

## **BRAVERY IN NICOLA YOON'S *EVERYTHING, EVERYTHING***

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**Abstract:** The purpose of this study is to reveal about bravery in Nicola Yoon's *Everything, Everything*. The writer uses qualitative research because the data collected is not presented through numbers but in the form of words. In conducting this research the writer collected data from two sources. The main source in the novel itself is *Everything, Everything* by Nicola Yoon, and secondary sources are other related sources such as books, online articles/journals, and the internet browsing related to the topic. The writer uses an objective approach to analyzing data. The objective approach focuses on the work itself, such as the plot, themes, characters, and settings that are interrelated. The results showed that bravery was seen in the main character Madeline Whittier. Madeline Whittier is an eighteen years old girl who never goes out of her house, she has SCID disease, almost everything she touched will trigger it, it can be said that she is allergic to the world. Madeline shows her bravery as follows: bravery to take a risk, bravery fight against her mother's opposition, and enjoy freedom like a normal girl.

**Keywords:** *Bravery, Motivation, Take a Risk, Overprotective Mother, Freedom*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Literature becomes part of the culture of society. Literature is a manifestation of the mind in written form. According to Jones, "Literature is just another way, we can experience the world around us through our imagination." (1). (Sabudu, 2014) stated that "literature is

reflection of human life whether in the society or in their private life, every phenomenon that found in the society usually reflects in the literary works such as poem, novel, drama or short story." (1).

A Literary work is an idea or feeling of writer expressed through his literary work. As stated by (Wuntu, 2014) "A literary work which has affective nature is a significant power to touch the deepest sense that can produce perfect consciousness as a form generator of human consciousness." (4).

Novel is one of literary works (Lolowang, 2010). Novel attracts the attention and the interest of many people regardless of their age, profession, or position, everyone almost likes to read a novel. According to (Maru, 2014) "novel is story regarding remarkable event or occurrence of life of someone is in it met by processing of soul altering someone which is narrated in the novel experience of life, what experienced of that figure basically represent of top from all distortion live and life which happened." (100).

Life without bravery will look useless because life is full of choice and mystery. Everyone must face bravely all obstacles in life because life choices or decisions not always run well (Ibrahim et al, 2021). According to Peterson and Seligman, "Bravery is an emotional force that involves a desire to achieve personal goals despite internal or external obstacles to their attainment." (199). Another opinion from Findley Paul, states that "Bravery is a nature preserve and fights for what is considered the right to confront all forms of danger, hardship, pain, and others." (10).

Bravery can be interpreted as an action to take a decision with the risk of the action (Potu et al, 2021). A brave person is not a person who has no fear, nor is one who is defeated by fear. Rather someone who can control fear and act with a rational or rational decision. "If someone can control his or her emotional and make the right decision, it can be a good way to reach something." (Kamagi, 2018).

*Everything, Everything* by Nicola Yoon introduces to readers about Madeline Maddy Whittier; an-eighteen-years-old girl who suffers from SCID (Severe Combined Immunodeficiency Disease) or known as "bubble baby disease." Basically, she is allergic to the world, and cannot leave her house or have any visitors who have not been through a rigorous decontamination process. Madeline fall in love with a boy who just moved next door named Olly. Madeline becomes more infatuated with him, and the outside world. Madeline the girl who

was completely content with her life realizes that she wants more. She decided she would rather risk her life seeing the outside world rather than spend it locked inside her house.

