

A Psychodynamic Exposition of Nora's Personality Traits in Matt Haig's *The Midnight Library*

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Abstract- *Matt Haig is an English author and journalist. He has written both fiction and non-fiction books for children and adults, often focuses on fantasy. Matt Haig is an excellent-promoting author and mental health lecturer who has already suffered from a major depressive disorder. Having tried to take his personal existence at the age of 24, Matt has ended up an advocate for mental health situations using his platform to enlighten audiences on the issues he's experienced as well as helping give them the tools to live a positive lifestyle. "The Midnight Library" is a beautifully written novel by Matt Haig, exploring the meaning of life and the impact of conflicting with mental health. The author focuses on the psychological journey of Nora, the protagonist on a quest of detecting her identity. She battled with misery and depression and self-murdered. In the middle of life and death, she appears herself inside a library where she gets the turn to recover from her depression and find true peace by choosing between many different lives. This study focuses to examine the development of the main character, Nora after the apparent death in Matt Haig's *The Midnight Library*. At the start of the story, the writer finds out that Nora is dispirited, petty minded, pessimistic, ungrateful, and self-blameful. After she experiences apparent death, she begins to understand the true meaning of her life. And then she turns into open-minded, optimistic, grateful, and happier person after she underwent something massive in her life when she is between life and death.*

Indexed Terms- *Character development, Apparent death, Identity, Epiphany, Hope*

I. INTRODUCTION

In life, human genuinely has a purpose in their lives to win or achieve. But, in the process of achieving the purpose in life, the human adventure is not always easy

and smooth. They are frequently confronted by many challenges, obstacles, and even persistent problems that can cause stress, ache and depression. Issues and barriers come to every human's life every day which makes life really difficult to live. If someone quit or drop out in the middle of their life because they have to face the problems and challenges in life, then they will lose and get nothing so that they can even think to end their own life. Therefore, they should try to solve the problem. Nobody is born with an exact personality in this global. It is because human character can be influenced by some elements and also can improve or broaden over time by being influenced by social life, social conditions, environments, and social activities around them.

In Matt Haig's *The Midnight Library*, the main character, Nora also experiences character development after she experiences apparent death in the *Midnight Library*, Matt Haig's *The Midnight Library* tells about the primary character, Nora, who lives with stress, disappointment and regret. She usually worries about her life and always thinks that her life is a mess. When things do not go as she plans, she gets mad at herself and feels desperate. She thinks that everything she does continually fails and goes wrong, her moves feel like a mistake and she thinks that it is her fault. One time, she wants to quit her life due to the fact she feels that she no longer has any goals to achieve in life, even a small goal has gone.

She feels that no one requires her or her help anymore. Finally, she decided to kill herself to put an end to all the worries and regrets in her life. But, Nora wakes up in a slightly in the *Midnight Library* with an awful lot of green books, from darkish to clear green. In the library, Nora meets Mrs. Elm, an old female librarian from her past school. Mrs. Elm explains to Nora that they are in the *Midnight Library* that is between life and death.

In the early of the story, it is shown that Nora is a 35-year-old woman who lives alone and survives with little purpose in life. Nora works at String Theory, a music store, as a store clerk and sometimes she gives piano lessons to a customer. She works well, does an excellent job, and also has no intention to move out of her job. It is not because she is too comfortable and honestly loves her job, but because she is too afraid to try new things. Nora lives with complete fears about what will happen in the future and she continuously worries about everything in her life. She even matters about things that she has not even tried. So, she messes up her own life.

Early in the story, Nora is described as a petty-minded person. She always worries about everything that happens in her life. If things do not go according to her plan, she constantly concludes the motives with negative thoughts.

At one time, in her days, Nora feels that horrific things were entering into her life continuously, every day. She lost her cat and she is dismissed from where she worked. Her side jobs as a piano teacher and medicine taker for Mr. Benerjee have additionally been replaced by someone else. So she feels that her life is absolutely useless. She feels that no one needs her anymore. Nora has lost everything that gives her reasons for being in the world. Losing things that makes a reason for her to stay alive, makes her feel that she also loses her chance to live a good life and to be beneficial. One of the reasons for her to live her life is to look after her cat, but her cat died and it is found by a man on the side of the road. She tries to do a good job in her working place so that she can get a good salary from that even though her salary is not enough to pay her rent sometimes. But now Nora is also dismissed from her job, which makes her lose her income.

