

## *Everything, Everything*

By

Nicola Yoon

### *Grade Levels:*

- 9-12

### *Synopsis:*

- Madeline is affected with the bubble boy syndrome, Severe Combined Immunodeficiency disease. She could die with exposure from the outside world so her mother spends a massive amount of money for an air filtration system comprised of an air lock that decontaminates all matter coming into the home, including people. Madeline's brother and father were tragically killed by a drunk driver when she was an infant so now it is just she and her mother, who is overprotective of her yet also her only friend. Carla, her nurse, is also a friend to Madeline, even though she is also responsible for Madeline's wellbeing while her mother is at work as a physician. It was Carla's friendship that brought Madeline out of her darkest days. When she was eight, neighbors moved in next door with children her age. Her desire to go out and play became overwhelming and when she could not fulfill that desire, she became severely depressed, scaring Carla. Madeline promised she would never act in such a way again but now new neighbors have moved in next door and there are kids her age, including a boy that intrigues Madeline. Olly is everything Madeline isn't. He wears black all the time and loves parkour, leaping up to the roof of the house nightly. When Olly and his sister Kara attempt to meet Madeline by bringing a Bundt cake to the house, Madeline's mom won't allow them entry. Olly becomes mystified as to the mysterious reasons for why Madeline will not leave the house so he writes his email address backwards on his window and asks her to at least communicate with him that way. This opens up a world that Madeline doesn't know exists. Olly quickly becomes her only friend her age. Slowly, Carla begins to realize that Madeline wants more than online conversation. Feeling sorry for Madeline, Carla arranges for Olly to visit after first being decontaminated. They are not to touch on these visits and they can only last a brief period of time. Olly slowly lets Madeline into his life, including the beatings his mother takes from his alcoholic father. After these meetings take an unexpected turn, Madeline has a decision to make: ignore Olly and break her own heart or make her own happiness. She eventually embarks on a journey of self-discovery that leads her to the most unexpected places. Little does she realize the Pandora's box she is opening.

### *Author Website:*

- <http://www.nicolayoon.com>

*Curricular Connections:*

- Articles
  - [Learning About Severe Combined Immunodeficiency \(SCID\)](#)
  - [Munchausen Syndrome by Proxy](#)

*Lesson Ideas:*

- Read an article from the National Human Genome Research Institute, which lays out the disorder of Severe Combined Immunodeficiency, and compare or discuss Madeline's symptoms with the presented research. Note the differences and similarities, which could then underscore that not all is as it appears in Madeline's case.
- Closing Activity: Analyze the syndrome Munchausen by Proxy in order to see if Madeline's mother truly exhibits those traits or if her "treatment" of Madeline is more or less child abuse.

*Additional Materials:*

- Nicola Yoon Discusses Debut Novel, Everything, Everything and the We Need Diverse Books Campaign – YouTube Video  
(Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pau7OLIt19A>)

*Suggested Companion Titles:*

- *The Unlikely Hero of Room 13B* by Teresa Toten
- *The Impossible Knife of Memory* by Laurie Halse Anderson
- *Bruiser* by Neal Shusterman
- *The Sacred Lies of Minnow Bly* by Stephanie Oakes
- *I Hunt Killers* by Barry Lyga

*Professional Reviews:*

- *Booklist* (09/15/2015)
- *Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books* (12/01/2015)
- *Horn Book Guide* (04/01/2016)
- *Kirkus Reviews* starred (07/15/2015)
- *Publishers Weekly* (06/15/ 2015)
- *Resource Links* (12/01/2015)
- *School Library Connection* starred (05/01/2016)
- *School Library Journal* starred (08/01/2015)
- *Teacher Librarian* (02/01/16)