CHAPTER 4
DATA ANALYSIS

This chapter will discuss the features of infatuation experienced by Quentin Jacobsen found in John Green’s *Paper Towns*. The analysis above will be followed by how Quentin overcomes his infatuation. These features of infatuation more or less are displayed by Quentin Jacobsen and the strategies used by Quentin to overcome his infatuation will be discussed by elaborating Quentin’s verbal and non-verbal actions in the novel.

4.1. Features of Infatuation

Features of infatuation such as; (1) infatuation happens before puberty, (2) infatuated individuals tend to make unrealistic expectations to their infatuation subjects, (3) infatuated individuals cannot discriminate their beloved ones regardless to the beloved ones’ personality, (4) infatuated individuals may have emotional turbulence, and (5) infatuation are easier to be seen by other people. Below is the elaboration of infatuation features Quentin has encountered.

4.1.1. Infatuation Happens Before Puberty

Most people are infatuated before age 11 – 12 but this phenomenon usually happens to girls. This idea is challenged by John Green’s *Paper Towns* who creates Quentin Jacobsen as the male main character in the novel. Quentin is friends with Margo since they were just two years old and Quentin becomes infatuated with Margo since they are nine. Quentin will love to spend the day to
play with Margo. Also, Quentin started to be nervous when she is around. This statement is verbally mentioned in the very beginning of the novel, it says:

So Margo and I were nine. Our parents were friends, so we would sometimes play together, biking past the cul-de-sacced streets to Jefferson Park itself, the hub of our subdivision’s wheel. I always got nervous whenever I heard Margo was about to show up, on account on how she was the most fantastically gorgeous creature that God had ever created.

(Green, 2008, p. 4)

From the quotation above people can find out that Quentin Jacobsen has a chronic infatuation towards Margo Spiegleman when he was just nine years old. First, it is mentioned “I [Quentin] always got nervous whenever I heard Margo was about to show up”, the same feeling when someone experiences when they have to speak in public, perform acts or songs, or get to answer teacher’s questions can make someone get stressed. It is clear that Quentin Jacobsen feels stressed or pressured when Margo is about to show up – because Quentin is not confident enough. Quentin thinks that he is not as good as Margo who is “the most fantastically gorgeous creature”.

Second, when the novel mentioned “on account on how she was the most fantastically gorgeous creature that God had ever created.” The sentence used figurative language to describe how physically incredible Margo is. Also, Quentin uses word “God” here to give the imagery to the readers that Margo is fantastically created by the Highest Power on earth and heaven. Some people believe when it comes to God then it is something unarguable. So because
Quentin will not let people argue or debate that Margo is the most fantastically gorgeous creature, he brings God to the business. Now a nine-year-old boy gets nervous when his best girl friend is about to show up and thinks that she is the most fantastically gorgeous creature, Quentin Jacobsen, does not realise that it is too early to have romantic feeling in his age – this leads to a conclusion that Quentin is infatuated with Margo since he is just nine.

4.1.2. Infatuated Individuals Make Some Unrealistic Expectations

All people, in general, have ideas about how their relationships should (or will) last — some ideas are nurtured since their childhood, some ideas are influenced by media, and the others are absorbed through observing friends' and relatives' relationships style. In John Green’s _Paper Towns_, Quentin makes unrealistic expectations about Margo too. Quentin’s expectations are made from certain reasons – one of them is that he is physically attracted to Margo.

All people know that there is love at the first sight but there is no love-in-the-first-knowing-the-person. It is because humans, or most men, have a strong visual instinct when it comes to flirting or looking for a date. This theory is supported by Clyde Hendrick et al who says in his journal _Do Men and Women Love Differently?_ (1984) declares that men will be first attracted female’s physical appearance. It is written:

Males responded more erotically on three of these items, agreeing more than females that they kissed soon after meeting, that they were first attracted physical appearance and that physical attraction is one of the best aspects of being in love. (p. 180)
The citation above stated that men tend to look for good appearance in women. Similar every other man, Quentin is also attracted to Margo’s physical appearance. Quentin always believes that Margo is hot and pretty and he directly says it in the novel. It is when Quentin stares at Margo from a distance in the school hall way, he thinks:

I kept taking glances at her through the crowd, quick snapshots: a photographic series entitled *Perfection Stands Still While Mortals Walk Past*. ‘Yeah,’ I said to Ben, still not listening, still trying to see as much of her as I could without being too obvious. It wasn’t even that she was so pretty. She was just so awesome, and in the literal sense.” (Green, 2008, p. 14).

In the quotation mentioned above, Quentin stared at Margo constantly even though there are distance and people walked by. Also, Quentin was not listening to his best friend, Ben, too because he was distracted by Margo who is just standing with her friends. More than that, Quentin takes mental picture of Margo standing in the crowed and makes it as photographic series entitled *Perfection Stands Still While Mortals Walk Past*. The title Quentin uses is very uncommon because the words ‘*While Mortals Walk Past*’ in the end of the title emphasized that Quentin sees Margo as a Goddess or an immortal – which is identical with eternity. So the conclusion from this quotation is Quentin already sees Margo as something higher than human being. Quentin expects that Margo is just as perfect as the Goddess or Quentin expects that Margo’s beauty is something miraculous or eternal.
Quentin does realise this idea— the way he expects Margo as a Goddess or miraculous gift. In the prologue of the novel, Quentin clearly said that Margo is a miracle for him. Quentin also mentions several miracles that might have happened to him:

The way I figure it, everyone gets a miracle. Like, I will probably never be struck by lightning, or win a Nobel Prize, or become the dictator of a small nation in the Pacific Islands, or contract terminal ear cancer, or spontaneously combust... I could have seen it rain frogs. I could have stepped foot on Mars, I could have been eaten by a whale....But my miracle was different. My miracle was this: out of all the houses in all the subdivisions in all of Florida, I ended up living next door to Margo Roth Spiegelman. (Green, 2008, p. 3)

The quotation above is such a confirmation that Quentin really expects Margo as a gift or a Goddess or a miracle. It is because he says that through all of the mighty occurrences such as winning Noble Prize, stepping foot on Mars, and eaten by a whale, Quentin chooses living next to Margo as his miracle. In such manner, Quentin values Margo higher than the mighty occurrences he might have faced. For this reason, Quentin sees Margo as a flawless individual.

