

# Epiphanous Moment in a Sein-Zum-Tode Trajectory in Matt Haig's *The Midnight Library*

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**Abstract** Matt Haig in *The Midnight Library* depicts Nora's dissatisfaction with her life choices. And this crisis in Nora's life was so devastating that she wants to commit suicide. This sense of malaise experienced by the majority of human beings due to the sense of disorientation attracts the attention of the audience. Suspended between life and death, Nora found her way to a library where she found different versions of her life as if she was living vicariously. She could read about her different roles in life as if she was living in a parallel world and she saw her life with so many different choices. After all, she found all those choices did not bestow her the contentment she was pursuing, instead, her lost contentment was retrieved. This epiphanic event reminds her she can be happy with her choices in life and it acts as a tromp l'oeil for Nora to distract her attention from the slough of meaninglessness and hopelessness. This paper highlights that the sense of finitude in life can make it more meaningful and Nora's Being toward death gives her a phoenix-like rebirth to affirmatively embrace her destiny as it is.

**Keywords** Epiphany; Malaise; Sein-Zum-Tode; Rebirth; Amor fati

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### Introduction

As an English Journalist and author, Matt Haig in *The Midnight Library* dealt with philosophical concerns in a fantastic manner. He is dexterous in both fiction writing and non-fiction writing. The major concern of this article, is his novel, *The Midnight Library*, which is a sequel to a memoir entitled *Reasons to Stay Alive*. In most of his works, he is obsessed with human depression, loss of hope, and suicidal feelings, as all these arise from his personal experience.

He believes that though he felt suicidal, and found depression as the most real thing in life, he finally succeeds in finding the silver lining in the dark clouds of his life. The recommended panacea in Matt Haig's works is reading about others' sufferings and seeing how they managed to survive from the depth of decrepitude. This emphasis on others' suffering and their manner of coping with it, will remind humans that suffering is part of life and is inalienable. Then with this in mind, humans will appreciate their lives rather than condemn them for their suffering. This is reminiscent of Friedrich Nietzsche's philosophy which believes that life must be embraced with all its depression and happiness.

In this regard, he scrutinized that grappling with the issue of fate, by underscoring human free will would not guarantee a human sense of emancipation in life. In his *Ecce Homo* Nietzsche highlights that "my formula for greatness in a human being is *Amor fati*: that one wants nothing to be different, not forward, not backward, not in all eternity..." (18). As for Nietzsche, clever, free and powerful human beings must embrace their fate with all its limitations and it is only in this way that the best choices can be made. It is interesting to note that for Nietzsche, fate must be loved by all its ups and downs; then he has an allegiance to suffering as he believes his success is indebted to his sufferings in life. Moreover, Nietzsche substantiates that higher acquiesce to suffering determines human sublime ranks in life; "the order of rank is almost determined by just how deeply people can suffer, the trembling certainty that saturates and colors him entirely, a certainty that his sufferings have given him a greater knowledge than the cleverest and wisest can have" (*Ecce Homo*, 321).

As it is clear, Nietzsche believes that as human beings we must not make a fuss about the sufferings that we are incurred by, instead we must accept our life

as it is and must not ruminate about what-ifs in our lives. As in the climactic point of the novel, we can see, the protagonist, Nora Seed, was entangled in the depth of darkness and her suicidal thoughts led to a path that shows her different versions of her life and it seems she found her lost object. She was then at peace with herself, she found that necessarily making different choices in life will not bring happiness to human life. Life is full of conundrums and we as human beings must learn to be happy with our choices. This obsession with making choices in life is reminiscent of Robert Frost's poem *The Road Not Taken*. In that poem, in the end, we could not find the poet's contentment because of being happy with his choice. Because in most cases, humans are thinking about the things they have not experienced, and this obsession with 'what-ifs' is deadly for humans and will culminate in their depression.

