

REDEFINING MOTHERLY LOVE THROUGH NICOLA YOON'S *EVERYTHING, EVERYTHING*

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Abstract

American literature authentically mirrors the nation from its birth onwards. This has a reflex towards society's cultural change and it appeals to be very realistic. They wrote with extreme freedom and they didn't hesitate to express their disillusionment for World War 1. The novel is centered on 17-year-old Madeline Whittier who is treated for severe combined immunodeficiency (SCID), also known as "bubble baby disease". The story revolves around her and the changes that happened to her life unexpectedly when suddenly she started to love a boy Olly, his new neighbor. This story is about a eighteen year old Maddy Whittier, a very observant teen who is also suffering from SCID, a severe autoimmune disorder. She is leading her life in a well purified and air locked house. She is attending online class, she doesn't have any friends all she knows is her mother and her nurse Carla. She defines the theme of coming of age as she was living according to a system and when a neighbor comes there her life entirely changed. At that time she reached her adulthood and she got a realization that she can decide on her interests. This story is the direct implication of what a sort of freedom means to a girl when she is set free to decide things. The capabilities to decide things and develop an independence on their own choice. When we meet the character Maddy, she believes every people. She thinks everyone as honest and trust worthy, this made her fall in love with her neighbor Olly. This was the realization of her on what truth is, and how people change truth to lies for satisfying others which causes damage of themselves. Maddy is new to this world because she was living in a shell and was kept in a lie that she is having an illness. Her identification of the outside world was an experience that is worth the risk of one's innocence and safety. Denying a person's wish and experience will actually cause more harm like anything else.

Keywords: Family Harassment, Tenderness, Value of Life, Pain.

The parent and child relationship nurtures the physical, emotional, and social development of the child's personality, life choices, and overall behavior. It can also affect their strength which causes them to emotionally, and mentally break down. Parents know what is best for their children, and a strong parent-child relationship can lead to better outcomes for the children. It is a unique bond that every child and parent would enjoy. Legally, the parent-child relationship is defined as the relationship between an individual, where the child is legally adopted. It has to start from the beginning, as it doesn't come out easy all of a sudden. They have to develop these relationships by understanding each other. Parents have unique qualities in parenting relationships that affect their decisions as parents. These characters include their age, gender, identity, personality, developmental history, beliefs, knowledge about parenting and child development, and mental and physical health. Positive parenting aims to achieve that through mutual respect, facilitation of the child's social and emotional development praising, setting, clear rules with firm but friendly communication, and fair behavior. The relationship between mother and daughter is always special. Mother's love is always unconditional as they are beyond words. The bond children create with their mother starts at a young age. At times, these relationships get complicated also. This relationship bond can affect the sense of self-esteem, self-worth, sense of identity, and ability to make friends. If this bond is not great, she may seek validation from others. Teenage girls always count on their mother and for them, mother will be always their role model. This results in them replicating her mother's activities, and

behavior. When they look at their mother they are identified as a perfect image and they consider this moment of glory as the proud moment.

Like every other relationship, this bond also has both ups and downs. The temperaments, personality experiences, and hormones can affect their relationship and in whatever way they sort things are recorded as their understanding of each other. The amount of effort put together by both to maintain a good environment within themselves shows their value in a family and the dynamics they share between themselves also make us realize it. The healthy relationship they share is happiness, love, and positivity. They often argue for simple things and fight for pride, joy, and moments but at last, they will be together. The amount of effort put forward by the mother in raising their daughter is large and they often sacrifice their own happiness. The wrong decision made by the children makes their mothers feel disappointed but they won't show this disappointed face. The best solution for every problems in this world comes from our parents especially our Mother. She uplifts you from every problems around you.

In a nice relationship what is needed is understanding and good communication. This can be considered as controlling relationship. Mother takes the leadership here and understands the value that she must give to her child. The children are not experienced enough and often they face some sort of pressure to live a life here but a mother who is experienced enough comes into place here. If we can't decide a solution in a pressure situation then life will be as challenging. So, Mother gives you that push you need from behind and they cover up for you at

times. Family dynamics is the next important key element to be mentioned. The family structure can be very dysfunctional and very harassment both verbally and physically. In this novel, Maddy and Olly start to explore free from their family dynamics. *Everything, Everything* suggests that choosing to make the change to free oneself from situations like these is overwhelmingly positive yet also incredibly difficult, and requires bravery. A teenage girl suffering from family harassment is mentioned here. Everyone desires to be better and they all seek something very great in adventure from life. It is our longing desire that makes us feel it. The author has a clear mind as he wants his readers to get inspired and wants his readers to take control of their lives. The main character Madeline faces this as a challenge in this novel. The author clearly shows how both Maddy and Olly begin to break free from their respective family structure.

