



Life versus Death in Matt Haig's *The Midnight Library*

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ABSTRACT:

Literature is a gifted and brilliant art form for the writers to produce the different Genre to the entire world and gives the purposeful thoughts to the readers. Matt Haig is an English Author, who is known for his Speculative Fiction and Fantasy Fiction dealt with Memoir in his writing style. The novel deals with the character Nora 35 years old woman the story revolves around that how the Protagonist suffering from depression and mental health issue and in between she finds a different version of life that she gets a chance to undo her regrets and eventually it reveals that how she overcomes the suicidal thoughts. One will be able to discover the main aspect that is 'Mental Depression' it plays a crucial life in everybody's life mostly who are in solitude state so here the eccentric writer imparts the life of Nora Seed that how she is undergoing burdensome circumstances in her daily life and how it influences and the way she overcomes anxiety and depression that demoralize the protagonist Nora Seed, here one can perceive that how Nora Seed manoeuvres the hardship and affliction occurs in her day to day state of affairs.

Keywords: Mental Depression, Regrets, Suicidal Thoughts, Solitude.

Literature is a means that the writers can pen his (or) her literary work and it is often deals with the experiences and back ground of their own culture. British Literature is largely from the United Kingdom of Great Britain and specifically the works produced in the English Language it encompasses Northern Ireland, Channel Islands and Isle of Man.

Matt Haig is an English author and Journalist palpably his works incorporates Fiction and Non Fiction. *The Midnight Library* is a fantasy novel by Matt Haig and in the main it sets a dilemma of the protagonist Nora Seed, 35 year old woman agonizes with mental health breakdown and confronts with anxiety and depression which leads a way to suicide.

Mental depression is an aspect constitutes in each and every one's life it leads people to commit suicide, over thinking, failures and lack of confidence leads a way to depression and anxiety, so in this Novel one can able to perceive the hardship and difficulties faced by the protagonist Nora seed, Matt Haig depicted the character Nora Seed in a way that how she is undergoing with an depression and suicidal thoughts here Nora Seed as an leading personality has given a different version of her life.

Nora Seed, 35 year old woman her life is filled with resentment and regrets, nineteen years before Nora accompanied Mrs. Elm a Librarian both were playing chess and Mrs. Elm always uplifted Nora in an inspiring way and further encourages Nora and says "There are many different possible lives ahead of you"(2). Mrs. Elm insisted Nora to make an effort to seek the multifarious of decisions. Nineteen years later Nora scrolled her mobile skipped through other lives that were living happily. Before she decided to die Nora regrets for the loss of her Voltaire, a Cat and mourns for her brother Joe who was not in the touch with Nora and her mother and finally her father and dream of leading The Labyrinths music band. Nora has numerous dreams within her but yet she cannot reach the dream so Nora dragged into the mental depression and started to have Anti-depressants, Nora ruminated that she fit for nothing and tells "Swimmer. Musician. Philosopher. Spouse. Traveler. Glaciologist. Happy loved. Nothing" (21). Nora was deeply distressed and avers that she could not accomplish her dreams and ponders herself as worthless.

Eventually Nora decided right time to die so Nora written a Letter and thought herself as a misfortune and tells her final good bye. Nora found in a mysterious place she wondered what was happening around her and Nora was in Chaotic and unclear state. Mrs. Elm a Librarian says that "Between Life and Death there is a Library" (28). The line explicates the mystifying place which was an peculiar Library that is *The Midnight Library*

Nora had different and unusual feeling and was in an conundrum situation she was considered as an closed book because it was weird for her to be in *The Midnight Library*. In Nora's head question was arised that Why she hasn't died only regrets were constantly running in her mind. "I haven't become Dan's wife .I haven't become a mother. I haven't become the lead singer of The Labyrinths. I haven't managed to become a truly good or truly happy person .I haven't managed to look after Voltaire" (29). These are the extensive regrets were constantly running and haunting her mind and it out brings her mental stress and anxiety.

