

What world, keeley
hewitt learns that it's
not



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What if your town was submerged underwater and the whole town was ordered to pack up and leave without any warning, or plans for the future? How would you and your closest friends spend your last days together knowing there was a chance of you guys never seeing each other again? While the adults plan for the future of themselves and their families, box up their belongings and find new places to live on such short notice, Keeley Hewitt and her friends decide to go out with a pop-bang-fizzle. There are parties in long-gone abandoned houses. Even canoe races down Main Street. The goal is to make the most of every day, week, hour, minute they still have together.

For Keeley, that means finally having the boy she has loved since she can remember. There's a weird sort of bravery that comes from knowing there's nothing left to lose. Bravery and love might convince you to do or say things you wouldn't in your right state of mind. Yet, the reward almost always outweighs the risk. Almost. It's the end of the town Aberdeen as everyone and their ancestors has known it, but the beginning (and maybe even the end?) of Keeley's first true love story that she will go on to tell her future children and grand-children.

But will it turn out the way she thought? In *THE LAST BOY AND GIRL IN THE WORLD*, Keeley Hewitt learns that it's not always clear what's worth fighting for or spending your time and energy on and what you should let become a memory instead of letting it consume you. *THE LAST BOY AND GIRL IN THE WORLD*, a book written by Siobhan Vivian, has readers imagine a distinct setting rather than what they are used to in an average YA book. When meeting the author at a book convention in Atlanta over the summer, she

said, “ Yeah, most people think that *The Last Boy and Girl in the World* is a dystopia,” (Google: an imagined place or state in which everything is unpleasant or bad, typically a totalitarian or environmentally degraded one.) – well, her readers are not wrong because a town that’s slowly going underwater sounds rather like futuristic global warming/climate change issues.

However, this is in fact a book, set in the town of Aberdeen (somewhere in Maryland, not Scotland- confirmed by Vivian herself) that due to a combination of environmental and human factors receives constant rainfall and flooding that will soon make it impossible to live in so the citizens have been told they must pack and leave, more or less, NOW. For Keeley Hewitt and her friends, this means it’s their last chance to throw one last hoo-rah in each other’s company. The group does every possible thing adventurous in the town that is to be done so they can have these memories forever— that is, until their homes are submerged in water.

Keeley travels down the paths of dealing with love, loss and grief for a place her and her whole family has lived in their lives. The book centers around the different shown reactions of the characters to their more-than-likely homelessness and sudden need to relocate, as seen through the eyes of Keeley, our protagonist. She’s the character who is usually shown as the sidekick in most YA books- somewhat over-the-top, a girl who masks her serious feelings under the appearance of frivolity, dramatics and fun, someone who I deeply relate with. Keeley begins her last days in the town seen as strong and adventurous, but “ loses her edge” and will to fight towards her final hours in the place she has known as home as reality sets in

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that she will never see the town again. Keeley accepts the fact that she must own up to her mistakes and take the consequences of her choices even if everything around her is moving on and growing up.? As sides are chosen and the people of Aberdeen stake their positions on whether to accept offers on getting new homes or stick it out in their beloved town, Keeley deals with strained friendships, changing family dynamics and cherishing every moment with her believed to be one true love.

But since this is a YA book, Keeleys method of dealing with the tough stuff comes back to bite her in a bad way, and she's left to try and repair everything she's managed to screw up. I really enjoyed hearing Keeley's view on her struggles; however, as the story went on she became self-indulged under the situations she was facing. Keeley's best friend Morgan was also a stimulating character who sticks by her until they are separated by the water. Keeley's relationships in the book are a great planting seed from which the book thrives.

Siobhan Vivian used great imagery to tell Keeley's story and the novel is written from the very believable voice of a confused teen. The scene Vivian creates in regards to the towns flooding is so realistic and nerving. I felt anxious for the characters while reading as if I was a character in Aberdeen. The imagery used talking about the town being submerged and ceasing to exist once the worst of the storm was over brought lots of heartbreak as if it was our very own Roswell. The gradual growth of characters you witness in THE LAST BOY AND GIRL IN THE WORLD was my favorite feature of the novel. The kids in the story were engaging and after reading I felt as if I were part of their friend group. The book also left me wondering about my own

friendships and relationships and how my close acquaintances and I would react if we had never seen each other again.

Keeley especially had great development in her personality and actions, which made the tale even more believable. The majority theme to me is, “Closure happens right after you accept that letting go and moving on is more important than projecting a fantasy of how the relationship could have been -unknown” with the relationship aspect of it pertaining to her friendships, her family, her “could’ve been” boyfriend, and most importantly, her home. Keeley’s interaction with the themes of love, loss, friendships, and more allowed me to connect to her character, which made me find the book even more relatable.

This is the book for anyone who loves books like I do- gentle but gut wrenching with lots of heart and feeling written into it. The characters are relatable, the scenes are very well written and imagery makes you feel as if you’re with Keeley and her crew in Aberdeen. **THE LAST BOY AND GIRL IN THE WORLD** is a thought-consuming book that will have you on the edge of your seat making you wonder how you would act and what you would do in the same situation.