Moreover, depression happens when humans cannot trace any meaning in their lives, Haig's obsession with the meaning of life is concretely manifest in his work, *The Humans*, in which he talks about his puzzlement about the meaning of life and being human:

To act like a human, I would after all need to understand them, so I asked her the biggest question I could think of. 'What do you think the meaning of life is, then? Did you discover it?' 'Ha! The meaning of life. The meaning of life. There is none. People search for external values and meaning in a world that not only can't provide it but is also indifferent to their quest. That's not Schopenhauer. That's more Kierkegaard via Camus. (43)

Here, by referring to Camus and his insistence upon the world's indifference to human life, Haig underscores the aggravation of meaninglessness in human life. But Haig's line of thought is not Camusian, as he tries to trace the place of love in the human world, with recourse to a quote from Carl Sagan, he justifies his stance; "for small creatures such as we the vastness is bearable only through love" (qtd. in *The Humans* 108).

What is worth mentioning about Matt Haig's view is that he depicts his world by referring to the imperfections of human beings and their habitat, the planet Earth, which at the first glance seems like dystopia for those who come from another planet. As an example in *The Humans*, Professor Andrew Martin who came to earth for a mission wants to perform his errand and return home to his so-called Utopian planet. But after passing some time with the humans, he found something mysterious exists between human beings on earth; the presence of family, their

ties, and love become fascinating and aspiring for him. He could see the trace of incandescent light amid the darkness, and that was the beauty of the human world for the professor. He no longer accuses humans of being imperfect and living in an imperfect world, on the contrary, he found hope and perfection in the sea of hopelessness and imperfection. This is known as *amor fati* or love of fate which is Nietzsche's solution for appreciating life despite all its disappreciation and resentment.

### Approach and Methodology

In an epiphanous turn, Nora Seed embraced her life instead of embracing her death. Epiphany is a valuable moment of realization in human life and if it happens to a human, it will save a life from boredom and malaise. In J.A. Cuddon's *A Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*, he asserts that epiphany is "a sudden spiritual manifestation" (298). Humans with recourse to epiphany can bury their hatchets about life and living and can affirmatively say yes to life in the Nietzschean manner. Friedrich Nietzsche's concept of 'amor fati' or 'love of fate' is first introduced at the beginning of *The Gay Science* book IV "*Sanctus Januarius*" or "*Hymn of Victory*," characterizing a reiterate affirmation of the Nietzschean way of living by saying yes to life.

According to Nietzsche, humans must live their lives wholeheartedly and must embrace their fate by inculcating the belief that if their lives go through a repetitive cycle, they will not find the least fault with it. His well-known concept of eternal recurrence is one of the most predominant manifestations of the *amor fati* concept. Veritably, in his *Gay Science*, he brilliantly sketches a harsh picture of eternal recurrence of life to highlight that humans must live a life worth infinite recurrence and reiteration:

What, if some day or night a demon were to steal after you into your loneliest loneliness and say to you: 'This life as you now live it and have lived it, you will have to live once more and innumerable times more; and there will be nothing new in it, but every pain and every joy and every thought and sigh and everything unutterably small or great in your life will have to return to you, all in the same succession and sequence—even this spider and this moonlight between the trees, and even this moment and I myself. The eternal hourglass of existence is turned upside down again and again, and you with it, speck of dust!' (341)

Strikingly, craving for different narratives for life is a quixotic desire for human beings. And this escape from the dominant narrative of life is a quest for human beings just proves that how everyone's life narrative must be lived recurrently. And everyone has a story of one's own and if they crave different living, they will fall prey to misliving. Indeed, "doing one thing differently is often the same as doing everything differently. Actions can't be reversed within a life time, however much we try [...]" (*Midnight* 43).