4.1.3. Infatuated Individuals Cannot Discriminate Their Beloved Ones

Regardless to the Beloved Ones’ Personality

The adage “love is blind” comes from the failure of infatuated individuals to judge or discriminate the loved ones in regard of their personality. Usually infatuated individuals remain to see their loved ones as what they expect.
Therefore infatuated individuals sometimes forget that their loved ones have flaws and personality. Quentin Jacobsen has been down that road, he cannot see the true self of Margo Spiegelman because all he knows is the fact he makes that Margo is a perfect creature. But before knowing how Quentin cannot make judgement to Margo in regard of her personality, it is important to know Quentin’s and Margo’s personalities from the beginning of the story.

There is difference between Quentin’s and Margo’s personality spotted since they are kids. This difference is spotted when they bike together through the Jefferson’s subdivision and find a dead body in a park. It is written in the novel:

She was pointing. And then I realized what was different….a guy wearing a gray suit, slumped against the trunk of the oak tree. Not moving…. I took two small steps backward. I remember thinking that if I made any sudden movements, he might wake up and attack me. Maybe he was a zombie. I knew zombies weren’t real, but he sure looked like a potential zombie…. As I took those two steps back, Margo took two equally small and quiet steps forward. “His eyes are open,” she said…. “I thought you closed your eyes when you died,” she said. (Green, 2008, p. 5)

The quotation above indirectly explains the difference between Quentin and Margo’s personalities. People can see that Quentin as an overthinking and anxious person from his reaction when he sees a dead body in the park. Quentin thinks that the guy might be a zombie because he looks like a potential zombie—even though he does realise that zombies are not real, his overthinking already takes over his mind and causes him panicked. Meanwhile, it is mentioned that
Margo moves forward to the dead body and, indirectly, Margo examines the dead body by saying "His eyes are open," she said..., "I thought you closed your eyes when you died.". Margo is quite brave as a kid and she has a big curiosity too; she moves forward the dead guy and curiously wonders why the dead guy still open his eyes, even though the guy is already died. After that Margo goes to the dead guy's apartment just to find out who he is and why he killed himself. Meanwhile, Quentin stayed home having panicked attack and being calmed down by his parents.

This difference in Quentin and Margo’s personality may become the main cause of why Quentin and Margo separated. However, this difference does not stop Quentin to keep admiring Margo. Several months later, Margo makes friends with other kids and forgets Quentin. Quentin and Margo’s friends – Chuck Parson and Jason Worthington – do not get along well because both of them are bullies. It is mentioned in the novel when Quentin has a childhood flashback:

In sixth grade, a bunch of kids including Margo and Chuck and me were forced by our parents to take ballroom dancing lessons at the Crown School of Humiliation, Degradation, and Dance ... the boys would walk over to the girls and the boy would say, “May I have this dance?” and the girl would say, “You may.” Girls were not allowed to say no. But then one day—we were doing the fox-trot—Chuck Parson convinced every single girl to say no to me. Not anyone else. Just me. So I walked across to Mary Beth Shortz and I said, “May I have this dance?” and she said no. And then I asked another girl, and then another, and then Margo, who also said
no, and then another, and then I started to cry…. So of course I went weeping to the teacher, and I spent the majority of middle school trying to live down that one embarrassing event. (Green, 2008, p. 61)

People may know that Quentin clearly has a painful memory when girls, including Margo, rejected to dance with him. This painful memory is reflected in the way he calls his former dance school with nicknames. In the quotation Quentin names his former dance school, “…Crown School of Humiliation, Degradation, and Dance,” Quentin still thinks that Crown School of Dance is not just a school of dance; it is more than that which is also school of humiliation and degradation. It is clear that Quentin was humiliated and degraded by Chuck Parson. Chuck Parson was the provoker, but he was not the only suspect. The girls, who rejected Quentin back then, are also the suspects for being provoked – those girls were including Margo. So after being humiliated and degraded by Chuck Parson, apparently Quentin was also rejected by Margo. This event supposed to make Quentin feels less infatuated with her, but Quentin keeps maintaining his feeling for her instead.

Chuck Parson is just a piece of Quentin’s childhood bully. There is Jason Worthington who is more than a friend for Margo – Jason was Margo’s boyfriend at the time. Eventually, Margo and Jason broke up because Jason cheated on her. So Margo asked Quentin to accompany her on her revenge pranks for her ex-boyfriend and ex-friends, but right after they did their prank to Jason Worthington, Quentin eventually had a childhood flashback. It is pictured:
I found myself feeling slightly bad for Jason….. But then again, in sixth grade, Jase promised not to punch my arm if I ate a live earthworm, so I ate a live earthworm and then he punched me in the face. So I didn’t feel very bad for very long. (Green, 2008, p. 41)

Quentin at the same time feels relieved and sorry for Jason because he does something horrible to Quentin. Indirectly, Margo is also mean to Quentin for leaving Quentin and making friends with the cool kids and for forgetting Quentin as her friend or forgetting him for being exist. After all this time Quentin sees Margo make friends with Jason Worthington and Chuck Parson who seems so mean to Quentin for no reasons. Quentin could have been so malicious with Margo for being closer to Jason and Chuck instead of him—her best friend since she was two. Or at least he could have been angry with Margo because she left him as a friend. Instead, Quentin maintains his feelings toward Margo by Quentin secretly stares her from distance every day.

