Third, if we have a wish, we had to fulfill it. We have to struggle in order to reach what we hope, to reach our destiny. Here, in Whyteleafe, Elizabeth only thought about her purpose, to get out from the school because she thought this school was uncomfortable for her and she did not like this school. She couldn't do anything she wants. I think this is not a good wish. But we should not look from the wish. We have to look from Elizabeth's struggle to fill it. She had to be a nice and kind person in school as really she was. When she could become the nice and kind girl in school, the Grand Meeting would ask her whether she wanted to go from school and let her go. And she really became a nice and kind girl. This showed that if we had a dream, anything would be possible to happen. *“Kita akan berkata pada Elizabeth bahwa tentu saja ia boleh meninggalkan kita di akhir tengah semester nanti kalau dia benar-benar merasa tidak bahagia disini dan mengatakan hal itu kepada kita di Rapat Besar terakhir nanti. Untuk itu ia tak usah kasar, badung, bandel, atau bengal. Ia harus bersikap baik, belajar giat, dan bekerja sebaik-baiknya, mengerjakan apa saja yang disukainya. Sebab kita akan dengan senang hati melepasnya pergi, kalau benar-benar itu yang dikehendakinya.”* (pg 145)

In addition, this book also explained about how other people are very important to us. We have to respect other people because we need other people to do our activities. We will always connect to them and can

not live without them. In the story, Joan always looked sad because she thought that her parents did not love her. When she met Elizabeth and became best friend, she did not look sad anymore. Elizabeth always helped her and accompanied her everytime she needed. Their friendship made them better.

3.2.4. Minor Values in *Cewek Paling Badung di Sekolah*

There were also some minor values inside the story. The first one was about friendship. Although Elizabeth wanted to be a naughty girl but actually she was a kind person. She didn't like to see someone sad. This is showed when she became a good friend with Joan, her roommate, that never got affection from her parents. Joan always looked sad and sometimes she cried when she thought about her parents. Elizabeth always help Joan and cheer her up. She always helped Joan in everything included in arithmetic. Elizabeth also gave a surprise when Joan have a birthday. She made the relationship between Joan and her mother better.

The second minor values was about family. Elizabeth who used to be very naughty still loved her parents so much. She became very angry when the students pointed her parents as the cause of her mischiefness. And she was willing to change her character as an evidence that her parents teach the right things.

The last minor values was about social theme. This was about Elizabeth that gave her love to take care some animals. She loved animal so much and took care of them carefully. Although she was selfish

but she could show that she had a soft heart, kind, and liked to help others.

3.3. The Criticisms of the Book

Actually the writer would say that this book does not have any weakness. However, there are a few criticisms about this book. *The Naughtiest Girl in the School* is very much a Blyton book in its style. The writing is not demanding, or even very interesting: Elizabeth always seems to express anger by stamping her foot, and the vocabulary is extremely limited. The novel almost describes the setting in school. The novel also does not mention all the characteristics of the characters. For example there isn't any further information about Hellen. Ms. Scott, Elizabeth's babysitter also only said in the beginning of the story.

The end of the story is only until the mid semester holiday. The reader does not have information about Elizabeth's behavior in the end of her first semester. Can she be a clever student in school or not and can she play at the concert in the end of the semester. The reader will be very curious about this but it is not written in this book.

IV. CONCLUSION

The writer thinks that *Cewek Paling Badung di Sekolah* is one of the greatest novels. This novel has many aspects that will attract people to read it. The unique cover of the novel makes people want to know how the story goes on in the novel. Besides the title '*Cewek Paling Badung di Sekolah*' also makes the different angle in life because usually the naughty person was a boy. How can a girl do something that is usually done by a boy especially in

school. This is very interesting to read. The writer thinks that the author of the novel is a very creative person.

When the writer looked inside the story, there were also some moral values that the author wanted to tell to the reader. The first one is about naughtiness. Elizabeth, the main character of the story was a naughty girl in school. Her naughtiness here because her parents spoiled her so much. Actually Elizabeth was a kind and nice girl. She became a naughty girl in order to make the school drop her out but she was wrong, her naughtiness made some difficulties for her. And she had to change her character in school.

The second was about friendship. Although Elizabeth was a naughty and selfish girl, she had a best friend in school, Joan. Elizabeth was a nice girl and liked to help the other. Joan always looked sad and sometimes cried because she didn't get affection from her parents. Elizabeth always helped her and make her happy. They became a best friend.

The last was about social theme. The novel said that the main character, Elizabeth liked to help her friend, especially Joan. She helped her to make Joan happy because Joan always looked sad.

In conclusion, the writer will say that this is a good novel to read. Beside it is an interesting story, it also has many moral values good for children. Children can learn that education in school is very important. School does not only give good education but also a lot of friends.

The moral value shown in the story is what we do is sometimes not like our desire. We have to respect other people around us because we need them to do everything in our life. In every condition we also need friend. Because of that if we look from the positive side, "Cewek Paling Badung di Sekolah" is a good book to read by children because it can give positive value to them

Although there are some naughtiness done by the main character, but it can be a valuable lesson for us. On the other hand, there are some positive values behind that. Children will know the meaning of friends and other people around them.

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