The novel tells about be brave and take risks in life. Madeline bravely explores the world beyond her comfort zone, she experiencing the wonders of the world for the first time, and discovering the deeper meaning of life. In other words, what it means to be really alive. After reading the novel, the writer is interested in analyzing bravery, to give a depiction of how to see ourselves in the world through the main character Madeline who bravery to get out of her comfort zone. Madeline is a girl who has limitations. She spent most of her life at home, because she was diagnosed with SCID or allergic disease to the world. However, with her bravery she took the risk by risking her life by leaving her house and running away by taking Olly with her without her mother's knowledge. The dominance of this bravery is challenging to dig out. How it is described deeply in the story becomes an interesting point. That is why the writer is interested in analyzing more deeply about bravery and its impact that motivate her, as reflected in Nicola Yoon's *Everything, Everything*.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### ***Research Design***

This research will be conducted in Qualitative method. "Qualitative research is descriptive that the written results of the research contain quotations from the data to illustrated and substantiate the presentation" (Bogdan and Biklen, 2003). From the definition above, it can be concluded that the presentation of the study will be in descriptive form. According to that definition, so qualitative research is descriptive.

### ***Data Collection***

In conducting this research, the data will be collected from the primary sources and the secondary sources. The primary sources taken from the novel *Everything, Everything* and the secondary sources are the other relevant books, articles/journals and internet browsing (Tatipang, 2022). In collecting the data, the researcher use another reference related to the novel. In research people need scientific work as the primary source, as stated by Mister Gidion Maru, featuring an Idea Woman in Ibsen's *Ghost*, "since the study takes literary work as its

object and primary source for its analysis, it is thought to be crucial to apply literary approach. It assists to reveal the meaning from the novel.” (16).

### ***Data Analysis***

In analyzing the data, the writer uses objective approach. In analyzing this research, the attention is on the intrinsic aspects found in the novel. About objective approach, Abrams M. H stated: “...the objective principle which on principle regard the work of art isolation from all these external points of reference, analysis as a self-sufficient entity constituted by its parts in their internal relations and to be judged solely by criteria intrinsic to its mode of being” (26). Objective approach is used to analyze novel *Everything, Everything* for deserving the traits of the character's bravery. It is used to analyze speech or the acts of the character, Madeline Whittier as well as the speech and acts of the other characters supporting the bravery of Madeline Whittier.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

Bravery is a big step, it shows how much courage one has, how much strength someone can put into something scary, hard, or sad. Merriam-Webster Dictionary indicates that bravery refers to quality of those people who act with bravery, effort, vigor, strength, daring, and boldness. Madeline Whittier as the main character in the novel *Everything, Everything* shows her bravery to take a risk to step out of her comfort zone even though it is dangerous for her who has a limited condition.

### ***The Bravery of Madeline Whittier***

#### ***Bravery to Take a Risk***

Madeline Whittier shows her bravery to take a risk to go out of her house. She decided to leave her house by leaving a letter for her mother. It can be seen in the quotation below:

“I’m not doing this just because of Olly. Or maybe I am. I don’t know. I don’t know how to explain it. It’s Olly and it’s not-Olly at the same time. It’s like I can’t look at the world in the old way anymore. I found this new part of myself when I met him and the new part doesn’t know how to stay quiet and still just observe. ...I don’t know, Mom. I don’t

know what I'm doing only that I have to. Sometimes I wish I could go back to the way I was before, before I knew anything. But I can't" (Yoon 168).

According to the quotation above, Madeline does not have enough of her life just to be locked in her house without knowing the taste of the outside world. Madeline shows that this is a great risk that she has taken from her life.

Madeline also shows her bravery by making a decision to travel to Hawaii with Olly, when Madeline and Olly in Hawaii they spent their time together to know each other better. It can be seen in the quotation below:

"Please help me, Olly. Please." I point to the orrery. "I need to escape, too, just for a little while." He nods. "Where do you want to go?" "Mads, be serious. We can't go to Hawaii." "Why not? I got us plane tickets. I booked us a hotel." "We're sitting in Olly's car in the driveway. He puts the key in the ignition, but doesn't turn it.

"Are you kidding?" he asks, "Hawaii is three thousand miles away. "Hence the airplane." "You're serious? When did you do this? How? Why?" "Last night, with a credit card, because I want to see the world" (178).

The quotation above clearly shows that Madeline is really serious about her choice to know the world and then she enjoys it. She is brave to go with Olly even though she has a limitation.