Those events above prove that Quentin fails to make judgement about Margo because he is so infatuated with her; he barely feels the other emotions toward her at the time. This phenomenon is supported by Kimberly K. McClanahan et al in the *Infatuation and Attraction to a Dissimilar Other: Why is Love Blind?* (2010) who states:

*We contend that infatuation is the type of love referred to in the adage “love is blind.” ...... it implies that those who are in a state of infatuation are blind either to the imperfections of the object of their infatuation or,*
more important for our focus, to the differences in attitudes between themselves and the adored other. (p. 434)

Quentin is also blind to Margo’s imperfections and flaws. He only focuses to the fact he imagines that Margo is a beautiful creature and her beauty is eternal. What has been written in McClanahan’s journal corresponds Quentin’s behavior, in that it is true that Quentin is infatuated with Margo.

4.1.4. Infatuated Individuals may Have Emotional Turbulence

Most infatuated individuals deal with emotional turbulence when they see or think about their loved ones. The turbulence may feel like riding roller coaster for the first time – unpredictable and rapid, once infatuated individuals may feel stable as in the roller coaster makes its way up, once it may feel frightening as in the roller coaster makes its way down rapidly. Once it may feel frustrating and depressing as in the roller coaster twisting around. Everyone has this kind of emotional turbulence eventually, but there is a fair line between everyone’s emotional turbulence and the infatuated ones’ – the infatuated ones hardly, and some of them fail handling it.

Quentin Jacobsen has been through this kind of emotional turbulence – when his life is up and down and twists around because of Margo. These are the emotional turbulences encountered by Quentin:

1. Mood Swings

An event called ‘breaking a sea world’ with Margo is an example of Quentin’s most extreme mood swings. The event happens in the following time after Margo pranks her friends with Quentin. At the first time, Quentin does not feel like breaking the sea world because Margo promises that there
will be no felonies. Thus Quentin becomes furious because of it. In the novel, it is inscribed:

And then under her breath she said, ‘I mean, God. Grow some nuts’……
And now I was mad. I ducked underneath my shoulder belt so I could lean across the console toward her. “After everything YOU did for ME?” I almost shouted. She wanted confident? I was getting confident. (Green, Paper Towns, 2008, p. 69)

Aside from its directly described that Quentin is mad, readers can easily notice that Quentin is very furious. It is noticeable from the way John Green writes how Quentin speaks by giving the readers imagery in sentence ‘I ducked underneath my shoulder belt so I could lean across the console toward her.

Figure 4.1           Figure 4.2

Figure 4.1 represents the imagery of ‘I ducked underneath my shoulder belt’ and Figure 4.2 represents the imagery of ‘lean across’. From the figures above, readers can imagine how Quentin reacts to Margo at the time – upset and challenging. Furthermore, Quentin also emphasizes the words ‘YOU’ and ‘ME’ in
the sentence ‘After everything YOU did for ME?’ reading the sentence helps readers to sense Quention’s tone in talking to Margo – serious and grim.

The reason of Quentin’s anger is because Margo has underestimated him by saying ‘I mean, God. Grow some nuts’ – it is an idiom which contains Quentin’s prayer to be more mature and act like a man. Apparently Quentin feels offended. But no matter how angry Quentin is, his mood is immediately changed from anger to being relieved. It is stated in the novel:

And that’s when, finally, I remembered what she said about the dead guy and the strings…. She half laughed. “You worry too much. I don’t want some kids to find me swarmed with flies on a Saturday morning in Jefferson Park.” She waited a beat before delivering the punch line. “I’m too vain for that fate.” I laughed, relieved, and exited the interstate.

(Green, Paper Towns, 2008, pp. 70-71)

Occasionally before feeling appeased, Quentin is worried with Margo’s state of mind that he thinks that Margo might kill herself. But nevertheless, Quentin’s mood change again in several hours. After they get caught up by the security after breaking the sea world, Quentin feels delighted. Quentin thinks ““I could barely even hear her; the only thing happening was the relief shivering out of my skin. This raw pleasure was worth all the worry that preceded it.”” (Green, Paper Towns, 2008, p. 77). This change of mood happens in a short of time – the first two change happen when Quentin is still driving. Quentin’s mood swing from being angry and furious, to become worried, then become relieved, and finally
feels delighted happens rapidly in the same time, and it is all because of one person – Margo Spiegleman.

2. Intrusive Thoughts

As readers know, Quentin repeatedly thinks that Margo kills herself after she runs away. This kind of thought is called ‘intrusive thoughts’ in the terms of psychology. David A. Clark and Christine L. Purdon declare in their journal The Assessment of Unwanted Intrusive Thoughts: A Review and Critique of the Literature (1995) that intrusive thoughts is an abrupt invasion of undesirable thoughts, pictures, or motives, it is a constant and common occurrence inside our systems. It is written:

In fact at times we seem almost helpless in our efforts to consciously control the content or direction of our thoughts (Wegner, 1992), as evidenced by the unwanted intrusion of a variety of mental events from a mundane tune or rhyme to a negative, possibly even disgusting or abhorrent, thought or image. This intrusive quality of cognition may be a particularly adaptive aspect of human nature when it involves the spontaneous occurrence of positive cognitions associated with creativity, inspiration, problem solving, and relief from boredom leading to increased motivation for productive work and social interaction. (p. 967)

The citation above

In the novel, Quentin encounters so many intrusive thoughts when he is searching Margo. One time when Quentin is reading Margo’s poetry book in which she leaves the clues there,
But even so, I cannot picture her here alive. It occurs to me that the Whiteman could be a suicide note. I think about things she highlighted: “To die is different from what any one supposed, and luckier.” “I bequeath myself to the dirt to grow from the grass I love, / If you want me again look for me under your bootsoles.” For a moment, I feel a flash of hope when I think about the last line of the poem: “I stop somewhere waiting for you.” But then I think that the I does not need to be a person. The I can also be a body. (Green, Paper Towns, 2008, p. 142)

The quotation above shows that Quentin’s intrusive thoughts lead to a conclusion that Margo is dead. This intrusive thought approaches Quentin when he entered an abandoned building and he smells something unpleasant that turns out to be a dead raccoon. The unpleasant stench actually makes him afraid – probably this is where Quentin gets his intrusive thoughts, and this intrusive thought makes Quentin jumps into conclusion that Margo is dead.

