



## THE PORTRAYAL OF ANXIETY IN *THEY BOTH DIE AT THE END* SILVERA'S NOVEL (2017)

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Received: (October)

Accepted: (November)

Published : (December )

### Abstract

This thesis goes into detail about anxiety in Adam Silvera's interesting book *They Both Die at the End*. Using qualitative research methods, this study looks at how anxiety is a key theme in the lives of the novel's characters and how it is woven into a complex web. The story takes place in a world where everyone knows they only have 24 hours left to live. This puts a cloud of anxiety over everything they think and do. Qualitative study methods are used to give a full picture of how anxiety is woven into the characters' lives in a complex way. The study focuses on anxiety, which is a common and complex feeling, to shed light on the character's mental and emotional turmoil. By looking at their struggles, this study hopes to show how similar they are to other people and get people to understand their deep emotional complexities. This study shows how important it is to use books to talk about anxiety, which is a common problem in modern society. By using *They Both Die at the End* as a way to look at anxiety, this study not only helps us understand the book better but also looks at what this feeling means in the bigger picture. Since anxiety still affects the lives of a lot of people, this study is a useful look at how it's portrayed in fiction, highlighting how important it is in our complex and emotionally charged world.

**Keywords:** Anxiety, mental illness, novel, psychology of literature, *They Both Die at The End*

### INTRODUCTION

Some of the fiction has its unique interpretation in terms of the projection of reality. This style of work has a strong connection to the people who created it. (Wood, 2008). They deliver everything as if it were a part of themselves, building their fantasy to ensure that everyone knows what they intend to communicate in the work. All of this leads to the plot to create a rich story at the end. This is why the anxiety could be the one that is being discussed because of the content feeling of reality itself.

The story of *They Both Die at The End* is about the day when there are only 24 hours left for them to live. This creates anxiety for the people who know the time when they will die. The novel *They Both Die at the End* provides an interesting lens through which to examine the concept of death anxiety. The reason why anxiety needs to be analyzed is that the whole story creates the situation a closer look at human anxiety. There are many issues of anxiety but this novel portrays how we could understand it better. This novel has given the writer the perspective of the people who are struggling with anxiety. To analyze this novel, the writer will discuss further the portrayal of anxiety throughout the characters within this novel. This is to ensure that people have a sense of relatability because of the portrayal of each character. Based on the research It is an unfortunate reality that some young children must face the facts of death and dying at a relatively young age. (Slaughter & Griffith, 2007) This led to the intervention of their psychological condition which caused the anxiety.

This is essential to understand because many people suffer from fear daily. This is important since a lot of people feel dread daily. Acute fear or panic, as defined by HelpGuide, is daily anxiety or panic episodes. They occur out of the blue. Thoughts about your big speech or being trapped in an elevator can be triggered in certain cases, but other times the attacks just happen. Furthermore, this book has the importance of discussing the coping mechanism issue. A coping mechanism is a conscious or unconscious change or an adaptation that reduces tension and anxiety in a stressful event or scenario. Psychological therapies frequently focus on changing maladaptive coping strategies. Coping behaviour and coping technique are both terms that can be used interchangeably. The coping mechanism that will be used for this paper is kind of like denial and distraction. The coping mechanism

will be discussed as the part to support the idea of anxiety. Distraction is the way the main character opts out of the anxiety condition that they face. All of these characters are young and are expected to have a long journey ahead of them.

Therefore, the focus of this paper will be on the anxiety of nature in this novel. The urgency of discussing this topic is about how many people feel related to the case of anxiety. According to the Mental Health Foundation, anxiety may trigger people to withdraw from friends and family, feel unable to go to work, or avoid specific locations. Even while avoiding circumstances can provide you with momentary comfort, the anxiety usually returns the next time you encounter it. This is how people suffer from the state of anxiety even on the smallest scale of everyday routine. The title of *They Both Die at the End* gives the spoiler of the entire story of facing death. By just a title, it makes people guess that the main character is dead at the end. Moreover, this book has won some awards like A Kirkus Best Book of the Year and New York Times Best Seller 2017. More importantly, the writer believes *They Both Die at the End* is suitable to depict the condition of people who are facing the problem of anxiety the most.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The theory employed in the research, as well as the technique used as direction in performing this research. The previous study will be briefly explained in this chapter. Furthermore, the author chose some of the research articles that included the results using prior studies as supporting parts of the research. To reach its goal, all prior research and theory connected to the anxiety condition are required. This material will aid the researcher in doing a more in-depth analysis of the study.