### ***Bravery in Fighting against Mother's Opposition***

Madeline shows her bravery in fighting against her mother's opposition when she finds out that she did not suffer from a deadly disease. Madeline talks to her mother, she went to know about the truth that she is sick or not. It can be seen in the quotation below:

"Am I sick?" I ask. My blood beats too loudly in my ears. "What did you say?" "Am I sick?" I say it louder this time. Her burgeoning anger dissipates, replaced by concern. "Do you feel sick?" She reaches out a hand to touch me, but I push away. The hurt on her face makes me slightly ill, but I press. "No, that's not what I mean. Do I have SCID?" She takes a deep breath to steady herself. "Madeline Whittier, what are you talking about? "You have records for everything, but there's nothing about SCID in here.

Why can't I find anything? I grab the red folder from the ground and shove it her. "You have everything else." "What are you talking about?" she asks. "Of course it's in here." I'm not sure what I was expecting her to say, but that was not it. Does she really believe it's all here?

She clutches the folder to her chest like she's trying to make it a part of herself. "Did you look carefully? I keep everything." After a while she looks up at me. "Did you take them? I know they were in here." Her voice is thick with confusion and, also, fear.

And that's when I know for sure. I am not sick and I never have been" (Yoon 275).

From the quotation above, Madeline has the courage to ask her mother. Even though Madeline finally knew the truth that she is not sick but her mother always lied to her and did not want to admit the truth of Madeline's illness and always hide the truth from Madeline.

Furthermore, Madeline felt unacceptable with the fact that she was experiencing, Madeline went out so her mother chased her and invited her to go back inside. It seems that her mother still thinks that Madeline is sick. It can be seen in the quotation below:

"I run from the office. I'm outside and my breath is soundless. My mom catches up to me. Her face is a ruin of fear. "What are you doing? What are you doing? You have to go inside." My vision tunnels and I hold her in my sights. "Why, mom? Why do I have to go inside?" "Because you're sick. Bad things could happen to you out here." She reaches out to me to pull me toward her, but I jerk away from her. "No. I'm not going back in." "Please," she begs (276-277).

Finally, she can make her mother speak the truth to her and the reason why her mother says that Madeline had a serious disease. It can be seen in the quotation below:

"I lost them. I lost your dad and I lost you brother. I couldn't lose you, too. I just couldn't." She's broken. She's been broken for a long time. Carla was right. She never recovered from their deaths. She nods her head. "I knew it was more than that. I had to *protect* you. Anything can happen to you out here." She looks around. "Anything can happen to you out here. In the world." "Come inside," she whispers. "I'll protect you. Stay with me. You're all I have" (277).

The quotation above clearly shows that the reason why her mother lies to her is that her mother wants to protect Madeline from the outside world because her mother could not lose her like her father and brother. Madeline's mother says to Madeline that all she has is Madeline.

From Madeline's bravery in acting to find out the truth despite her mother's opposition and fighting with her mother, she finally knows about what her mother had been hiding about Madeline's life that she did not suffer from SCID.

### ***Aspects that Motivate Madeline's Bravery***

For every human who has limitations, their belief in having a future tends to be very weak. They consider their future bleak. This results in loss of life expectancy and life motivation. This happened to Madeline Whittier the protagonist in Yoon's novel *Everything, Everything*. She is considered to suffer from a form of Severe Combined Immunodeficiency Disease (SCID). She has not left her house in seventeen years because she is allergic to almost everything. This happens until she meets her basic needs which motivates her to alive and become a brave person. Her basic needs as humans involve the desire to have a relationship and social interaction. Therefore, humans, especially with a physical limitation, must have a motivation that can be obtained from within themselves or from outside themselves.