The reason Quentin says “I cannot picture her here alive” is because at the first time he expects that he will immediately finds Margo in the abandoned building, which is wrong because all he finds is a dead raccoon. Therefore, the scary imagery inside the building and the absence of Margo match in Quentin’s head. In this situation, Quentin hardly thinks anything else but Margo’s death. Therefore he matches the clues he gets from Margo to confirm that she is death. Unfortunately, the sentence “To die is different from what any one supposed, and luckier.” in the book supports Quentin’s misinterpretation. Thus, after all Quentin
has been through so far, the intrusive thoughts worsen. The next thing Quentin does is searching for help.

Even though I knew the highlighted parts were probably the only important parts, I wanted to know whether it was a suicide-note kind of poem. But I couldn’t make sense of it. I was ten confusing pages into the poem when I got so freaked out that I decided to call the detective…. He just waited until I stopped talking and said, “…. So what’s your theory?” I’m worried that she might have, um, I guess killed herself.” (Green, Paper Towns, 2008, pp. 150-151)

The quotation above is a proof that Quentin cannot think any other possibilities but Margo’s death. In the sentence ‘I was ten confusing pages into the poem when I got so freaked out’ demonstrates Quentin’s raging intrusive thought – that he is so freaked out and that he cannot make any sense of it. Fortunately, the detective gives a wise advice to Quentin, the detective says that it is Margo being Margo – she always runs away and adds drama to the people around her, and therefore there is nothing to worry about.

Nevertheless, as what the researcher has mentioned above, intrusive thought is something people often lose control. So even though Quentin has listened to the detective’s advice, he keeps jumping to a conclusion that Margo kills herself. The paragraph bellows states:

The conclusion seemed inescapable. Even with everything broken and decided inside her, she couldn’t quite allow herself to disappear for good.

And she had decided to leave her body— to leave it for me…. She had said
she didn’t want her body found by random kids—and it made sense that out of everyone she knew, she would pick me to find her. (Green, Paper Towns, 2008, p. 152)

The paragraph above implicitly explains that his intrusive thoughts worsen by making a new conclusion that Margo’s dead body will only be found by him and not anyone else. In this state, Quentin’s intrusive thoughts have led him into an obsession. The statement mentioned before is supported by S. Rachman in his research entitled A Cognitive Theory of Obsessions: Elaborations (1998), it is written:

if a person catastrophically misinterprets his unwanted intrusive thoughts about harming other people as signifying that he is potentially dangerous, then a range of formerly neutral stimuli are turned into potential threats…..This conversion of neutral cues and situations into potentially threatening ones increases the range of threats and therefore increases the opportunities for the provocation of obsessions. To continue with the same example, if my catastrophic misinterpretation leads to the conversion of sharp objects from neutral to threatening, then the opportunities for provocation of the unwanted thoughts are greatly increased by the addition of this new and wide range of threats. (p. 385)

The citation above explains that intrusive thoughts may make people hurt one another. In contrast, Quentin’s intrusive thoughts do not endanger or threaten anyone but himself and his future. Quentin’s intrusive thoughts urge him to do whatever it takes to find Margo, such as skipping classes, skipping senior prom, and even skipping his graduation. Also, after skipping graduation, Quentin foolishly drives from Orlando
to New York for Margo – which is dangerous because it is a twenty-one hours road trip without any parental advice. Therefore, it is obvious that Quentin’s intrusive thought is a part of his infatuation towards Margo.

3. Fantasy

Oxford Dictionary defines fantasy as “a pleasant situation that you enjoy thinking about but is unlikely to happen, or the activity of imagining things.” (Oxford, 2018). People normally have fantasy when they are falling in love, and just like most normal people, Quentin have fantasies about Margo too.

The first time Quentin has fantasy about Margo is when he is just a little kid. In the novel, it is described that Quentin sees Margo as a fantastic creature, “I always got very nervous whenever I heard that Margo was about to show up, on account of how she was the most fantastically gorgeous creature that God had ever created.” (Green, Paper Towns, 2008, p. 4)

It is obvious that Quentin has fantasy about Margo because in the sentence above Quentin says that Margo is the most fantastically gorgeous creature that God had ever created. The use of words ‘most fantastically gorgeous’ has their own level of elevated language – it is because only Quentin who thinks that Margo is the most fantastically gorgeous creature and that other people only see Margo as a regular creature.

The other fantasy Quentin has is that when the senior prom is nearer, Quentin puts his hopes that he will find Margo and he will bring her to the party. The novel says:
I lay down and started to feel a little depressed about prom. I refused to feel any kind of sadness over the fact that I wasn’t going to prom, but I had—stupidly, embarrassingly—thought of finding Margo, and getting her to come home with me just in time for prom, like late on Saturday night, and we’d walk into the Hilton ballroom wearing jeans and ratty T-shirts, and we’d be just in time for the last dance, and we’d dance while everyone pointed at us and marveled at the return of Margo, and then we’d fox-trot the hell out of there and go get ice cream at Friendly’s. So yes, like Ben, I harbored ridiculous prom fantasies. But at least I didn’t say mine out loud.

