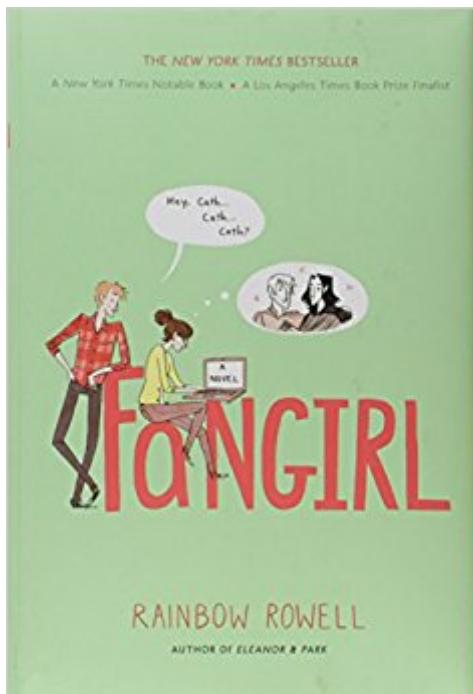


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# Fangirl: A Novel



## **Synopsis**

In Rainbow Rowell's Fangirl, Cath is a Simon Snow fan. Okay, the whole world is a Simon Snow fan, but for Cath, being a fan is her life--and she's really good at it. She and her twin sister, Wren, ensconced themselves in the Simon Snow series when they were just kids; it's what got them through their mother leaving. Reading. Rereading. Hanging out in Simon Snow forums, writing Simon Snow fan fiction, dressing up like the characters for every movie premiere. Cath's sister has mostly grown away from fandom, but Cath can't let go. She doesn't want to. Now that they're going to college, Wren has told Cath she doesn't want to be roommates. Cath is on her own, completely outside of her comfort zone. She's got a surly roommate with a charming, always-around boyfriend, a fiction-writing professor who thinks fan fiction is the end of the civilized world, a handsome classmate who only wants to talk about words . . . And she can't stop worrying about her dad, who's loving and fragile and has never really been alone. For Cath, the question is: Can she do this? Can she make it without Wren holding her hand? Is she ready to start living her own life? Writing her own stories? And does she even want to move on if it means leaving Simon Snow behind?

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Rainbow Rowell's Playlist Rainbow Rowell's Fangirl is a coming-of-age novel that is smart, funny, and genuine. Fangirl takes place during Cather Avery's first year of college, learning who she is when stripped down to just Cath--not the twins Cath & Wren and not Magicath, her fan fiction pen name. Through all the changes, both difficult and thrilling, one part of her old life still makes as much

sense in her dorm room as it did in her childhood bedroom--the Emergency Kanye Party. When the going gets tough in this story, the tough crank up Kanye West, sing out loud and dance until they feel better. Check out Rowell's Fangirl playlist below to see what other music played a part in this story. "I Wonder" → Kanye West: So Cath, the main character of Fangirl has a Kanye West thing; he's sort of her Patronus. This song lays out how lost Cath is at the beginning of the book.

"You ever wonder what it all really mean? You wonder if you'll ever find your dreams?" "Cath" → Death Cab for Cutie: I think this song might be the reason I chose the name "Cath." The lyrics don't fit my Cath, but the feelings do. More loss, more lost. "Heaven's on Fire" → The Radio Dept.: I use songs to help me get into the right mood and frame of mind when I'm writing a scene. This song, for me, is Cath's first few weeks of college → when she feels all caught up, and completely overwhelmed, by the activity. When she's overdosing on new and other.