The previous research is significant since it aids the writer's research and that of the next researcher. Previous study provides an example of how to perform analysis and research in a high-quality manner. It also serves as a resource for fresh study discoveries. To support the analysis, the authors analyze various prior studies relevant to the issue while performing this research.

The first study is a journal article according to Krisnawati, R. (2011) with the title *the Anxiety of Raju Rastogi in Rajkumar Hirani's 3 Idiots movie (2009): A psychoanalytic approach*. This study's goal is to investigate anxiety disorders from a psychoanalytic perspective. The researcher chose this as a previous study because it can be concluded that it shows the characters' anxiety, which is expressed in their gestures and actions. The second previous study by Inaya (2021) with the title of *The Anxiety of Pauline and Madeline in Nicola Yoon's Everything, Everything*, employs Sigmund Freud's idea of anxiety and coping mechanisms. The third previous study was made in the same year when Mawarni (2016) made the thesis titled *Anxiety Disorder in JK Rowling's Harry Potter and The Philosopher's Stone, Harry Potter and The Chamber of Secret, and Harry Potter the Prisoner of Azkaban*. This research uses three different sources of data, all of which come from the works of the same author.

The fourth study comes from Farohah (2015) with the title *Anxiety Suffered by Elizabeth Holland in Anna Godbersen's Splendor*. The primary character of this book, Elizabeth Holland, is investigated to see if she is going through the stages of anxiety. This research focused on Sigmund Freud's anxiety theory and included an analysis of the primary character. The fifth previous study is obtaining resources from Karlina (2019) who was conducting a study entitled *Anxiety as Seen in Sophie Kinsella's Finding Audrey*. This study offers a thorough assessment of the current status of anxiety and discusses the intriguing future potential for both research and practice using the psychoanalytic study method.

Those previous studies are important to this study because they will help the writer evaluate the psychology of anxiety disorder through the novel *They Both Die at the End*. Furthermore, journals assist researchers in analyzing issues by following a pattern in identifying symptoms and applying relevant theories.

## METHOD

The researcher will require methodology and method to conduct the study. The purpose of research is to discover the answer to a question; therefore, the researcher must reveal and discover the solution to the problem. Research Design, Data and Data Resources, Data Collecting Technique, and Data Analyzing Technique comprise this chapter.

The data from Adam Silvera's novel *They Both Die at the End* was represented using descriptive qualitative methods. The primary objectives of qualitative research are to provide explanations and assessments

of situations. n (Stake, 2010 in Eklesia & Rido, 2020). Because the data is in the form of sentences rather than numbers, the descriptive qualitative method is used. Descriptive research collects data in the form of written or spoken words, and visuals and does not employ figures (Cenita & Nurmaily, 2020). Moreover, the goal of the study was to come up with scientific techniques for reliably assessing the variables. Psychological variables are not often measured consistently and accurately. To evaluate all of the elements in a methodical, analytical, and unbiased manner, science techniques must be applied. Mitchell & Jolley (2010) Even while it could intuitively acquire proper measurement variables, it couldn't rely on memory to maintain track of observations. The capacity to connect context with explanation is a qualitative strength. (Fithratullah, 2021).

The primary source of data in this study is the target of analysis (Kuswoyo and Siregar, 2019). This strategy is utilized to gain knowledge of a literary work and its relationship to current societal phenomena, such as the psychology issue (Heavenly and Kasih, 2020). As a text source of data, there are numerous components such as books, papers, and journals. Furthermore, the data and theory can be combined to locate and describe the pattern, as well as to define critical spots (Samanik and Lianasari, 2016).

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### *The Cause of Anxiety Threat*

The Death-Cast call, which warns characters of their impending death within the next 24 hours, is one of the novel's most major threats. This call is a ubiquitous and ever-present danger, instilling in all who receive it a continual sense of approaching catastrophe. Here's a quote that exemplifies the gravity of the Death-Cast call:

*"The caller ID reads **DEATH-CAST**, of course. I'm shaking but manage to press Talk. I don't say anything. I'm not sure what to say. I just breathe because I have **fewer than twenty-eight thousand breaths left in me**—" pg.2 (Adam Silvera, 2017)*