However, craving for a repetitious life is only possible when humans can adore their lives; otherwise, their lives will be tantamount to catastrophe. If we reach the point that our extravagant desire for the better version of fate disappears, then there is *ne plus ultra* for us as human beings. Meanwhile, extrapolating Nietzsche's inquiry to his obsession with naturalistic metaphysics, by considering the human life-affirming quest for meaning-making through the simultaneous incorporation of human free will and fate will shed light on human infirmity against the undeniable power of fate. While denouncing nihilistic philosophy, he moves toward enlivening and vivifying elements of life. In this regard, Nietzsche constantly reminds humans "to keep in mind that this was the perspective of a nihilistic philosophy that inscribed the negation of life on its shield" (*Anti-Christ* 49).

Categorically, Nietzsche asserts that pity is the concrete manifestation of negation in life; i.e., as human beings, we must not pity our being and existence, as pity is quite appropriate for the dead rather than the living. In his *Anti-Christ*, he sheds more light on this point that: "pity negates life, it makes life worthy of negation, —pity is the practice of nihilism. Once more: this depressive and contagious instinct runs counter to the instincts that preserve and enhance the value of life: by multiplying misery just as much as by conserving everything miserable, [...]—pity wins people over to nothingness!" (49)

In this study, the positive connotation of nothingness matters; life even as the representative of nothing must be embraced quite affirmatively. Human beings must be courageous enough for this endeavor and they have to defeat their ontological, epistemological, and eschatological insecurities. Any insecurity may lead to human hatred and disgust of the whole world as if there is no beauty to be investigated. For Nietzsche, any affliction is grace in disguise, and for him, this mindset gives the only solution to human beings for coping with the sufferings in life. The aim of unraveling the mysteries of human life will just demystify the human situation on earth. For example, Nora, the protagonist of *The Midnight Library* is grappling with a life conundrum, at first she feels defeated against fate by negating her life, but epiphanically she wins against life malaise and ennui by saying yes to her version of

the life.

Authentically, Nietzsche believes in the positive affirmation of life, requiring positive forgetfulness which provides an opportunity for the triumph of rebirth and the discovery of identity. He asserts that “only through forgetfulness could human beings ever entertain the illusion that they possess the truth” (*Birth* 143). Strikingly, the inherent potentiality of rewriting in forgetting shows that nothing happens till today; then metaphorically, life can be like a text which can be rewritten every day and in this sense, our world must be remarkably *scriptable* in Barth’s terminology; there is always an open play of possibilities.

In Haig’s *The Midnight Library*, the library shows the other scriptable facets of Nora’s life and it reminds her of the fact that she has written her life and must appreciate it the way it is written. Therefore, Haig’s work seems to be the paradigm of Barthes’ *jouissance*. In other words, the library’s forking paths permit Nora to write her days anew and it provides an opportunity for her to escape from their daily boredom. Extrapolating from Nietzsche’s concept of *amor fati* and the eternal return of the same, this study will underscore that everyone’s life must be embraced as it is. Fantasizing about the forking paths of life is a mirage that will also deflate your present moments.

If human beings neither have fear of life determinism nor have any hope for a better future, they will become the incarnation of their fate and they will stop awaiting a world beyond, and instead, their real moments in their given lives will be more gratified. Nietzsche’s philosophy unlike that of Schopenhauer does not believe in the loathsome and fearsome nature of fate, instead, it will emphasize the glorification of life as it is. Human beings can embrace their fate in the Nietzschean way only if they become able to free themselves of excessive desires. Otherwise, their fear of the portentous nature of fate metamorphoses their human life into animal life and they will easily yield to death and suicide. For having an authentic life, in Heidegger’s philosophy, human beings must know that death is part of their lives, and death will come to humans because human’s Being is designated in a way that it moves toward death and they must not go hastily toward death. And Paul Edwards, as one of the most famous Heideggerian, mentions “Heidegger, repeatedly remarks that all human beings are dying all the time” (177), by which he means interior death, and this recurrent interior death can revitalize human beings and their lives.