"Paranoid" → Kanye West feat. Mr. Hudson: When things hit bottom for Cath, she throws herself an Emergency Kanye Dance Party. I can see her jumping on her bed to this song. "You worry bout the wrong things, the wrong things." "American Boy" → Estelle feat. Kanye West: Required listening for every Emergency Kanye Dance Party. Plus, it's happy and bouncy, so that reminds me of Cath's friend Levi, who joins the party. "Brandy Alexander" → Feist: When Cath finally falls in love, she almost resents how easy it is. She resents that she can't help it. This song is so sweet and seductive and irresistible → which is exactly how Cath sees the guy she's falling for. "I See You, You See Me" → The Magic Numbers: This is another reluctant love song → about two people who sort of back into love. When it gets to "This is not what I'm like, this is not what I do" → I think of Cath and the way she tries to reject her feelings. Like she's allergic to them. "Love Letters" → Jude: There's a part of the book when just about everybody regrets their behavior. "Love Letters" feels like regret to me → but also hope. There's so much longing in Jude's voice. "Samson" → Regina Spektor: One of the love stories in the book is between Cath and her twin sister, Wren. Cath feels abandoned by Wren. Now that they're at college, Wren would rather party than hang out with her twin. But Cath is still so devoted to Wren, and worried about her. "You are my sweetest downfall. I loved you first."

"Landslide" → Fleetwood Mac: Every book I write has "Landslide" on its soundtrack, and always at the same point in the story → the part where the main character does whatever he or she has to do to grow and change. I play "Landslide" in my head whenever my life is changing in a big way. "Hymn for Her" → The Magic Numbers: This is my happy-ending song for Cath. I'm not exactly sure what the lyrics mean, but I love how gentle and cautious it is, especially at the beginning. It's so reassuring for a love song. "It won't hurt to find love in the wrong place. I've

been hurt before, but all the scars have rearranged."

Best Books of the Month: Teen & Young Adult, September 2013: At first glance Rainbow Rowell's *Fangirl* has a lot in common with *Eleanor & Park*: idiosyncratic girl with troubled family meets good, normal boy and falls in love for the first time. But this is why Rowell is so talented--from the same basic ingredients she can create something new and special. In *Fangirl*, quirky introvert, Cath, is safe within the immensely popular Simon Snow (think Harry Potter) fan-fiction blog she writes with her twin sister, but college turns her life upside down, leaving her feeling like an awkward outsider. When she writes, Cath knows exactly what her characters should say to each other, but when it comes to forging real-life friendships, much less a romance, she hasn't a clue. An immensely satisfying coming-of-age novel, *Fangirl* deftly captures the experience of discovering your true voice and clumsy, vulnerable, remarkable, first love. --Seira Wilson

So, you're burnt out on the New Adult genre. You've read 30.5 books this year about fictional girls having the same college experience, like they are in some sort of perverted episode of the Twilight Zone. They have all been raped, abused, or raised by wealthy parents who do not care about them and keep them from the one they love, but it's ok because after one roll in the hay with the reformed bad boy, these girls have life figured out. They get over their past, they stand up to their parents, they pass the test and save the day. And you're just over it. Yeah? Me too. And that is probably why I loved *Fangirl* and Cath so much. Because her college experience did not read like a Teen Harlequin novel. It read like my life. "Look at you. You've got your s\*\*\* together, you're not scared of anything. I'm scared of everything. And I'm crazy. Like maybe you think I'm a little crazy, but I only ever let people see the tip of my crazy iceberg. Underneath this veneer of slightly crazy and mildly socially retarded, I'm a complete disaster." -- Cath, to her roommate Raegan I loved that the angst in it was so subtle and yet I kept having these little electric waves of emotion roll through my chest on Cath's behalf: as she's navigating her classes... as she feels betrayed when her identical twin doesn't want to be her roommate and finds a new best friend... as she's struggling to feel comfortable in her own dorm room because she's living with a fairly intimidating (yet ultimately awesome) upperclassman named Reagan... as she reluctantly begins to interact with other people and learns the hard way that some can be trusted and some are just using you to get ahead... as she falls in love for the first time. All of the tension in this book felt authentic and not overdone, not over-the-top, and yet left my heart a little bruised. Because this is the angst that real people experience their freshman year of