The subject of threat is clear in the given paragraph from the novel and it is important to the novel's analysis of anxiety. Mateo Torrez's inner agony begins with the simple sight of "**DEATH-CAST**" on the caller ID. This existential threat hangs big in the story, providing a continual reminder of his time to the death. Mateo's shaking reaction to the incoming call emphasizes the gravity of this constant threat, as he lives in a world where death is both unavoidable and predictable. Furthermore, his anxiousness is heightened by the uncertainty surrounding his response to the phone call. The reference to Mateo having "**fewer than twenty-eight thousand breaths left**" indicates how it makes Mateo hard in breathe, it's the sign of a continual reminder of the imminent danger, as each breath pushes him closer to his death. Throughout the novel, this overall sense of threat drives Mateo's ideas, actions, and emotions, leading him to confront his anxieties and take chances. In conclusion, as illustrated in this paragraph, threat is a significant factor that sustains the characters' fears and drives the narrative's examination of mortality and terror. Another quotation example:

*"The hell I do," I say. **My heart is pounding mad fast**, even faster than when I first moved up on Peck, even faster than when I first decked him and laid him out. Peck's left eye is swollen already, and there's still nothing but **pure terror in his right eye**. These Death-Cast calls go strong until three." pg.8 (Adam Silvera, 2017)* This quotation eloquently reflects the threat that Rufus and Mateo face. The ticking clock, represented by the countdown on Rufus' phone, serves as a continual reminder of their imminent doom. The explicit remark of it being exactly twelve hours since the call heightens the threat's immediacy and intensity.

The phrase "**My heart is pounding madly fast**" emphasizes the gravity of their situation. It's not just the passage of time; it's a countdown to the ultimate unknown, a point beyond which there is no return. This sentence demonstrates how Rufus feels threatened by the call, even while his attempt to beat up Peck ends the threat's inescapability and the characters' helplessness to influence their fate.

The phrase "**pure terror in his right eye**" was also used, which is noteworthy. Even if Peck ended up getting beaten up by Rufus, he was completely shocked to learn about the illness. The dread in his eyes is a symbol of how he knows the Death-cast call, which means that it has become a threat for Rufus because he will die in twenty-four hours. He is aware of this fact very well. Rufus will pass away within the next day. Ignoring the fact that he was being beaten up and the feeling of pain in the process.

### ***Environment***

The environment of the story is vital in developing and maintaining anxiety. The novel takes place in a dystopian universe where people receive Death-Cast calls, and this world is defined by its bleakness, unpredictability, and persistent sense of imminent destruction, which is death.

*"We used to beast through the streets on our bikes like we were racing without brakes, but not tonight. We look both ways constantly and stop for red lights, like now, even when the street is clear of cars."* Pg. 21 (Adam Silvera, 2017)

This remark effectively depicts how the surroundings, particularly the changed metropolitan landscape, cause the protagonists to worry. The novel's characters' relationship with their surroundings has been changed by the imminent danger of death. The line *"we used to beast through"* emphasizes how Rufus never cared about his environment, but as he realizes he would die, anxiety sets in. It describes Rufus's efforts to maintain his mental health in the face of his impending death. Furthermore, what was previously a haven for carefree experiences, embodied by *"... but not tonight. We look both ways constantly and stop for red lights,"* has now become a cause of increased caution and concern. The emphasis on looking both ways and stopping at red lights, even when there are no automobiles on the road, emphasizes how the protagonists' consciousness of their mortality has changed their vision of the world around them. The previously banal parts of their surroundings, such as street crossings, are now imbued with dread, reflecting the deep influence of their impending mortality on their daily encounters. This transformation of the landscape into a place of caution and dread represents the characters' increased unease in the face of their imminent fate.

*"Not that easy. We're not dying from natural causes. How can we try to live knowing some truck might run us down when we're crossing the street?"* Pg. 55 (Adam Silver, 2017)

The excerpt emphasizes how, in the face of their impending deaths, the characters' environment becomes a huge cause of concern for them. In the story, the landscape, which was formerly a backdrop for carefree living, becomes a source of increased dread and vulnerability. *"How can we try to live knowing some truck might run us down when we're crossing the street?"* The characters' admission that they are not dying naturally stresses the importance of the environment as a potential hazard. Their terror of random events, such as being hit by a truck while crossing the street, highlights the deep impact of death on their vision of the world around them. This shift in perception emphasizes the environment as a sign of unpredictability and danger, in stark contrast to the familiarity they previously enjoyed. In essence, the environment, with its enhanced ability to elicit fear and anxiety, serves as a strong symbol of how the protagonists' imminent mortality has transformed their relationship with the world in which they live.

### ***Repression***

Freud described repression as the unconscious erasure from consciousness of distressing thoughts, feelings, or memories. In the context of the story, the protagonists' impending deaths and their responses to this reality force them to face deeply repressed emotions and regrets.