(Green, Paper Towns, 2008, p. 133)

The quotation above explicitly describes Quentin’s desire in specific details. It is obvious that Quentin wants a perfect prom with his dream girl, Margo. But the situation at the time seems impossible because, at the moment, Margo is missing and no one knows where she is and where she goes. For these reasons, what Quentin thinks about Margo is called fantasy because it is enjoyable and pleasant but is unlikely to happen.

4. Anxiety

Oxford Dictionary defines anxiety as “a nervous disorder marked by excessive uneasiness and apprehension, typically with compulsive behaviour or panic attacks.” (Oxford, 2018). Quentin is always anxious when he finds theory about Margo’s death. One example is when Quentin is so nervous he called Ben, his best friend, and he says:

I couldn’t calm down, so I called Ben from bed and told him my theory…. 
“Whatever... She’s got you all worried, and she’s got Lacey all worried, and prom is in like three days, you know? Can’t we just have a fun prom?

“Are you serious? She could be dead, Ben.” (Green, Paper Towns, 2008, p. 153)

From the conversation above, Quentin clearly says that he cannot calm down because he thinks that Margo is dead. Meanwhile, Ben tries to calm him down by talking about prom and how it is going to be fun. In contrast, Quentin cannot calm down because, at the time, he is anxious and probably having panic attack. Furthermore, Quentin’s anxiety keeps increasing during his journey in finding Margo.

There is one moment when Quentin feels like he is in his rock bottom. It is when Quentin is consumed with his anxiety. The novel describes Quentin’s feeling in the following sentences:

Why hadn’t she left me a specific place? All these scary-as-hell clues. All this intimation of tragedy. But no place. Nothing to hold on to. Like trying to climb a mountain of gravel. (Green, Paper Towns, 2008, p. 154)

The imagery of the sentences above is strongly referring to the sense of anxiety. The sentences “All these scary-as-hell clues. All this intimation of tragedy. But no place” represent Quentin’s anxiety because it looks like Quentin has found all clues and tragedies but there is no specific place found.

The feeling grows wider as Quentin gets lost in Margo’s game further and further. Quentin keeps continuing his life and continuing his journey of finding Margo at the same time, but no matter how hard Quentin tries to carry on, his worry about Margo refuses to cease. It is explained explicitly in the novel:
The day passed as it always did—in slow motion, with a thousand plaintive glances at the clock. But now it was even more unbearable, because every minute I wasted in school was another minute in which I failed to find her. (Green, Paper Towns, 2008, p. 159)

The quotation above gives the reader sense of anxiety, the sentence “The day passed as it always did—in slow motion, with a thousand plaintive glances at the clock.” gives imagery that Quentin cannot wait long to find Margo, all he does is just staring blankly at the clock waiting for the bell rings – this means that Quentin is impatient and impatience sometimes creates anxiety. The next sentence “But now it was even more unbearable, because every minute I wasted in school was another minute in which I failed to find her.” likewise gives the imagery of anxiety too, the sentence tries to reach readers’ mind to understand how painful it is for Quentin to waste most of his time in school while he can spend more times in searching Margo. Besides, Quentin uses word ‘unbearable’ to explains that his anxiety is on the peak and that it might explode if sooner he cannot find Margo. Therefore, the entire occurrence above is called anxiety because they make Quentin uneasy and nervous. This kind of anxiety is part of Quentin’s infatuation because it is only occurs every time he thinks about Margo.

4.1.5. Infatuation Is Easier to be found by Someone Else

The researcher has explained in the review of literature that infatuation’s characteristic often comes and goes and it is easier to be spotted by someone else (Sternberg, 1986). In the Paper Towns novel, people around Quentin are actually aware that Quentin is infatuated with Margo. One day Quentin tells his parents about the clues Margo leaves for him and this is how his father reacts:
And I said, “Actually, it’s not for English; it seems like maybe Margo left it for me to find.” They got quiet, and then I told them about Woody Guthrie and the Whitman. “She clearly likes to play these games of incomplete information,” my dad said. “I don’t blame her for wanting attention,” my mom said, and then to me added, “but that doesn’t make her well-being your responsibility.” “What should I do?” “Graduate,” my mom said. “And trust that Margo can take of herself, for which she has shown a great talent.” “Agreed,” my dad said, but after dinner, (Green, Paper Towns, 2008, p. 131).

In the end of the conversation, Quentin’s mother clearly says that Margo’s well-being is not Quentin’s responsibility. The hidden message of Quentin’s mother’s advice is that Quentin pays too much attention for Margo. Therefore what she actually tells him about is that whatever Margo does, it has nothing to do with Quentin. The concern Quentin’s parents show is a hint that they find something wrong with Quentin because they think that Quentin starts to give a lot attention to Margo. After Quentin’s parents give him such an advice, Quentin overhears their parents talking about him and Margo, it is written, “when I went back to my room and played Resurrection on mute, I could hear them talking quietly back and forth. I could not hear the words, but I could hear the worry.” (Green, Paper Towns, 2008, p. 131). The sentences above give the readers imagery of Quentin’s parent’s worry. The novel describes with sentence “I could not hear the words” means that his parents hide something from Quentin. Therefore, it is possible that Quentin’s parents know that Quentin is infatuated with Margo but unfortunately his parents do not do anything to prevent Quentin to do anything reckless in searching of Margo.
4.2. How to Overcome Infatuation

According to a self-help book entitled *Addiction to Love: Overcoming Obsession and Dependency in Relationship* (Peabody, 1989), there are three ways to overcome a chronic infatuation such as: (1) overcoming the self-conflict, (2) make changes, (3) find out and heal childhood traumas, and (4) letting go. This method is expected to collate with Quentin’s ways to overcome his infatuation. Below is the elaboration of overcoming infatuation in John Green’s *Paper Towns*.