Nora does not need to try to be worthwhile or to have the life that she thinks is perfect again, because in her opinion, the more she tries, the more she fail in her life. She turns into desperate, so she decide to end her life. She knew only one thing with absolute certainty: she didn't want to reach the following day. She decided to die. In her life, Nora feels that she has nothing left to hold on to and that she has nobody else by her side, even just to exchange news. Even Nora lost her cat and feels so sad about it. For all of the bad things that

happen in her life, Nora always blames herself and thinks that she is the one who makes her life becomes worse. Nora blames herself, feeling that she is the most useless person in the world. Everything she does always feels like a mistake to her. She feels that no matter what she tries, it will not work. Her mind is filled with the illusion of failure in life.

After what Nora had experienced in her life, she chose to end her life because she refused to retain. She's afraid to go through tomorrow. Actually, death is never going to be the answer to every problem. After Nora decides to quit her life, she hopes that she will be free of all the problems and anxieties of her life. But after Nora tries to quit her life, Nora wakes up in a place that looked like a library. Nora also notices a person who looked similar to her past school librarian, named Mrs. Elm.

Nora has been through a lot in Midnight Library. She has tried various versions of life, which make her learn many stuffs too. She learns many things and understands many things that she does not know earlier. Nora experiences epiphany after she experiences apparent death between life and death. Epiphany is a unexpected consciousness experience by a character about a deeper understanding of a situation and circumstance in life in a story. Characters begin to acknowledge her lives and circumstances after she experience character evolution caused by the crucial situation that occurred in her life. Epiphany shows that the character in the story has learned and noticed something from her previous experiences, thus makes her become the better version of herself than she was earlier.

II. INFERENCE

After everything that Nora has been through at the Midnight Library, Nora understood how worthy is life. She realizes there is no ideal life. The life she is lived all this time is the best life ever. When Nora experiences a few events in her apparent death, she learns and realizes something, such as the fact that life must go on without giving up, because it will also give a variety of lessons.

Nora Seed realizes that by staying alive, she will be able to realize and recognize many stuffs.

This is because when a person lives, that person will go through many things and enjoy many things which could cause them to be better version of themselves. Nora wants to change herself to see only the good in her life. It is because she has learned a lot about life, and she is prepared to live a better life .

After her apparent death, Nora begins to see the possibilities that she can reach in life. She can see that there are excellent possibilities that can be obtained. She is able to see hope in her life and make it survive. In Nora's life, previously she was someone who couldn't be grateful and kept complaining about everything that happened to her. However, after she experienced many things while she was in between life and death, she turned into someone who could respect herself more. She became extra grateful for everything that happened to her.

Nora is now starting to see the best in her life. Nora is being greater confident with her life and she is living a full of happiness in her life right now. Nora starts to appreciate that in all her life there must be various trials to come. Everyone also has difficulties and problems in their life. So Nora makes a decision to love herself more for who she is. She starts enjoying her life and unable to live her life with positive thoughts. As Nora sees the wonderful things in her life, she becomes more happier. She now sees that everything in her life is more inspiring.

Based on the analysis above, it can be concluded that Nora, the main character in Matt Haig's the Midnight Library, has a dynamic kind of character, where the character can change at the end of the story. So, the character of Nora at the beginning of the story and at the end of the story is different. At the beginning of the story, Nora is described as a dispirited, petty-minded, pessimistic, ungrateful, and self-blameful character. After, Nora experiences apparent death in Midnight Library where she actually is between life and death. There are a lot of things that make her realize the fact that she has not known before, and she also learns a lot there. She begins to realize the true meaning of her life. So, after that, it is found out that Nora's apparent death influences Nora's character development. At the end of the story, Nora becomes an open-minded, optimistic, grateful, and happier person after she

experiences something massive in her life which is when she is between life and death.

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