*"It takes a minute before he lets go of his father's hand, almost like his father is holding him back, but Mateo manages to break free. He picks up a clipboard and drops it into a rack above his father's bed."* Pg. 70 (Adam Silvera, 2017)

The remark alludes to the novel's theme of repression as a source of anxiety. Mateo's initial hesitancy, as well as his father's description, indicating that there may be unresolved emotions or unexpressed thoughts in their connection. *"like his father is holding him back,"* The suppression in this, he knows well he can't let go of his father because this is his last day. Mateo's initial reluctance to let go of his father's hand, as well as his subsequent acts, may indicate a form of hesitancy, possibly tied to unspoken feelings or anxieties. The word *"break free"* implies that there was some type of restraint or holding back, indicating the presence of underlying feelings or thoughts that were not addressed openly. Mateo's apparent diversionary behavior of picking up a clipboard could represent an attempt to distract attention away from or conceal deeper emotional concerns.

*"He picks up a clipboard and drops it into a rack above his father's bed."* Mateo breaking free and picking up a clipboard, which appears to be a commonplace chore, may represent his attempt to suppress or deflect his attention from deeper emotional concerns. In this scenario, repression could be a protective technique used by Mateo to avoid confronting possibly uncomfortable sentiments or concerns about his father. While not directly stated in the statement, this concealment of underlying emotions or concerns suggests that unresolved difficulties

may contribute to uneasiness in the novel. The anxiety caused by such repression may run throughout the novel, adding levels of intricacy to the characters' experiences.

### **Frustration**

As a psychological notion, frustration refers to the sense of being obstructed or thwarted in one's efforts to achieve a goal. The approaching and uncontrollable nature of death, as indicated by the Death-Cast calls, produces a persistent sense of frustration among the individuals in the narrative.

**"I don't have all day!"** Mateo shouts, **like someone finally pissed off he's dying at eighteen.** Turns out there's some fire in him. He stops at the curb and sits down, **straight reckless**, probably waiting for a car to knock him out of his misery." Pg. 91 (Adam Silvera, 2017)

This quotation illustrates how frustration functions as a source of fear in the novel. Mateo's remark, **"I don't have all day!"** expresses his extreme outrage at the unfairness of confronting mortality at such a young age. This outburst represents a tipping moment when the weight of his imminent fate becomes too much for him. The frustration in his ranting reflects his powerlessness in the face of situations beyond his control. His decision to sit **"straight reckless"** at the curb, presumably waiting for a car to end his anguish, emphasizes the extent of his frustration and sorrow. This fury, stemming from the injustice of his situation, contributes to the novel's unease. It emphasizes how the characters' helplessness to change their fate and the limits placed on them create a strong sense of dissatisfaction, which increases their anxiety as they face the conclusion of their lives. The phrase **"like someone finally pissed off he's dying at eighteen."** inside the quotation underscores Mateo's great dissatisfaction as a source of concern throughout the novel. This speech expresses his profound sense of injustice and rage at the prospect of dying at such a young age. At eighteen, most people imagine a future full of possibilities, dreams, and opportunities; however, Mateo's future is tragically cut short by the Death-Cast call.

### **Gender**

While the novel's basic premise is around imminent death, gender also plays a significant influence in the characters' experiences and responses. Gender influences the characters' interactions, perceptions, and societal expectations, complicating their experiences in the face of mortality.

**"I don't break down or nothing like that, seriously, even as I remember playing catch with my boys. I leave the light on as I step out and keep the door open so Malcolm and Tagoe don't get weird about going back in."** Pg. 28 (Adam Silvera, 2017).

The quotation refers to the topic of gender and societal norms as a possible source of anxiety, particularly in Rufus' character. Rufus' statement **"I don't break down or nothing like that,"** suggests a conformity to traditional masculine ideals that inhibit emotional vulnerability. There is an inherent expectation in many communities for men to be stoic and emotionally tough, which can lead to concealing or repressing feelings, especially in the face of hardship.

Moreover, **"I step out and keep the door open"** Rufus' decision to leave the light on and the door open for his pals, Malcolm and Tagoe, demonstrates a desire to project power and calm. He may be complying to conventional standards of how males should act, even when dealing with the probable death of a loved one.

This interaction suggests that Rufus may be hiding his genuine emotions and attempting to conform to gender standards that discourage vulnerability. Individuals like Rufus may find themselves split between true emotional expression and societal pressure to toughen up as a result of the pressure to conform to these standards.