### ***Self-motivation***

Madeline Whittier is in cage for seventeen years without ever going out of her house. She never meets other people besides her mother, and her nurse Carla. She wastes her time by reading books. But, when she becomes eighteen years old, some motivation to enjoy her life as a teenager appears from her own thought. The following quotation shows the beginning of her self-motivation: "Maybe it's because I'm eighteen now. Technically, I'm an adult. I should be leaving home, going off to college. My mom should be dreading empty-nest syndrome. But because of SCID, I'm not going anywhere" (Yoon 10).

Madeline realizes that she has to decide a life choice because she has already eighteen years old, which means she has already been an adult. Further, she tells her mom her wish on her eighteenth birthday: "What did you wish for?" she asks as soon as I open my eyes. Really there's only one thing to wish for-a magical cure that will allow me to run free outside like a wild animal, but I never make that wish because it's impossible" (11).

That is seen that Madeline has a wish to be like a normal girl although she thinks it is impossible to happen. However, she motivates herself to be optimistic for her own life by saying this: "World peace," I say (11).

The following quotation also shows Madeline hopes a change of her life and the hope can motivate her to be more optimistic: "Maybe, I'm holding out hope that one day, someday, things will change" (14).

Besides, Madeline's view of the outside world makes herself not to realize her real life. The quotation below proves that Madeline believes that life outside is really beautiful and it is not as hard as hers. Of course, this really motivates her to know more about outside life and she wants to leave her cage:

"But trying to get back to my normal routine is hard when I can hear all the sounds of the outside world. I notice things that I paid very little attention to before. I hear the wind disturbing the trees. I hear birds gossiping in the mornings. I see the rectangles of sunlight that slip through my blinds and work their way across the room throughout the day. You can mark time by them. As much as I'm trying to keep the world out, it seems determined to come in" (32).

The above quotations show how motivation exists from the protagonist's own mind. Later on, there is also motivation which comes from outside factors. Those factors are because of the protagonist's relatedness.

### ***Motivation from Other People***

That is Carla, Madeline's caregiver. Carla plays an important role in Madeline's life, she encouraged Madeline's motivation to feel loved, and be brave. As seen from the following quote: "Just because you can't experience everything doesn't mean you shouldn't experience anything. Besides, doomed love is part of life." (Yoon, 79). "Be brave. Remember. Life is a gift. Don't forget to live it" (141).

Olly, the one with whom Madeline falls in love for the first sight. Olly, the caring boy whom Madeline falls for, is a believable character with real-life problems unwittingly motivates Madeline to risk all in order to live more fully. He shows some attention to Madeline and



succeeds to make her more cheerful to live her life even with severe disease. It can be seen in the quote: "Ever since Olly came into my life there've been two Maddys: the one who lives through books and doesn't want to die, and the one who lives and suspects that death will be a small price to pay for it... The second Maddy knows that this pale half life is not really living" (167).

The above quotation proves how valuable the coming of Olly is to her life. The coming changes Madeline view her own life.

The following is a quote that shows that Madeline fell in love with Olly from their meeting even though she knew that it would be a disaster: "Maybe we can't predict everything, but we can predict somethings. For example, I am certainly going to fall in love with Olly. It's almost certainly going to be a disaster" (99).

Madeline distinguishes two different conditions in her life: being happy and being alive. She prefers being alive, she can feel such stage after meeting Olly.

Then, Madeline reveals the different feeling between love for her mom and for Olly. She expresses that she has ever love somebody, but now she feels like special love. She thinks that such love for Olly is better than her first love for her mom. The following quotation shows it: "In my head I know I've been in love before, but it doesn't feel like it. Being in love with you is better than the first time. It feels like the first time and the last time and the only time all at once" (221).

Madeline is not satisfied with her current situation so she plans to leave home. Madeline risks her life by get out of her house and inviting Olly to go to Hawaii with her.

Madeline and Olly spent their time together while in Hawaii getting them to know each other better, and fell in love for each other even though for them what they had been through was something they had never thought of before. Here is a quote that shows it: "Everything's different and the same. I'm still Maddy. Olly still Olly. But we're both more somehow. I know him in a new way. And I feel known, too. For us to have met, to have fallen in love, to get to be together is beyond anything either of us had ever thought possible" (229).