### **Nora Seed Seeks Élan Vital**

Nora felt inadequate in every aspect of her life and she wants to commit suicide, but

“even death was something Nora couldn’t do properly, it seemed. It was a familiar feeling. This feeling of being incomplete in just about every sense. An unfinished jigsaw of a human. Incomplete living and incomplete dying” (*Midnight* 40). Matt Haig was not a nihilist, instead, he seeks to show that malaise and suffering in human life must be taken for granted and the mere presence of the platitudinous life must not doom human life to annihilation. Humans may die of boredom recurrently, but it does not mean that they must accept death as the end of their lives. Like Heidegger, Haig also believes that humans can be revitalized after harsh repercussions in their lives. Kevin Aho in an analysis of Heidegger’s concept of death has written that:

In *Being and Time*, Martin Heidegger introduces a unique interpretation of death as a kind of world-collapse or breakdown of meaning that strips away our ability to understand and make sense of who we are. This is an ‘ontological death’ in the sense that we cannot be anything because the intelligible world that we draw on to fashion our identities and sustain our sense of self has lost all significance. (55)

Matt Haig also beautifully depicts Nora’s collapsed world, but he wanted to show some way out of collapse to Nora for emphasizing upon life significance despite all problems. He found that the acceptance of boredom as a presupposed presence in life will strengthen the human sense of “*élan vital*,” Henry Bergson’s term for the vital force or impulse of life, and it is responsible for human evolution. In his *Creative Evolution*, Bergson highlights that “the mystics and the romanticists applauded and hugged to their hearts the passionate hugging of life which he counseled as the way of reality” (17). Throughout this novel, it is clear that Nora is stuck in the dark side of life, but in an evolutionary move, she finds her path to the incandescent status of the light. In Nora’s retrogressive rumination, it is important to analyze her obsession with some haunted regrets in her mind which indicates that her becoming is far from ideal; therefore, she wants to deprive herself of the continuation of life.

Nora was only able to think of herself in terms of the things she wasn’t. The things she hadn’t been able to become. And there were quite a lot of things she hadn’t become. The regrets which were on permanent repeat in her mind. I haven’t become an Olympic swimmer. I haven’t become a glaciologist. 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. And now, last, of all, she hadn't even managed to become dead. (*Midnight* 40-41)

Therefore, Haig is not deceiving himself with a chimeral ideal of a utopian world in which he supposed there has to be no trace of suffering; such an ideal will just darken the reality of everyday life and will let suicidal thoughts haunt the human mind. Because if human beings covet an ideal world without any suffering, then will fall prey to an extreme desire for knowing the root of human suffering.

And this overthinking will only give way to human higher suffering. What stopped Nora from committing suicide, at last, was her acceptance of her life with all her choices, she found that she is responsible for all her choices but neither she must be praised nor condemned for her choices. She no longer wants to escape fate, she found that she has to close her eyes to other choices in life when she sees the other versions of her life in a parallel world; "the most intriguing variant of the other-dimension topos is the parallel- or alternate-world story based on historical speculation, the 'what-if' premise" (McHale 61). After exposing to the parallel worlds, she decides to close her eyes to what-if premise, she stops brawling with fate for terminating her suffering; in the end, her life becomes the representative of *amor fati*, Nietzsche's solution for the unbearable of suffering in life.

#### Medication for Pessimists

You whine that nothing pleases you?  
 Still pouting, friend, and must you mutter?  
 I hear you curse, and shout and sputter -  
 it breaks my heart and patience too!  
 Come with me, friend! A nice fat toad,  
 If swallowed voluntarily  
 with eyes closed and summarily -  
 might lessen your dyspeptic load. (Nietzsche, *Gay Science* 45)

Any discomfort in digesting the amount of pain and suffering in the world will make life devoid of meaning. For decreasing the dyspeptic load of suffering, everyone in life is supposed to find meaning. Haig's work is under an errand to which he is very committed and that is how to find a meaningful way of living.