**"I need more time before answering this. Maybe another eighty years, but I don't have that and I don't want to man up to it right now. "We're headed back to Pluto now. Can you meet us there?"** Pg. 18 (Adam Silvera, 2017)

Adam Silvera's work contains the quotation, **"I need more time before answering this"** emphasizes the issue of gender and its impact on the characters, particularly Rufus Emetrio. This sentence illustrates cultural norms and prejudices about conventional masculinity. The phrase **"man up"** is a colloquial statement that encourages someone, usually a man, to exhibit attributes associated with traditional masculinity, such as emotional stoicism and toughness. Rufus' refusal to **"man up"** in the face of his approaching mortality reveals his softness and emotional depth, contradicting the conventional male response to adversity.

## **Fear**

As the characters cope with the realization of their approaching deaths, fear is a constant and significant topic in the work. Throughout the novel, their thoughts, actions, and relationships are shaped by an all-encompassing terror. *"But I wasn't honest with Rufus, because, on a deep level, I do believe partying on the train is my kind of scene. It's just that the fear of disappointing others or making a fool of myself always wins."* Pg. 64 (Adam Silvera, 2017).

This quotation emphasizes the concept of fear as a major source of anxiety, especially in the character's inner battle. The character acknowledges in this passage to not being honest with Rufus about their genuine feelings about partying on the train. Fear of disappointing others and embarrassing oneself is a strong incentive in their decision-making process.

The word *"the fear of disappointing"* is important in understanding the character's uneasiness. It emphasizes how the fear of negative social assessments and the fear of disappointing others influence their actions and choices. Fear of disappointing others is a common source of anxiety because it can cause people to prioritize external expectations over their own goals or comfort. Furthermore, the phrase *"making a fool of myself"* refers to the fear of social embarrassment or scorn, which is still another aspect of fear that can contribute to anxiety. The character's reluctance to participate in activities they might otherwise love because of this anxiety exemplifies how anxiety can be founded in the anticipation of unpleasant results and reactions from others.

*"And one day she'll find herself on the terrible end of a Death-Cast call and it sucks how we're all being raised to die. Yes, we live, or we're given the chance to, at least, but sometimes living is hard and complicated because of fear."* Pg. 89 (Adam Silvera, 2017).

*"And one day she'll find herself on the terrible end of a Death-Cast call, and it sucks how we're all being raised to die,"* says Adam Silvera in his novel *They Both Die at the End*. *"sometimes living is hard and complicated because of fear."* effectively depicts how fear pervades the lives of the protagonists and serves as a primary source of worry throughout the narrative. The novel's depiction of dread is not limited to the fear of death, but also to the fear of squandered opportunities, unsaid words, and unmet goals. Mateo is concerned not only about his mortality but also about the regrets he might carry to the grave. This worry of leaving things unsaid and undone exacerbates his anxiety. Mateo's concerns are shared with his best friend child, Penny.

## **Age**

Age is important in the narrative since the characters' deaths are determined by the Death-Cast calls rather than their ages. This feature contradicts commonly held beliefs about age-related expectations, regrets, and opportunities. *"I could leave my apartment to do something with myself and fall down the stairs and snap my neck before I even make it outside; someone could break in and murder me. The only thing I can confidently rule out is dying of old age."* Pg. 3 (Adam Silvera, 2017).

The quotation highlights the novel's topic of age as a serious source of anxiety. The character's notion of leaving their flat, followed by the immediate anxiety of falling down the steps and cracking their neck, emphasizes how the fear of unexpected, untimely death weighs heavily on their mind. The suggestion of someone breaking in and murdering them emphasizes the vulnerability that is often associated with kids. In this context, age anxiety is concerned with the fragility of life in one's youth. The character's statement that they can firmly rule out dying of old age is noteworthy; it represents a lack of assurance and control over their fate, which contributes to a constant sense of uneasiness. This subject alludes to the novel's broader message of the unpredictability and impermanence of life, particularly for young people who may feel powerless over their destiny and continuously vulnerable to unforeseen events.

The reference of *"dying of old age"* in the passage serves as a point in highlighting the novel's fear about aging. The character's remark that they can safely rule out this particular cause of death highlights a profound sense of uncertainty and dread about life's unpredictability. In contrast to the typical path of aging and dying peacefully in old age, the character is confronted with the possibility that their life would be cut short at a young age. The striking contrast between the customary expectation of growing old and the approaching possibility of premature mortality heightens age-related anxiety. It represents the characters' knowledge that they are denied the opportunity to experience the natural progression of life and age, which can be a source of existential and emotional difficulty. This topic poignantly reflects the characters' struggle with the anxiety of approaching death too soon, stressing the

deep influence that age-related anxiety has on their experiences throughout the work. Another quotation that represents the age as the cause of anxiety:

*"I have to count trees, maybe sing a favourite song while dipping my feet in the Hudson, and just do my best to be remembered as **the young man who died too early.**"* Pg. 6 (Adam Silvera, 2017)

The quotation emphasizes how age, specifically the idea of being a "**young man who died too soon,**" is a major source of concern in the work. The character's musings on counting trees, singing a favourite song, and dipping their toes in the Hudson River depict a desire to appreciate and capture the essence of youth before their tragic departure. The reference to being remembered emphasizes the emotional anxiety of missing out on the experiences and milestones that come with getting older. Age is a key source of concern in this context since it signifies the potential unfulfilled life that the character may never have the opportunity to have. The character's desire to be remembered as a "**young man**" rather than simply a man emphasizes the abrupt and untimely nature of their approaching death, contributing to the novel's overriding theme of fear about ageing.

### ***The Types of Anxiety***

Based on Freud's 1933 and 1926 works, the protagonists in *They Both Die at the End* fight with reality, neurotic, and moral anxieties. Reality fear becomes apparent as characters face the demise-Cast calls' imminent demise. This external menace keeps the story in fear, highlighting human fragility. As they deal with internal conflicts and unresolved emotions, characters experience neurotic anxiety. The story explores their emotions and reveals long-buried fears, regrets, and aspirations that cause mental anguish. Unresolved inner conflicts and unexpressed emotions cause this inner struggle, similar to Freud's neurotic anxiety.

### ***Reality Anxiety***

Reality anxiety, as per Freud's theory, relates to the fear or anxiety arising from a real external threat or danger. *"I snatch the body bag from his hand and throw it into the bushes because body bags are for corpses and Mateo isn't dead. I return to Mateo's side, choking and crying and dying. "Come on, Mateo, it's me, Roof. You hear me, right? It's Roof. Wake up now. Please wake up."* Pg. 215-216 (Adam Silvera, 2017)

Rufus is experiencing a powerful emotional response that resonates with the concept of reality anxiety in the quoted sentence, *"I return to Mateo's side, choking and crying and dying,"* His emotional exhaustion is visible as he chokes and sobs, struggling with the brutal reality of Mateo's possible death. This attitude expresses denial or disbelief in the face of the body bag, which represents death. Rufus' desperation and helplessness are highlighted by the phrase "**dying,**" which refers to mental suffering rather than physical death. Despite his emotional turmoil, his return to Mateo's side emphasizes his profound connection and desire to find comfort in Mateo's presence in the middle of the harsh reality. This statement expresses Rufus' deep emotional struggle and attachment to Mateo in a single sentence, making it a profound illustration of reality anxiety.

This part showing from the quotation *"Wake up now. Please wake up."* eloquently depicts reality anxiety as a major theme in the novel. The character's hesitation to accept Mateo's lifeless body and grab the body bag from the paramedic shows genuine anxiety. Throwing the body bag into the bushes shows a frantic attempt to deny Mateo's death. The character's choking, screaming, and pleading for Mateo to wake up portrays the immense terror of confronting death. The anxiety, which is founded in harsh, irreversible truths, persists throughout the novel as persons face their impending death. The characters' attempts to deny or rationalize death show their deep-seated fear and anxiety in a world where death is inevitable.

*"I see Althea Park in the distance, my place of great change. I return my attention to the video, his voice blasting in my ears. I cross the street **without an arm to hold me back**"* Pg. 226 (Adam Silvera, 2017).

The quotation emphasizes the novel's theme of reality anxiety as a significant type of anxiety, particularly as it applies to the characters' battles with the reality of death. When the character cites Althea Park, a place that represents a watershed event in history, and then returns their focus to a film, it demonstrates their desire to avoid confronting the painful reality. However, the character's crossing of the street *"without an arm to hold me back"* acts as a heartbreaking representation of Mateo's death. This absence, combined with the character's incapacity to accept it, causes further worry. The reality of Mateo's death dawns on the protagonists, and the subsequent automobile disaster becomes a terrible representation of their desperate attempts to escape the inevitability of their own mortality. This form of anxiety, founded in the face of unavoidable truths, characterizes the protagonists' experiences as they deal with the realization that they are living on borrowed time, enhancing the narrative's persistent atmosphere of anxiety.