Nora came to know through Mrs. Elm that *The Midnight Library* is to safeguard from death and it gives an opportunity to try different lives, Nora gets an chance to live the life that she wished to live and if she wanted she can unshackle her regrets Mrs. Elm handed over a book to Nora that is 'The book of Regrets' since Nora was born her regrets were chronicled, specifically Dan specific regrets, Dan is a man that Nora about to marry but she refused to marry Dan, so Nora wanted to live that life with Dan and Nora encountered with Dan and his dream of own a pub in countryside and then she returns to the Library, Nora was suffocated with her regrets still Nora wanted to die because her depression grown stronger she thinks that always she was disappointed and bad at her work. Nora tells Mrs. Elm that her life is catastrophe.

According to Nora in whatever life she chooses to live in her subconscious mind she had an suicidal thoughts so she was not fulfilled in whatever life she chooses for instance Nora's life with her father Geoff, Nora came to know the truth that is her father had an affair with another woman and he divorced Donna Nora's mother Donna in her childhood days suffered a lot and was not happy in her nuptial. "Nora believed marriage was something was not only inevitable but inevitably miserable" (122). Nora was petrified about marriage because she examines that the marriage was miserable because no one can get away from that unhappy life in marriage which was affected her enormously.

Nora even in choosing different version of life suffered a lot and felt very heavy because her psyche got addicted to depression ,stress and harmful stuffs further Mrs. Elm encourages Nora Seed when she felt very down and unencouraged, Nora gradually came to understand the life that she chooses ,she lived the different shade of lives. In one life she lived the life of a glaciologist, aclimatologist, a tree planter, professional dog walker and so forth at the same point Nora became aware that she was dreaming someone's dream. "The married life in the pub had been Dan's dream. The dream of becoming a swimming champion belonged to her father and The Labyrinths well that had always been her brother's dream" (173). gradually Nora was able to comprehend that she was not pursuing her own dream instead following others dreams so she recognized her own passion.

Nora, wished to live a happy and peaceful life the life that Nora worked with animals and she got that life and in another version of life Nora married Ash and had an daughter Molly so Nora wanted to continue with this life but she was back to the library Nora has returned from the life which she lived with Ash and Molly and she returned back to the Library, The Library got collapsed and started to ruin and fell into disrepair and eventually Nora decided to live and changed her suicidal thoughts. Nora wished to live and avers "I don't want to die" (238). Nora was determined and convinced to live not to die anymore.

So eventually Nora wished to live and changed her suicidal thoughts she was able to overcome the destruction situation and admitted to the hospital and get back into her normal life again until before Nora was in chaotic state and fear of getting marriage and having a child but after recovering from her destroyable thoughts Nora wanted to show love to everybody around her. In past Nora understood the meaning of life it doesn't mean that knowing everything but just to live the life.

Nora remembered that Joe bought her a picture it is volcano. The volcanoes were the harmful and destructive. "It solidifies and then breaks down over time to become soil-rich fertile soil" (258). The volcano represents the life it seems to be contradictory volcano will become stronger and it disintegrates ultimately the soil will turn up into rich and fertile. Nora wanted to be like Volcano "You don't have to understand life you just have to live it" (254). It impossible to comprehend the life so just to enjoy every moment of our life and just have to live it. In the inference the author Matt Haig put forward the sweetness and bitterness of everybody's life ultimately the protagonist of the novel Nora Seed able to understand the purpose of life one can examine that the life is alike Oxymoron it embraces happy, sad, anxiety, depression, and so forth the novel fits into everybody's life the fact is that the life is full of ups and down contains positive and negative aspects so through the life of Nora Seed one can elucidate the difficulties and

trauma and the complication situation of humankind which is inevitable and perpetual. "The only way to learn is to live" (62). Life entails obstacles and favorable circumstances the only way to live a life is to learn a situation to tackle with credence and hope.

Reference:

Haig, Matt. *The Midnight Library*. Great Britain: Canongate Books, 2020.