Like all philosophers of all ages, Haig's major concern was to deal with human essence, and like Heidegger and Nietzsche he seeks to cope with the naked truth of



human nature. As with Nietzsche, embracing fate with all determinism was the first step in the quest. However, her protagonist's craving (Nora in *the Midnight Library*) for knowing was for everything and more rather than nothing and less. She invites death to her life by scrutinizing her being and becoming, and her life becomes the manifestation of 'sein-zum-tode' or 'being toward death' in the Heideggerian sense (SZ).

If human beings remember death as the finitude to the infinite jeu of life, Heideggerian authentic life would be guaranteed. But what is at stake in *the Midnight Library* is the commandment of living every moment of life without yielding to life's vicissitudes. Strikingly, Nora's quest becomes tragicomic of her ambivalent affirmation of life with maneuvering on the absence of meaning in life which causes her to lose contact with the 'zeitgeber' or time-giver temporarily and she welcomes *Thanatos* to her life. After which she enters into a phantasmagoric library where she says is somewhere between life and death, "for want of a better word, it is in-between. It is not life. It is not death. It is not the real world in a conventional sense. But nor is it a dream. It isn't one thing or another. It is in short, *the Midnight Library*" (43).

In the postmodern era, humans are more than ever in need of the opalescent and incandescent status of truth due to the zeitgeist, as Brian McHale asserts in his *Postmodern Fiction* (1991). Humans are expected to come and go between truth's absence and its epiphanic presence, and this happens for Nora quite epiphanically. Indeed, no absolute meaning, no absolute right or wrong can be ascertained to living because there are different paths in everyone's life, and based upon different factors humans can have the best choice. Humans must be intelligent enough to accept that there is not one absolute best decision for them, but sometimes obsession occurs for humans because of the disturbance in existential intelligence which is hypersensitivity to human life and death when a person cannot doubt the meaningfulness of life, and life will be in jeopardy because of excessive thought about death. According to Gardner,

A central or nuclear capacity for a possible existential intelligence: the capacity to situate oneself about the most extreme facets of the cosmos, the infinite and the infinitesimal—and the related capacity to situate oneself about certain existential features of the human condition, such as the meaning of life and death, the meaning of life and death, the final destiny of the physical and psychological world, and certain experiences such as feeling deep love or being absorbed by a work of art. Note that I do not mention at all the need to attain a

final truth, in the same way, that one who possesses musical intelligence must not produce or produce a final truth. Musical intelligence does not have to produce or prefer a certain kind of music. (*Intelligence Reframed* 67)

Nora suffers from a disorder in digesting the infinite and infinitesimal events of the world, her incapacity in tackling the vital questions about ontological, epistemological, and eschatological concerns, propels her deadly living toward a real desire for death. She could not find any vitality in her living; therefore, she seeks to put an end to her life to seek her fortune in the world of the dead. Nevertheless, she requires rebirth and a new identity, and forgetting her regrets can abet her as *Nietzsche (1999)* asserted,—only through forgetfulness could human beings ever entertain the illusion that they possess the truth . . . (143). Nietzsche believes in positive forgetfulness which provides an opportunity for the triumph of rebirth and the discovery of identity. The potentiality of rewriting in forgetting shows that nothing happens until today and humans can feel that they have a new opportunity for living. Metaphorically, life can be like a text which can be rewritten every day and in this sense, everyday life must be ‘*scriptable*’: there has to be an open play of possibilities in every day human world to survive them of deadly living.

### **Occurrence of the Epiphany in a Sein-Zum-Tode Trajectory**

All in all, “*Sein-Zum-Tode*” is a way of “Being toward death” which can also be indicative of death’s presence in human life. This mood is exacerbated when humans are in a rush for living at any cost, Nora was in a rush for the end of her life. It bears a correspondence with us as postmodern humans who are in a rush without paying any attention to anything else. It seems she suddenly felt nothing, or a pre-tornadic tranquil silence of zero sensation as if she reaches the end. Nora’s convulsion was due to her sudden confrontation with nothingness rather than institutionalizing nothingness as the initiating constituent of her quest. Once there was a belief that truth must have been mythologized; “making mythology” (Tharpe 116) about human access to truth could be salvaging; while Perhaps truth is nothing and nothing is truth. Juxtaposition and overlap of Truth and Untruth make us susceptible to un/making mythology of Truth, as the world and everything surrounding it is ‘pharmakon-like’ (*Dissemination*).