*"I snap awake from the nightmare. Nightmare-Mateo was completely ablaze, blaming me for his death, telling me he would've never died if he hadn't met me. It sears into my mind, but I shake it off as nothing but a nightmare because Mateo would **never blame anyone for anything.**"* Pg. 217 (Adam Silvera, 2017). The supplied passage gently highlights the novel's theme of reality anxiety as a key sort of anxiety. A sign of reality anxiety is the character's vivid account of a nightmare in which Nightmare-Mateo blames them for his death and expresses remorse for having met them. Excessive concern and fear about real-life outcomes or consequences, even if they are unreasonable or implausible, are common symptoms of this form of anxiety.

Mateo's character is highlighted by the character's rapid response, rejecting the nightmare as unfounded. They argue that Mateo would *"never blame anyone for anything,"* highlighting their faith in their relationship's tenacity. The very existence of such a nightmare, on the other hand, indicates the constant fear that pervades the protagonists' experiences in a world where death is a known certainty. This sort of reality anxiety is rooted in the dread of being held accountable for poor events or hurting the lives of loved ones, showcasing how the characters deal with these worries and anxieties as they traverse the difficulties of living their final day.

### **Neurotic Anxiety**

Neurotic anxiety, in Freudian theory, relates to anxiety stemming from unresolved inner conflicts and unexpressed emotions. *"I collapse back onto the floor, thinking about how **it's do or die now. Not even that.**"* Pg. 5 (Adam Silvera, 2017).

The quotation from this cleverly depicts the novel's theme of neurotic anxiety as a type of anxiety. *"It's do or die now,"* says the character and *"Not even that,"* expresses a sense of impending doom and dread. The anticipation of disastrous results typically causes neurotic anxiety, which is characterized by excessive worry and unfounded anxieties. In this case, the character's belief that it is not just a matter of *"do or die"* implies irrationality and hyper-vigilance in their reasoning. They are experiencing anxiety that extends beyond the usual fear of death, indicating a fixation with an approaching fate over which they have no control.

This type of anxiety is consistent with the novel's overall subject, in which individuals struggle with the awareness of their impending death and become overwhelmed by a neurotic preoccupation with the uncertainty of their final moments. The phrase *"it's do or die now"* denotes a high-stakes mentality, and the addition of *"Not even that"* emphasizes the neurotic side, implying a concern that even their finest efforts may not be enough to change their fate. This remark, in essence, emphasizes how neurotic anxiety develops in the characters as they face the imminent truth of their own mortality, enhancing the pervasive mood of dread woven throughout the novel.

Characters struggle with this neurotic focus on the uncertainty of their dying moments throughout the novel, often leading to unreasonable behaviours and decisions. Their hypervigilance and fixation with death heighten the overall worry that pervades the narrative, revealing the deep impact of neurotic anxiety on their experiences and behaviour as they confront the reality of their mortality.

*"I cannot convince you to not feel guilty if you forget the anniversary of my death, or if you realize days or weeks or months have gone by without thinking about me. I just want you to live."* Pg. 196 (Adam Silvera, 2017). The quotation connects slightly to the issue of neurotic anxiety, a common sort of anxiety throughout the work. *"I cannot convince you not to feel guilty if you forget the anniversary of my death"* says the character, highlighting a neurotic fixation on how people will remember or forget them after death. Neurotic anxiety is frequently characterized by an excessive obsession with perceived judgments and anxieties about how one is regarded by others, especially in situations over which one has no control.

In this context, the character's request indicates a neurotic anxiety of being forgotten or failing to leave an indelible mark on the lives of those they care about. It emphasizes the absurdity of such fears, given that they are addressing a future event over which they have no control. The character's wish for loved ones to simply *"live"* represents an understanding of neurotic anxiety's potentially paralyzing nature, which can hinder people from completely experiencing life and the present moment.



### **Moral Anxiety**

Moral anxiety, according to Freud's theory, pertains to anxiety arising from conflicts related to one's sense of right and wrong, ethical dilemmas, and moral considerations.

*"Once I get out of here—not if—I'll go see Lidia and Penny, but I'm not telling Lidia. I don't want her to consider me dead before I am, or ever bring her any sadness. Maybe I'll send her a postcard explaining everything while I'm out living."* Pg. 24 (Adam Silvera, 2017)

The character's decision not to tell Lidia about their approaching death is motivated by a wish to protect her from misery and keep her from thinking of them as **"or ever bring her any sadness."** Mateo's uneasiness in this passage is intricately linked with moral issues. He is torn about whether to tell Lidia, a person he feels greatly about, about his approaching death. This internal conflict demonstrates his great feeling of responsibility and his desire to protect Lidia from the emotional misery of his circumstances. Mateo's reluctance reveals a moral quandary in which he must weigh the desire for honesty with the desire to safeguard the sentiments of his loved ones. **"Maybe I'll send her a postcard explaining everything"** His thought of sending a letter to explain his situation while he's **"out living"** emphasizes his sense of obligation and shame. Overall, this text demonstrates the complicated interplay between Mateo's fear of dying and his moral duty to those he loves. This indicates great moral distress, as the character wrestles with the ethical quandary of when and how to inform loved ones of their imminent death. The urge to send Lidia a postcard explaining everything while they are "out living" indicates an attempt to combine their moral obligation to be truthful with the need to protect Lidia from undue sorrow.