To feel that everything new to Madeline was extraordinary, she did not want Olly to feel anxious and guilty that Madeline had finally come out of her comfort zone instead, Madeline

thanked Olly because of Olly, Madeline felt happier and more alive. It can be seen in the quote: "I reach over and take his hand. "Thank you," is all I can think to say. I want to tell him that it's not his fault that I'm out here. That love opens you up to the world. I was happy before I met him. But I'm alive now, and those are not the same thing" (181).

All of the quotes above reveal that both Carla and Olly contributed to controlling Madeline's motivation. Carla as Madeline's nurse always tries to motivate Madeline to enjoy her life and be a brave person. And it is undeniable, from Olly, Madeline feels what she never has. Besides, Olly drives Madeline to desire to get her human need that is being alive.

### ***Motivation from Personal Life Choices***

Madeline's life story represents her choices besides her severe illness. She was brave enough to take any risk, even though she knew his handicap. She and her lover Olly continue to be hindered by Madeline's limited condition. Madeline became increasingly dissatisfied with being isolated. Finally, she made a decision that moved the course of events that changed her life forever.

When Madeline had her eighteenth birthday, she took the initiative to change her life and determine her life choices. That can be seen from the quote below:

"Another whole year of being sick, no hope for a cure on the horizon. Another year of missing all the normal teenager things – learner's permit, first kiss, prom, first heartbreak, first fender bender... This year is a little harder than previous. Maybe it's because I'm eighteen now... I should be leaving home, going off to college. My mom should be dreading empty-nest syndrome" (Yoon 10).

Meeting Olly for the first time made Madeline think of herself in the universe, outside the limits of her home, and to admit what she really wanted. This was something she did not really allow herself to do until this point:

"And it's not just Olly that I see. I keep picturing myself floating high about the earth. From the edge of space I can see the whole world all at once. My eyes don't have to stop at a wall or at a door. I can see the beginning and the end of time. I can see infinity from there. For the first time in a long time I want more than I have" (80).

The two quotations above reveal how initially life was brighter than she wanted to achieve. However, Olly's disappearance after their relationship was discovered by her mother resulted in Madeline's perspective on her life-changing gradually. Although she describes herself as two Maddys in reality, Madeline grew and began making her own decisions about the risks she would take and how she wanted to live her life: "Ever since Olly came into my life there've been two Maddys: the one who lives through books and doesn't want to die, and the one who lives and suspects that death will be a small price to pay for it... The second Maddy knows that this pale half life is not really living" (167).

Madeline seems genuinely convinced of what she will do and Carla also ensures Madeline that everything has its own consequences. Carla noted Madeline was ready for the consequences:

"I don't turn around, talking instead to Carla in the mirror. "Are you sure about this? You don't think it's too risky anymore?"...He's the biggest risk I've ever taken. "You trying to talk me out of it?" She comes over and puts a hand on my shoulder. "Everything's a risk. Not doing anything is a risk. It's up to you" (68-69).

The quotes reveal that Madeline realized that there was a risk to what she would take, but she seemed ready to take it. This choice was taken by Madeline even though she knew of its limitations. Madeline has determined her life choices and their consequences.

Madeline decided to get out of her comfort zone and go on travel in Hawaii with Olly, she found herself getting so sick that Madeline's mother immediately picked her up and looked after her again in their home. A few months later Madeline got an email from the doctor who treated her in Hawaii, saying that she had never suffered a severe illness.

Madeline and her mother got into a big fight about the truth that her mother had covered up all this time. Madeline's mother was forced to make Madeline like someone suffering from SCID because her mother did not want to lose her after the death of Madeline's father and brother. From then on she began to set temporary boundaries with her mother. Over time, she learned to forgive her mother, understanding that what her mother did was out of love. Unlike her mother who tried to protect her from the dangers of life, Madeline accepted that life and lived a risk:

"But anything can happen at anytime. Safety is not everything. There's more to life than being alive. Love. Love makes people crazy. Loss of love makes people crazy." "The universe took my dad and brother away. For her it was the Big Bangs in reverse—everything that became a nothing. I can understand that. Almost. I am trying to" (300).