"This year is a little harder than the previous one. Maybe it's because I'm eighteen now. Technically, I'm an adult. I should be leaving home, and going off to college. My mom should be dreading empty-nest syndrome. But because of SCID. I'm not going anywhere" (Yoon,22).

Maddy's mother won't let her daughter go out of home. Her mother is denoted as the empty-nest syndrome which means she experiences loss and sadness. Maddy and her mother's relationship is very manipulative. Maddy can't leave the house because her mom works outside the home, and still, she appears as if she doesn't have a clear understanding of the social life outside. Maddy wants a decent life and wants herself to be socially active but the situation she was brought in is completely different. She doesn't have a stable life as she didn't even celebrate her birthday with anyone. Her Mother is bossing her life here as she doesn't allow any of Maddy's friends to be close to her. Her only friend she got is her nurse Carla.

"After I lose, we go to the couch and watch our favorite movie, *Young Frankenstein*. Watching it is also part of our birthday ritual. I put my head in her lap, and she strokes my hair, and we laugh at the same jokes in the same way that we've been laughing at them for years. All in all, not a bad way to spend your eighteenth birthday" (Yoon 23).

Madeline is struggling here so as the common audience in their normal life. No one likes to be a servant to the boss. Here the mother is taking authority over her, but at the same time, it is shattering her desires and wishes. She is the authority means she decides what to do, and which one to reject. To her, it is her daughter's life and she is doing what she thinks will be best for her. But actually, it is causing her dreams and desires of her. Maddy and her mother celebrate the birthday quietly as there is no joy over there. Eating and watching movies don't make her happy. She wants something very joyful and very pleasant. "In my white room, against my white walls, on my glistening white bookshelves, book spines provide the only color" (Yoon 13). Her life under white walls means her life is only with her mother, Carla's daughter Rosa has grown less close now and she is old enough to be interested in boys. But in the case of Maddy, she is still reading *Flowers for Algernon*, a favorite book of hers and she is re-reading it. Carla has grown up her daughter in the right way Maddy's mother is different from her.

The eighteen year girl Maddy has no way to take a boyfriend to her mom. Madeline's mother is not ready to let her daughter speak with outsiders. She fears that her daughter communicates with outsiders without her knowledge. She may run out from her hands Maddy's mother is visibly saddened over having to deny Maddy the chance to socialize with neighbors. Maddy finds her life as the enjoyment of her mother.

"See I think there are roads that lead us to each other. But in my family, there were no roads- just underground tunnels. I think we all got lost in those underground tunnels. No, not lost. We just lived there" (Saenz, 21). These are the lines from *Last Night I Sang to the Monster* by Benjamin Alire Saenz. Everyone in this world felt some pain in their childhood. It may be intentional or unintentional, but that time have the backup from our family. The pain of illness, accident, or violence and some damages are done emotionally through the unexpected death of family members, accident, and divorce of parents. In Maddy's case, she was affected by her family. In Olly's case, he was affected by her drunkard father. He refuses to allow Kara to paint her nails black. Olly has an interest in athletics but he made him join football. She learned her lessons online. She is not allowed to go to school and she is also not allowed to speak with anyone else other than her mother and Carla. She doesn't even visit her tutors, the only tutor she met twice was Waterman. He is one of the favorites of Maddy and he never treated her as someone different. He also allows Maddy to enter his house. Maddy felt some connection with Olly and slowly a small relationship was building up there. This was quite not acceptable for Maddy's mother. Normally, men falling for women and vice versa is quite common. Here the decision wants to be made by these two. But here Maddy's mother is interfering with them and this makes her think about this relationship again. In her deep soul, she has feelings towards Olly and she thinks about her mother and controls her feelings. Maddy is supposed to be the decision maker but her inner mind is conscious which makes her feel that she is a patient with a deadly disease. She doesn't understand what love feels like but when Olly shows up everything changes in her life. Olly's family is quite complicated as his father is a violent man who is also a drunkard person. Olly's mother did not taste the peaceful life when she got married. Olly's father takes authority over her mother when he is drunk. Maddy couldn't see this situation in Olly's life. Maddy is mentally abused and Olly is physically abused. They are connected here and they share each other's pain. When Olly is in trouble we are shown how Maddy tries to protect him even after her mother stopped her from going out. It is also a case of Healing generational trauma that takes courage and strength. It is very common for the dysfunctional families to deny this abuse.