Characters struggle with moral anxiety throughout the story as they traverse the various moral choices and ethical issues brought on by their imminent deaths. This sort of anxiety emphasizes the characters' strong feeling of responsibility and concern for the well-being of others, adding layers of emotional complexity to their experiences in a world where death is an unavoidable fact.

*"People make mistakes. Rufus made a mistake attacking Peck. Peck shouldn't have had his friends send the police after Rufus, but he wasn't wrong to have done so. Well, legally, no. Morally, hell yes."* Pg. 63 (Adam Silvera, 2017)

The quotation looks on the issue of moral unease, stressing the novel's characters' complicated moral dilemmas. The admission that **"people make mistakes"** and the realization of Rufus's error in attacking Peck demonstrate a sense of moral responsibility and self-reflection. This is a symptom of moral anxiety, which frequently revolves around issues of ethics, personal responsibility, and the consequences of one's behavior.

The remark **"Peck shouldn't have had his friends send the police after Rufus, but he wasn't wrong to have done so"** captures the moral ambiguity that pervades the characters' experiences. Peck's activities may be legal, but the moral ramifications weigh hard on the characters. This disparity between legal and moral viewpoints reflects the characters' internal moral battles, indicating their aptitude for self-examination and ethical introspection.

The statement that Peck's actions were **"morally, hell yes"** incorrect emphasizes the protagonists' increased sense of moral responsibility and moral discomfort throughout the novel. This form of worry is a frequent motif as individuals grapple with the difficulties of their actions and decisions in a world where death is a constant reality, bringing depth and emotional complexity to their travels. *"I fold up the note and leave it with the picture. I head out the room, shaking. I don't go looking for Mateo's body. That's not what he would've wanted in my final minutes."* Pg. 226 (Adam Silvera, 2017)

The quotation form serves as a moving illustration of moral uneasiness, which is prevalent throughout the novel. Rufus' actions, such as folding the message and leaving it with a picture, indicate his moral obligation as well as his deep feeling of moral anxiety. Concerns about ethics, personal responsibility, and the repercussions of one's conduct are common sources of moral distress.

Rufus' choice to leave the note for Mateo's father is motivated by a deep moral sense of duty arising from the possibility that he contributed to Mateo's death. Even in the face of death, the act of leaving the note represents an attempt to make amends and accept responsibility for his acts. His emotional state, however, as evidenced by the phrase that he is **"shaking,"** emphasizes the intensity of his moral distress. **"That's not what he would've wanted in my final minutes,"** says Rufus, reflecting his grasp of Mateo's moral stance and goals. This moral awareness highlights the characters' moral battles and ethical introspection in a world where death is an unavoidable fact. It emphasizes how moral anxiety adds depth and emotional complexity to the characters' experiences in their dying moments as they deal with the moral implications of their acts and decisions.

## CONCLUSION

The portrayal of reality in fiction takes on a distinctive form, sometimes intimately tied to the creators' personal thoughts and feelings. This connection to the narrative world they create is equivalent to pouring a piece of their soul into their work, resulting in a story that has a significant impact on readers. *They Both Die at the End*, Adam Silvera's work, is an excellent example of this deeply personal storytelling technique. Anxiety emerges as a recurring motif inside its pages, portraying the individuals' experiences and feelings as they face the harsh truth of impending mortality.

Anxiety is an ever-present companion in our world, manifesting in a variety of ways and affecting people of all ages. The novel's depiction of anxiety is a heartbreaking reminder of the complex web of emotions that comprise the human condition. Anxiety can cause withdrawal, avoidance, and the creation of coping methods, all of which fit into the narrative. Finally, *They Both Die at the End* skillfully addresses the concept of anxiousness through its characters' encounters with impending death. This work enables readers to journey through the intricate maze of human emotions, providing a thorough and empathic look at the nuances of anxiety. As anxiety continues to be a pervasive aspect of our lives, this narrative serves as a testament to the universality of the human experience and the emotions that unite us in our common path through life.

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