4.2.1. Overcoming Self-conflict

Self-conflict is a psychological attempt within the conscious inside an individual that causes mental struggle emergent from opposing demands or impulses. Self-conflict actually happens to an individual when he or she sees the reality is different from what he or she expects. This psychological phenomenon occurs to Quentin in *Paper Towns*.

When Margo leaves clues for Quentin, Quentin is determined to find Margo at all cost. In the middle of the searching, Quentin starts to doubt whether or not Margo wants to be found and the self-conflict starts. At the first Quentin thinks:

It became a weekend of reading, of trying to see her in the fragments of the poem she’d left for me. I could never get anywhere with the lines, but I kept thinking about them anyway, because I didn’t want to disappoint her. She wanted me to play out the string, to find the place where she had stopped and was waiting for me, to follow the bread crumb trail until it dead-ended into her. (Green, *Paper Towns*, 2008, p. 117)
The paragraph above clarifies Quentin’s perseverance to find Margo by following her clues as bread crumbs that will him to her, even Quentin reads the book Margo gives every weekend and makes it as a habit. Besides, Quentin also contemplates all the highlighted parts in the book to find the interpretation that might be the clue. However, in the halfway of his searching of Margo, Quentin starts to feel indecisive. Quentin thinks,

Why hadn’t she left me a specific place? All these scary-as-hell clues. All this intimation of tragedy. But no place. Nothing to hold on to. Like trying to climb a mountain of gravel. (Green, Paper Towns, 2008, p. 154)

The last sentence of the paragraph above mentions 'Like trying to climb a mountain of gravel’ is an imagery of Quentin’s anxiety and uncertainty of his searching. The conclusion is Quentin is almost hopeless. On the hand, Quentin perseveres to find Margo – to pursuit his first love. In the following scene, Quentin decides to keep on searching Margo, he states:

As the line of cars snaked behind me like some kind of unwilling funeral procession, I found myself talking out loud to her. I will play out the string. I will not betray your trust. I will find you. (Green, Paper Towns, 2008, p. 155)

The quotation above shows that Quentin is almost giving up in searching Margo, but still, Quentin perseveres because Quentin wants Margo’s disappearance to change him. Therefore, Quentin keeps going on.

There is a moment when Quentin hits his rock bottom – after he travels from pseudovision to pseudovision and finds nothing. Quentin vents up his emotions by hitting the ground, the novel portrays:
I hit at the dirt with the heels of my fists, and then pounded it again and again, the sand scattering around my hands until I was hitting the bare roots of the tree, and I kept it up, the pain shooting up through my palms and wrists. I had not cried for Margo until then, but now finally I did, pounding against the ground and shouting because there was no one to hear: I missed her I missed her I missed her I miss her.

I stayed there even after my arms got tired and my eyes dried up, sitting there and thinking about her until the light got gray. (Green, Paper Towns, 2008, pp. 156-157)

From the paragraph above, readers can feel Quentin’s agony in searching Margo. The agony makes Quentin has tantrum to vents up his emotion but in the end Quentin managed to rest. The last sentence ‘I stayed there even after my arms got tired and my eyes dried up, sitting there and thinking about her until the light got gray’ illustrates Quentin’s fatigue.

All of the evidences above are some examples of Quentin’s self-conflict. At first he feels so determined and devoted to find Margo, then Quentin feels uncertain, and after that he gains strength again to continue his searching. It is obvious that Quentin is psychologically struggling because he does not meet expectation when he is searching Margo. Nevertheless, Quentin keeps expecting that the clues will lead him to Margo.

Short story, Quentin continues to look for Margo while he is still trying to face his self-conflict. While Quentin is still facing his self-conflict battle, he realizes that after all this time he misunderstood Margo. Therefore, Quentin does not think what
matter to him anymore but he thinks what matter more about Margo—when she is not herself, when she is all alone. It is written in the novel:

I found myself able to imagine Margo here,….. This image seemed too sad to be true—it all struck me as so lonely and so very unMargo. But all the evidence of the past ten days accumulated toward a surprising conclusion: Margo herself was—at least part of the time—very unMargo. (Green, Paper Towns, 2008, p. 169)

The paragraph above is a proof that Quentin starts to see Margo as herself in regard of her personality and what triggers him to see the fact is when he sees unfamiliar activity done by Margo. This proof is accurate because Quentin use words ‘very unMargo’; the words actually means that ‘this is not the Margo I used to know’. Thus, in the next plot, Quentin contemplates everything about Margo. It is stated:

I realize that I cannot imagine them because I didn’t know Margo…. I knew how she acted in front of me, and I knew how she acted in front of others, and I knew that she liked… adventure and dramatic gestures, and I knew that she was funny and smart and just generally more than the rest of us. But I didn’t know what brought her here, or what kept her here, or what made her leave. I didn’t know why she owned thousands of records but never told anyone she even liked music. I didn’t know what she did at night, with the shades down, with the door locked, in the sealed privacy of her room. (Green, Paper Towns, 2008, p. 170)

Quentin’s contemplation leads to the fact that he does not know Margo well this whole time – that after these decades of being Margo’s secret admirer, Quentin’s expectation
about Margo is different from her personality. Therefore, in the following plot what Quentin looks for is not only where Margo is but also who Margo is.