Olly slowly starts to feel cared for by Maddy and they feel safe with each other. He describes her family's struggles and the issues he is facing in his life. Maddy's mother questions Carla about their relationship "How could you let a stranger come in here?" Carla understands this relationship and this makes Maddy's mother fire Carla and warns her daughter not to see him again. Maddy's passion for art made Mr. Waterman feel delighted. Maddy was even refused to have internet privileges by her mother. She asks her mother about the usage of internet facilities and she responded as she wasn't interested to talk on that particular matter.

Maddy's mother does behave in ways that suggest she may be able to come to terms with her daughter's new independence, such as buying her a phone and stopping her from leaving for New York City. Her mother appointed new rules over her and appointed a new nurse for her. She didn't even say anything back as an objection. Her mother knows what she needs and what she is doing. Maddy took some time to realize that she had a life as an independent adult in front of her. Maddy sees Olly through her window, but at that time Olly doesn't realize her. Sometimes the world itself reveals itself before us. She slowly understands that there is a world that exists there. It is existed just out of reach a way for her to think about the world outside the sunroom.

Maddy loves Olly, but in fear of her mother, she fakes that she loves her mother. She says that her mom is kind and selfless but that mom won't understand what she is going to say. She understands that the life she leads in her imagination and books is no substitute for experiencing it. Ocean is the symbol of life, she understands her life and the value of it and photos or books are not enough to satisfy her needs now.

Tenderness is the strong emotions of affection and personal attachment. Psychologist Erich Fromm in his book *The Art of Loving* describes about "Love is not primarily related to a specific person; it's an attitude, an orientation of character which describes the relentless of a person to world as a whole. It is said to be a complicated emotion. Tenderness is different for different people, but it is the deepest emotion. Christians consider love as a true gesture of faith. There are four forms of tenderness in the Bible which are communicated through Greek words: Eros, Storage, Philip, and Agape. It is characterized by romantic love, family love, brotherly love, and God's divine love. God has given this power of tenderness to individuals to share their human emotions with others. It helps you to understand what love means and how we should follow the command that god has given you. "Love is patient, love is kind. Love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its way; it is not relatable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. Love bears all things, endure all things. Love never ends" (1 Cor.13:4-8). We can say that Tenderness is of three types' conceptual love, loving family members, and love a partner. The love of a mother is conditional on the life of the child and their needs. A woman is a good mother by nature. A Mother plays the role of mentor, teacher, and caretaker.

In this novel, tenderness is expressed through motherly love. But here the character is shown as a very harmful and selfish love person. She is completely afraid of the community. Madeline's mother lost her husband and son at a young age, so she decided to protect her daughter from any harm. Her mother's love expression was not pure love but fear. She thinks that she will also lose her daughter if she lets her go outside. This resulted in creating a fake disease for the safety of her daughter. Severe Combined Immunodeficiency (SCID) is very rare and very dangerous. There are several different types of disorders but a person doesn't have a functional Immune system. Victims are most susceptible to infections. Madeline makes her stay indoors because of her selfish love. Dr. Whittier her doctor takes good care of her. She also started to have an interest in art which made her read books. Her only relationship is with books and her mother not with the outside world. She even doesn't know what the outside world looks like, who her neighbors are, she doesn't know any tutors as she studied online, had no friends, and no family members. She has a lot of dreams about the outside world which she even haven't seen yet. This life made her realize real life without knowing the outside world. Life which is outside is joyful and has many beautiful moments. So she says that it is not as difficult as it is said to be. This made her interested to learn about the outside world and the life out there.

