*Eleanor Or The Rejection Of The Progress Of Love* rev. by Alexandra Dixon

by Anna Moschovakis

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*Eleanor Or The Rejection Of The Progress Of Love* depicts two storylines: one is about a woman writing a book and the critic helping her along the way. The other is about the main character of the first woman’s book trying to find her footing in life. Anna Moschovakis, previous author of the poetry collect *You and Three Others Are Approaching a Lake* (winner of the James Laughlin Award from the Academy of American Poets) shows talent in fiction, as well, as she creates characters in dual storylines who are both fun and thoughtful .

The structure of *Eleanor Or The Rejection Of The Progress Of Love* is one of the things that makes it so interesting. Readers are taken through three of the four seasons as we follow the lives of the writer and Eleanor. The narrative switches between Eleanor’s perspective and the writer’s. As readers watch Eleanor try to figure out her life and find somewhere to settle down, the narrative is interrupted by the writer as she meets with the critic and tries to work out a way to bring Eleanor to life. Each storyline is compelling and interesting to read. The writer struggles with her own personal issues and develops a unique and platonic friendship with the critic. Meanwhile, Eleanor’s storyline is interesting because it starts out with her trying to find her stolen laptop and communicating with a man who claims his friend has her laptop, and evolves to her moving to a foreign country and trying to get her life on track.

Another thing that makes this novel so interesting is the poetry and language. Moschovakis’s poetic background shines as readers get moments that may or may not be poems that are unique structurally, rhythmically, and imaginatively, and always feature strong diction. For example, an email the critic writes to the writer is simply a repeated “time passed.” The email is done in a way that makes it poetic and rhythmic. Another example is the writer brainstorming ideas for the title of her book. The titles are listed in a way where after each one, there is an “Or.” The novel’s title itself is derived from this little moment. The titles are center-presented on the page, and this again has a poetic sense of rhythm. There are small moments like this throughout the novel, and they make it that much more fun to read.

*Eleanor Or The Rejection Of The Progress Of Love* is an engaging novel, and the added poetic elements make it that much more interesting. This novel is unique fiction, but it has the feel of non-fiction as well, especially when the writer takes over the narrative. I would recommend this book for anyone who likes poetic elements mixed in with a prose narrative, or anyone who likes a mixture of fiction and non-fiction.