At the same time, during Quentin’s self-conflict battle, Quentin slowly overcomes his false expectation about Margo. He says:

Yes. The fundamental mistake I had always made—and that she had, in fairness, always led me to make—was this: Margo was not a miracle. She was not an adventure. She was not a fine and precious thing. She was a girl. (Green, Paper Towns, 2008, p. 199)

All Quentin’s expectation about Margo is suddenly changed by only seeing unfamiliar events done by Margo. Fortunately, Quentin has intention to contemplate the reason of why Margo acts like that which leads him to the fact that he does not know Margo pretty well in these last decade. This case makes Quentin puts himself in Margo’s shoes to answer the question ‘who Margo is’. Automatically, Quentin overcomes his self-conflict by putting himself in Margo's shoes.

4.2.2. Make Changes

Make change is important for infatuated individuals as a small step to overcome their infatuations. As people, there are a bunch of changes that people can make. Therefore infatuated individuals need to know the kind of change they need – it is the kind that might change their perspective towards their loved ones. In the self-help book written by Susan Peabody entitled Addiction to Love: Overcoming Obsession and Dependency in Relationship (1989) encloses the method for help people handle their love obsession. It is explained:
Making changes is the next step in recovery. Changes include outer modifications of behavior and an inner shift in values and thinking patterns. The changes love addicts make will be based on the insights they have gained while preparing their inventory, and they should remember that the person they need to change is themselves. (Peabody, 1989)

The citation above advises people with certain obsession, in this case is infatuation, to change their behaviours and thinking patterns and to make such changes they have to look for insights that motivate them to change themselves. Some love addicts never find the eagerness to change because infatuated individuals live in a state of refusal in their lives. Therefore, all they need is some help.

In the sub-chapter before, then researcher already mentioned that Quentin overcomes his self-conflict by putting himself in Margo’s shoes. In this sub-chapter, Quentin uses the same way to change his perspective about Margo – putting himself in Margo’s shoes. In the novel when Quentin has dinner with his parents, Quentin listens to his parents’ conversation about mirrors and windows. It is described:

My dad finished chewing something and then put his fork down and looked at me. “The longer I do my job,” he said, “the more I realize that humans lack good mirrors. It’s so hard for anyone to show us how we look, and so hard for us to show anyone how we feel.” (Green, Paper Towns, 2008, p. 198)
The quotation above talks about psychological theory windows and mirrors – as Quentin’s father is a therapist. The symbol windows illustrates how people see the others from their own perspective, meanwhile the symbol mirrors illustrates the true reflection of someone’s personality. After Quentin listens to his father’s speech in the dining room, he immediately implies the windows and mirrors theory to find who Margo is. In the novel, Quentin thinks:

And I was hearing something about her and about windows and mirrors. Chuck Parson was a person. Like me. Margo Roth Spiegelman was a person, too. And I had never quite thought of her that way, not really; it was a failure of all my previous imaginings. ….. I had been imagining her without listening, without knowing that she made as poor a window as I did. And so I could not imagine her as a person who could feel fear, who could feel isolated in a roomful of people, who could be shy about her record collection because it was too personal to share….. And all at once I knew how Margo Roth Spiegelman felt when she wasn’t being Margo Roth Spiegelman: she felt empty. She felt the unscaleable wall surrounding her…. (Green, Paper Towns, 2008, p. 199)

The paragraph above is a proof that Quentin starts change his point of view about Margo. If in the first place, Quentin always sees Margo as a miracle or an adventure or a goddess. However, after Quentin listens to his parents talking about mirrors and windows he realizes that he is wrong and he just realizes that Margo is a person too. It is verbally mentioned in the first sentence of the paragraph above that says, ‘And I was hearing something about her and about
windows and mirrors. Chuck Parson was a person. Like me. Margo Roth Spiegelman was a person, too. And I had never quite thought of her that way, not really; it was a failure of all my previous imaginings.’ It is clearly mentioned that Quentin is aware that he has failed to see people as they are.

After Quentin knows that he is wrong and after Quentin starts to change his point of view about Margo, it is enough for Quentin to see Margo from the window, it is time for Quentin to see Margo through the her reflection in the mirror. In pursuit to see Margo through the mirror, Quentin needs to put himself in Margo’s shoes. Quentin learns something from Whitman’s poetry about how seeing people as they are and feel the sense of their misery. It is written:

As he writes, “I am the man . . . . I suffered . . . . I was there.” A few lines later, it becomes even more clear that Whitman no longer needs to listen to become another: “I do not ask the wounded person how he feels . . . . I myself become the wounded person.” ….. It is not enough just to see her or hear her. To find Margo Roth Spiegelman, you must become Margo Roth Spiegelman. (Green, Paper Towns, 2008, p. 226)

From the poetry book Quentin reads, he recognizes that to find Margo he must put aside all of his expectation and put himself in Margo’s shoes. In the next scene, Quentin starts to collect the clues by imagining himself as Margo. For example, when Quentin looks for clues in the mini mall, he really puts his mind in Margo’s. it is described:

But I could also imagine this: Margo picking these books up at various garage sales, buying every travel guide she could get her hands on for a
quarter or less. And then coming here—even before she disappeared—to read the books away from prying eyes. Reading them, trying to decide on destinations. Yes. She would stay on the road and in hiding, a balloon floating through the sky, eating up hundreds of miles a day with the help of a perpetual tailwind. And in this imagining, she was alive. Had she brought me here to give me the clues to piece together an itinerary? Maybe. (Green, Paper Towns, 2008, p. 175)

The quote above is a proof that Quentin tries to be Margo—he imagines her movement and her mind set. Quentin’s new habit lasts until he knows precisely where Margo is. However, even though Quentin has made changes he still pursues a long journey from Orlando to New York to find Margo.

4.2.3. Letting Go

The final step of infatuated individuals after surpass several steps above, it is the time for the infatuated individuals to let go. In the self-help book entitled *Addiction to Love: Overcoming Obsession and Dependency in Relationship* by Susan Peabody (1989) supports the idea by stating:

The final stage of the healing process is letting go. This is when recovering love addicts not only put down the burden of unwanted emotions …. but they let go of this burden and walk away. They have faced the truth, …. accepted what cannot be changed, and forgiven those who persecuted them. Now, they must take the freedom they have worked so hard to attain and move on to the next phase of their life. In other
words, they must learn to live in the present unaffected by the past.