She is trying to come out of the cage. This is a representation of a girl's life in this world. Especially a girl who had lot of dreams when she was raised here and the societal norms always were against her dreams of them. Girls are asked to marry anyone when they reach eighteen. Every girls wish to higher studies or even in choosing their life partner the right to take decisions are not given to them. Here the author is mocks the societal norm and asking everyone to come out of the cage that is set around you. There may be many people to oppose you but you have to come out bravely with break the norms around you. The cage

which is set around you by the society can be broken by our desire. It is very hard to get back to a normal life in this world but it will be interesting as it sounds. You have that power and you can bring that change to the society.

Here she has heard a lot about the outside world and this created a curiosity in her mind and it is said that it will be difficult to get back to normal life. When Maddy finds out that she doesn't have a disease, she is very ecstatic, and her mother pleads with her that she can't lose her, even after everything. It shows her mother's feelings and sorrow deep inside her mind. She didn't recover from those deaths and she doesn't want to lose Maddy. After recovering from her illness, she comes to understand her real condition. Here the author did a great job of chronicling Maddy's journey towards forgiving her mother. It is Maddy who is taking the initiative towards discovering the truth about her health, confronting her mother, and beginning to set a boundary. Here Maddy finds out that the activities done by their mother as an expression of love. She understands that she thinks that there is nothing perfect in this world. She also believes that this world is quite unpredictable as anything can happen at any time and there is no escape from this. Olly's presence made changes towards Maddy. It shows that tenderness can change one's character and life easily.

Love makes everyone blind and this white love is the symbolic representation of purity and chastity, while other colors represent growing personal identity. We can see Maddy wears a white T-shirt often before meeting Olly but after she sees Olly she does not wear white but made a purchase over every color. Maddy thinks that it will be difficult for her to live without her. She was happy before she met him but now she thinks it in another way as now realizes that she is alive in this world. This love is often very romantic because of the language, symbols, and purity they have in them. Maddy is strongly connected to Olly. She started to oppose everyone, she started to think about him and thought of helping him. Maddy doesn't have any friends but she thinks Olly has dropped out of school and he will have a girlfriend, so she believes that it won't hurt her as his presence can make her awake and alive.

Maddy has to face two situations in her life: being happy and alive. She felt both after she met Olly. She understood that feeling and described this to her mother. She says she loved someone, but she feels a special love. She thinks that her love for Olly is better than her mom's first love. Children are in the care of their parents and they are often kept very safe. Protective parents will always surround their children without causing them any harm. In the beginning stage of our life, the child will start to walk successfully. Parents are said to be playing an important role in their lives. Mother sees their child playing around through the window, as they may be worried about the safety of them. The child's body forms a loose 'S' shape, which implies that the child is carefree and calm.

Tenderness plays an important role in everyone's life. Mother-daughter relationships can be complex but also filled with compassion and tenderness with high emotions. Here Maddy is confused about her love towards Mother and Olly. She gives more importance to Olly than her mother but her mother has more love towards her and is living for her. She has feelings for Olly as she feels incomplete without him. In the natural instance, every mother loves their children unconditionally. Every time Dr. Whittier thinks about protecting her daughter her tenderness results in her daughter's life.

Life is a journey with problems to solve, and lessons to learn but most of all people experience joy. Life is beautiful but always not very easy though. It is full of with problems, and the

challenges lie in facing them with courage. A person who never encountered difficulties in life can never achieve success. Difficulties test your courage, patience, perseverance, and true character as a human being. Adversity and hardship make a person strong and ready to face the challenges of life with equanimity. There is no doubt that there is no gain when there is no pain. Some individual identifies life just as an enjoyment and they don't show any responsibility they have and they suffer a lot.

Life is like a rose plant, as it has beauty in it as well as you have to be careful of the thorns. One who accepts difficulties with courage because of their hard work can experience heroic happiness, contentment, and peace. As an individual, you have to enjoy your life and also have to face difficulties too. The very important aspect of life is to keep moving forward. As nothing in this world remains permanent so as human life. Many people find it difficult to face failures. They didn't understand that if they failed in the first attempt it gave them a strong mind to face the failures. According to individuals the value and definition of life differ. Some identify pain as the synonym word for life. They have to understand that Pain only increases our mental resilience. Life is not something that one should take for granted. Whatever we get in our life, we see in our life is all an experience, and only that will make you understand certain things.