Overall, Madeline finally returned to her mother after recovery. She realized that she was the only love her mother had. It can be seen in the quote: "My mother loved my father. He was the love of her life. And she loved my brother. He was the love of her life. And she loves me. I am the love of her life" (301).

All the events that occurred in Madeline's life represented her chosen choices. Even though Madeline and her mother were involved in a conflict that made their relationship fall apart, Madeline finally accepted her mother back.

But in the end, what Madeline chose was her personal determination that she chose to leave the house and her mother. As seen in the following quote: "When will you come back home?" she asked. And I told her the truth. "I don't know if this is home anymore." She cried then, but still she let me go, and that has to count for something" (301).

Madeline expressed her bravery in determining her own destiny.

### ***The Impact of Madeline's Bravery***

The life choices that Madeline chooses resulted in a decision and the decision made by Madeline was freedom. Free from the restrictions her mother placed on her. Freedom is the result of a choice. Freedom can also be interpreted as having no fear and doing whatever the heart wants and still moving forward. Like Madeline who made the decision to take a risk and get out of her comfort zone and after living a life full of limitations, she finally found out the truth about her life that she was not sick.

From what she had been through, she decided to return to being with Olly. Olly, who was previously Madeline's neighbor, had moved to New York with his mother and sister, they moved away from Olly's evil father. Madeline booked a ticket to go to New York for herself, although the doctor who treated her was not happy with Madeline's choice but she still chose to go. Meanwhile, Madeline's mother made absolutely no attempt to stop Madeline with her

choice. As seen from the quote: "To her credit, my mom didn't try to stop me when I told her last night. She swallowed all her fear and panic even though she still doesn't fully believe that I'm not sick" (300).

The quote above proves that Madeline is completely free from the ties or boundaries she has experienced so far.

Madeline arrived in New York the taxi dropped her off at an old bookstore near Olly's house where she and Olly would meet. Until the time came, Madeline watched Olly slowly walk in and how Olly had changed a little from before. As shown in the following quote. "His hair has grown. He has big floppy curls that soften the angles of his face. Also, he's not wearing all black. Well, his jeans and sneakers are black, but his T-shirt is gray. And I think he's taller somehow. I don't know why I expected him to be the same. *I'm not*" (304).

The quotation above describes how Madeline's picture of Olly has changed. But that did not make Madeline's feelings change, it made her even more panicked. As shown in the following quote:

"More than anything I've experienced in the last few weeks—saying good-bye to Carla, leaving home against Dr.Chase's advice, leaving my mom in her sadness—seeing him looking so different causes me the most panic." The smile he gives me is worth living for" (304-305).

The quotation above proves that Madeline's bravery, which has gone through all the things that previously were impossible for her to do, all of which is done on the basis of determination or motivation, a choice to get out of her comfort zone and courage and love until finally she has freedom and can reunite with Olly.

## **CONCLUSION**

After analyzing Madeline Whittier's bravery researcher came to the conclusion that Madeline Whittier was a girl whose mother was convicted of having a serious disease, namely Severe Combined Immunodeficiency Disease. Madeline's bravery is classified into two types, namely the first act of bravery, dare to take a risk by getting out of her comfort zone even though she has a limit not to be contaminated with the outside world by leaving home, and

spending time with Olly in Hawaii. The second type of bravery is bravery against opposition from her own mother who claims that she has a serious illness this makes the relationship between Madeline and her mother messy. This bravery led her to the fact that she did not really have a deadly disease, it was just a lie made by her own mother because she did not want to lose Madeline, even though in the end Madeline forgave and accepted her mother back. From this fact, she decided to live a normal life and be free from restrictions until finally, she could meet Olly again.

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