(Peabody, 1989)

The citation above correlates with the end of Quentin’s virtue in the novel. After Quentin looks for clues, change his perspective, and puts himself in Margo’s shoes, he finally able to let go, even though the process of letting is a little bit difficult and takes time.

The process of letting go starts when Quentin takes a road trip from Orlando to Agloe, New York with his friends. In the travelling, Quentin spends most times and adventures with his friends instead of with Margo. In the halfway of the road trip, Quentin and his friends have a tragic accident – their car accidently hit a white cow. The car hit a cow because the road is already dark and the driver, Quentin, might be exhausted after twelve hours driving. However, from the accident, Quentin finds that something exciting can happen without Margo. It is written:

Every couple minutes, Radar says, “Do you guys remember that time when we were all definitely going to die and then Ben grabbed the steering wheel and dodged a ginormous freaking cow and spun the car like the teacups at Disney World and we didn’t die?” (Green, Paper Towns, 2008, p. 272)

The fact that they keep repeating the incident with the cow drove to Quentin’s revelation that even without Margo, he can have fun. In the next scene, Quentin finds another thing he can learn from traveling, he proclaims:

Traveling, I am finding, teaches you a lot of things about yourself. For instance, I never thought myself to be the kind of person who pees into a
mostly empty bottle of Bluefin energy drink while driving through South Carolina at seventy-seven miles per hour—but in fact I am that kind of person. (Green, Paper Towns, 2008, p. 260)

Even before the cow incident, Quentin has realized that traveling may reveal the true colour inside him. However, Quentin keeps hoping that he will find Margo but this time he is ready to let go if the reality is different from what Quentin expects. In the next plot, it is written:

As I trail off, I hear them making one another laugh—not the words exactly, but the cadence, the rising and falling pitches of banter. I like just listening, just loafing on the grass. And I decide that if we get there on time but don’t find her, that’s what we’ll do: we’ll drive around the Catskills and find a place to sit around and hang out, loafing on the grass, talking, telling jokes. (Green, Paper Towns, 2008, p. 274)

Apparently, the presence and the joy his friends share replace Margo’s disappearance a little bit. This is proof that Quentin is ready to accept the worst possibility.

After twenty one hours of a road trip, finally Quentin and his friends arrived in Agloe. In Agloe, they find Margo in a barn and they find that Margo is so different than the Margo they use to know in Orlando. Margo acts so different—she acts like she is not pleased to see her friends. In this situation, Margo’s friends immediately leave but Quentin stays. When Quentin is alone with Margo, Quentin’s agony rises again—he wants the Margo he expects, not the Margo he sees right now. It is written in the novel:
“How could I have warned you when you completely dropped off the face of the planet?!” I see a long blink and know she has no response for this, so I keep going. I’m so pissed at her. For . . . for, I don’t know. Not being the Margo I had expected her to be. (Green, Paper Towns, 2008, p. 284)

At that time, Margo is very furious because of the fact that she does not want to be found. Margo and Quentin have a quarrel for a while but after that Quentin is able to handle Margo’s anger. Turns out, Margo and Quentin have a deep conversation after their fight – conversation about their childhood, about how Quentin finds her, and how they think about each other. Nevertheless, Quentin finally realizes why this whole time he cannot understand Margo when he asks her to come home, she refuses. It is written:

“but I think you can come back now. I really do.”

“No, you don’t,” she answers, and she’s right. She can see it in my face—I understand now that I can’t be her and she can’t be me. Maybe Whitman had a gift I don’t have. But as for me: I must ask the wounded man where he is hurt, because I cannot become the wounded man. The only wounded man I can be is me. (Green, Paper Towns, 2008, pp. 297-298)

The last sentence “The only wounded man I can be is me” means that Quentin finally accepts himself without comparing his wound to Margo’s. Quentin finally sets Margo free from his expectation – from his infatuation fantasy, by letting her chooses her path and him chooses his.

Another proof that shows Quentin is ready to let Margo go is when Margo starts to show affection to Quentin by asking him to stay. Margo is actually developed
feelings towards Quentin because Margo thinks that Quentin is the best partner in crime ever, but the reason why she leaves him is because she already makes a plan to go and for Margo the plan must be done. Therefore when Margo has Quentin in Agloe, she asks him to stay with her. Most infatuated individuals would accept the offering for this is the moment they have been waiting for. However, Quentin has been through so many changes and progresses in his searching and surprisingly he rejects Margo’s offering. It is illustrated in the novel:

   It ends quite a while later when she says, “You can come to New York. It will be fun. It will be like kissing.”
   And I say, “Kissing is pretty something.”
   And she says, “You’re saying no.”
   And I say, “Margo, I have a whole life there, and I’m not you,” (Green, Paper Towns, 2008, pp. 302-303)

   Quentin does not verbally say ‘no’ to Margo’s offering, instead he says ‘Margo, I have a whole life there, and I’m not you,’ that can also mean ‘I would like to, but I have my life and I cannot follow you forever.’ From this conversation it can be concluded that even though maybe Quentin still have feelings towards Margo, he is not obsessed anymore. Quentin decides to choose his life over Margo and decides to go home where he belongs. It means that Quentin is ready to let go and live the reality.

   Finally, from all of the ways to overcome infatuation such as overcoming self-conflict, making changes, identifying and healing childhood trauma, and letting go, Quentin surpasses all the steps. Unfortunately, the step identifying and
healing childhood trauma cannot be found in the novel because Quentin does not have a childhood trauma that correlates with his infatuation life.