Here it is all about Maddy who lived her entire life with an incredible disease SCID which makes her allergic to everything. Because of her misfortune, she was confined to the walls of a polluted Los Angeles home for seventeen of eighteen years of her life. "Maybe it's because I'm eighteen now. Technically, I'm an adult" (10). She continues her life with her mom, the nurse, and the teacher. Despite all her limitations, she is excited and builds value in life by reading new things and experiencing them. This novel emphasizes that direct experience is superior to all the indirect experiences and the incidents happening there. The key to her happiness is when she identifies the reality and starts to face every issue. Life is hard, honey. Everyone finds a way. She decides her life choices that she has to experience in life. The only wish that she needs is to go out of the cage that is set around her and meet people outside.

She hasn't enjoyed her life, she spends these many days inside four walls, reading books. She never wants to see the outside world where kids of her age go outside to play but it is never possible in her life. She is very talented in arts and hides her works as no one should see it. For her she always wanted a normal life where she could do anything like others do in their normal life. She motivates herself by being optimistic for her own life by saying that everything is for the best. She is hoping that she gets a better life by saying that one day everything will change.

Maddy's vision of the outside world makes her unaware of the real life. Maddy believes that life outside is so beautiful and it is not as hard as hers. Of course, this motivates her to learn more about outside life and she wants to break the cage which was set around her. Her entire life changes when a new family comes to her next door. Olly notices her through the window tries to make contact first but it became unsuccessful and then he comes up with an idea by throwing stones at her window and having constant communication between them. They swipe their email and they started to have a nice and cute friendship. She tells the readers that she spends her time only by reading books sometimes from back to front. She thinks this as her life, her life as a book, she would read it back and forth- until you find someone more important.

Finally, Mother's anger, betrayal feeling, and anxiety surrounding Maddy's changes, however, sometimes in their family movement reflects a serious flaw. This is what happens in a normal girls' life. Here Maddy represent as a women who was betrayed by her own mother by a fake disease. She is a caring mother that made her say a lie to her daughter, so she can be kept safe inside her cage. Even though she faces many pain here but it is understandable.

Pain is the feeling of great discomfort, unhappiness, upset, disappointment, and a physical feeling which is caused by emotional disorder. Pain is the part of life, as it makes people go through worst phase. The emotional pain which is unpleasant which get affected to your body and appearance. There is no short ways to alleviate psychological, and the use of different ways an emphasis on particular aspect of mind life. The technical term include algopsychalia and psychalgia, but it may be called mental pain, psychic pain, social pain, or spiritual pain. Physical pain is the hurt that cause to your body and that causes damage to the body of a individual. It can be caused because of many things like throbbing, aching or burning. Mental sufferings lead to physical suffering.

Maddy goes through many suffering in her life. From her birth itself she is a bird in a cage. All she needed is happiness through freedom as it was denied by her mother. The sense of suffering was the case that is projected in many works like *The lovely Bones*, *Tangled*, *Hamlet*, *Frozen* etc. In the autobiography work by Helen Keller *The Story of My Life* she explains about the survival of her and the problems that she overcomes through her life. Through facing this she became one of the world's great motivational speaker of all time. She is a model for those who lose their strength and through her life she says that life is full of problems but you have to find a solution to move on. *Everything*, *Everything* deals through the themes of affliction, the dream of a normal girl and the issues she have to face when she was having this desire to explore the outside world. Her mother does everything for keeping her daughter safe from outside world but she didn't realize that she is actually shattering her daughter's desire. This gives you a direct insight into the mind of parents and children. Parents needs to understand the value of life and they should make the children understand about the personal values and the social values they have to face in their life. They both have to create a nice bond between them. The loneliness and the frustration between mother and daughter is because of love. The value of life is about love. The children will always go for love, if they are denied they will go where they find love. The life of man without any happiness is considered to be a life in hell, at the same time you have to be aware of your responsibilities. The relationship that a child have towards her mother should stand high with other relationship. No child like a inside life in a cage they have to be set free. Only experience make the human being understand about life. Maddy here experiences her first love, first touch and the first kiss in outside world of real experience.

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