Derrida’s view of pharmakon reminds humans how pharmakon can have the oxymoronic function of both poison and remedy. Moreover, the mythology of Truth is nothing absolute; it can lead us to an under-erasure world. Trace and

sedimentation of Pharmakon-like features are disseminated to the very reason of the world and human *raison d'être*. In Opposition to life *raison d'être*, Nora wanted to put an end to her malaise and suffering; she temporarily forgot that life is pharmakon-like and the world must be embraced affirmatively with both happiness and suffering as parts of human living.

However luckily, in an epiphanous turn, she found that there is no way for obviating suffering except by embracing it. Therefore, Haig implicitly underscored Heideggerian concern for authentic living which is an appreciation of life minutia. He concluded that both self-reflection about one's suffering and regrets about life choices are destructive of life and living. In fleshing these claims out, what makes humans more appreciative of life is 'being toward death', because the idea of finitude will help humans to go beyond the routines of everyday life; therefore, they can find something precious in the platitudinous everydayness.

Paul Edwards believes that "Heidegger and his disciples constantly confuse death with our thoughts and emotions about death. My thoughts and emotions about death are indeed 'mine,' but it is difficult to see why they should be regarded as 'more mine' than for example my desire to love and be loved or my desire to enjoy life" (169). It is exactly how Nora feels about death, more than anything else in her life, she feels to be in the lap of death and was blind to all life enjoyments, and her desire for life incidence was terminated. And according to the inference of Edwards from Heidegger's point, it was not the ordinary sense of the word death, instead, it is the consciousness of death that haunts Nora's mind. Dreyfus and Wrathall, other Heideggerian experts verified that it is the interior experience of death:

Edwards's interpretation of Heidegger's concept of death as total annihilation, the utter absence of experiences, is difficult to defend. Edwards can think of nothing else that Heidegger could consistently mean by "the impossibility of any existence at all. Yet Heidegger insists, and Edwards recognizes that he insists, that one not read "death" as referring to an event that takes place at the end of one's life. (Dreyfus and Wrathall 69)

By considering death as an inseparable part of life, humans will watch their lives under more scrutiny. Therefore, after watching all her life in that fantastic library, Nora regained some reasons for life continuation. She found that perhaps her life is also worth watching, every chapter of her life which corresponds to her age was recorded and that is why she found that she could have different choices, but her life is also representative of one of her choices that are worth living. Either of those

choices would make a different person of hers. She found that her identity is made up of her decisions at the moment, and with a different decision, she would have entered another life.

Nora Seed, like her namesake Nora in Ibsen's *A Doll's House*, is also in search of her lost identity. But the big difference is here that Nora Seed feels disorientated existentially in human society while Ibsen's Nora was lost as a woman in a patriarchal society. Every Human on earth can empathize with Nora Seed because all human society can empathize with her regrets and what-if. But the only thing that triggers us not to be immersed in Nora's persona is that we can manage to live more eagerly by not repeating past regrets. And we must not cogitate over past regrets excessively. Gardner's Existential intelligence can help us to broach essential questions about existence but at the same time, this intelligence will help us not to be finicky for the answers, because this intelligence will warn us of the outcome of overthinking existential questions. Because the aim of these questions is not to embrace truth, but rather this intelligence will help us be more cognizant of human beings.