college, and I saw myself in it. With that being said, I'm not kidding when I tell you Cath is the opposite of the typical NA heroine. She's awkward and has a bad case of social anxiety and is more firmly planted in her internet reality than actual reality; but she is also endearing and smart and Rainbow Rowell helps us understand her. I've never written fanfiction, or read fanfiction, or even really been aware that fanfiction existed, but the point of the book was not to make me a fanfiction groupie. The point was to show the journey of one girl's first year in college, and that girl happened to be an incredibly talented writer of fanfiction. Cath writes slash fiction about Simon & Baz, who are the main characters in a Harry Potterish series, and there is quite a bit of talk about her fanfic throughout the book. Even though I can't identify with that personally, it didn't turn me off like I expected it to. Throughout the course of the book it even grew on me because Cath was growing on me, and I cared about her. Also, her roommate was there for comic relief and to say the things that most of us would be thinking if we were actually interacting with Cath. Quotes from her roommate Reagan: "What do you mean when you write them? No, you know what? Nevermind. I don't want to know. It's already hard enough to make eye contact with you." "You're just so helpless sometimes. It's like watching a kitten with its head trapped in a Kleenex box." Cath is sometimes frustrating because you want to rush her, to force her to make the right decisions and to stop pushing people away. But that's why this is a coming-of-age tale and not a romance, although the love story in it gave me a true case of "the feels." It was well done, sweetly and slowly built, and even though it wasn't totally believable (he was almost too perfect) I was rooting for both of them. My cheeks hurt from smiling during their interactions and when it finally happened I felt a little giddy. If you're looking for a steamy romance with a first-person POV, this isn't your book. It's extremely chaste. But if you love character-driven stories with humor, realistic dialogue, and a sweet love story, this is one of my favorites from 2013. This is truly the story of a girl who is coming of age, who is a young adult-- someone on "adulthood probation." I loved tagging along for her journey. \*\*Just a side note: If you're not loving the fan fiction parts, you can skim them or skip them without getting lost in the story. I did that a few times and it was no big deal, although that is what kept me from giving it five stars.\*\*

Cather starts to college missing her twin sister (who chose a different roommate and a partying lifestyle), worried about her father, and feeling awkward about her roommate Reagan, writing partner Nick, and Levi, Reagan's 'not exactly' boyfriend -- honestly, she'd rather just hide out writing more of her wildly popular fanfic. (Though reviews are inherently subjective, I prefer to provide some organization to my opinions through the use of a personal rubric. The following notes may contain spoilers.) Plot and Setting: 4.9 -- Plot is engaging from start to finish. Has many unique elements, no

major holes, and a sense of focus. Setting is clear and believable. Timeline may be a bit hard to follow. Family drama/coming-of-age/romance, with fanfic and story theft drama thrown in. There's a lot going on, but the different elements are juggled well, and it ends up being an engrossing, cohesive story. The timeline is fairly straightforward (one college year), though there are some large jumps that were slightly jarring, and a few spots that felt a bit inconsistent. Characters: 5 -- Relatable, realistic, interesting, dynamic characters. Even minor characters have depth, as do the relationships between characters. Stellar characters. They are all so different, and their interactions are complex and believable. Plenty of relatable moments, especially with Cath. Mechanics and Writing: 5 -- Few, if any, typos, punctuation issues, or word errors. (

This is a book I revisit about once a year. It might seem crazy, but this is one of my favorites. The friends to something more that happens in this book is so slow and so beautiful and so freaking perfect that I have to have more of Levi and Cath.~~~~I absolutely adore this book. This is the third time I've read it and each time I find something new to love. Levi. Levi, Levi, Levi. I'm pretty sure this man is damn near perfect. He's kind, fun, happy, and sincere. These aren't the typical words I use when describing male characters, but Levi is special. He's everything I hope my daughters find in a guy (I'd say he's everything I would love to find, but I found my special someone so the his ship has sailed). I love this story--obviously, it's my third time reading it. I love the slow dance between Cather and Levi. I love how good they are together, even before they're together. I love snarky Reagan, Cath's dad, and Wren. I just love it all. This is a story I will continue to read again and again. This once per year thing is working pretty well and I'm going to keep that going. I did listen to this book instead of reading it this go 'round and I have to say the narrator is perfect for the voice of Cather. She seems to really understand the story and how Cather is feeling. And then there's the voice of Simon and Baz. I think it's cool that these sections are narrated by someone else. The story flows very smoothly and I'll definitely listen again. Levi. Because he's more than just...

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