Nora's cognizance is indebted to that fantastic library and the extra-terrestrial librarian, Mrs. Elm. She transformed a lot and she found she can live her life with all the decisions made, even if they are not the best decisions made; they're her idiosyncratic decisions for her life. In the final run, Nora is no longer pro-death, she becomes anti-death and embraced her life. Perhaps at the end of this journey, we see Nora comes to an anagnorisis that she must close her eyes to other versions of her life, and instead, she must learn to embrace her own life with its ennui and boredom. The easiest way for humans is to wait for a survivor; while they're supposed to be their survivor which is equal to David Foster Wallace's theoretical view of a true hero. In his unfinished novel, *A Pale King* (2011), Wallace addressed that "Gentlemen, here is a truth: Enduring tedium over real time in a confined space is what real courage is... True heroism is minutes, hours, weeks, year upon year of the quiet, precise, judicious exercise of probity and care—with no one there to see or cheer."

However, Nora as a postmodern human must learn how to become a hero. Stereotypically speaking, in the past people loved to be seen and cheered, but here we need an anti-heroic turn for heroism: As Nora escapes being seen, there are shreds of evidence when she confessed that she hates to be seen, "as soon as I started winning swimming races, I became seen and I didn't want to be seen" (*Midnight* 89).

Those thirsty for being a hero are very much ostentatious and pretentious;

they always want to be seen and cheered. This potential fear of not being seen will penetrate all their individuation and make them all like masked faces thirsty for being seen. And in this way, many forlorn humans of this lost generation like Nora (at the beginning of her quest) are digging their graves while still living and they don't let their being move toward death as they draw death to the midst of their being. When Nora was depressed, she wanted her being to be devoured by time; the bulimic nature of time is called for by Nora which is very reminiscent of the desire shared among Beckettian characters:

Farewell to farewell. Then in that perfect dark foreknell darling sound pip for end begun. First last moment. Grant only enough remain to devour all. Moment by glutton moment. Sky earth the whole kit and caboodle. Not another crumb of carrion left. Lick chops and basta. No. One moment more. One last. Grace to breathe that void. Know happiness (86).

Aspiring to reach a void, an empty space for breathing, it seems being among the community is stifling for Nora. Therefore, Nora quit swimming for evasion from being seen, and instead took refuge in the library, "as a teenager I'd have happily been invisible. People called me 'the Fish.' They didn't mean it as a compliment. I was shy. It was one of the reasons why I preferred the library to the playing field. It seems a small thing, but it helped, having that space" (*Midnight* 89). What is the hint of a space? Nora and her fanatic status gave way to a new aspect of her personality; after that bizarre experience, she was at peace with herself. Nora's experience is not explicable by rationality, it seems something happens to her, and very miraculously her life changes. Moreover, as there is a correspondence between Nora and Beckettian characters' desires for a void; it can be said that "Beckett's texts reveal the Jungian dilemma of modern man in search of soul. And the Beckettian search is mythic, through and through. Quests to and from, characters who are archetypes not stereotypes, variations upon same: all imply an insistence like that of myth to return to the ground of being" (Doll 109). Throughout the novel, Nora was in a quest to recover from soul depletion, depleted soul cannot bear boredom and more than ever needs vital moments. At the end, Nora's exhausted and depleted soul was revived and she chose life continuation rather than its annihilation.

### **Conclusion**

To sum it up, *The Midnight Library* manifests some parallel worlds to the real world of Nora Seed. Before encountering the Library, it was stifling for Nora to

live a life with what-if premises, but after that encounter, she found that what she has experienced throughout her lived life is just one among many worlds that she could have lived. She prefers to return to her everyday life and forgets about committing suicide. The thought of death just empowers her and infuses her with new blood, it seems she found her lost vitality. All these happened miraculously and epiphanically, without any recourse to rationality. What is worth mentioning is that death as the supposed finitude of life turns out to be an inseparable part of life, and humans can step out of life ennui and malaise and can make their lives more meaningful with the thought of death. Because they must prove to themselves that they are courageous enough to live life, in facing adversity they must not succumb to death, they can keep a stiff upper lip. As Nora realized in the end, that committing suicide means embracing frailty, instead she decides to continue playing her role as Nora Seed in her lifetime. And she comes to this understanding after experiencing too much darkness and boredom; in the trajectory of being toward death she was reborn and her being was enamored with light.

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