

**Chorduroys and Too Many Boys: Teenage Life (With A Playlist)**  
**Book 1: Everything All At Once**  
**Ivy Cayden**

**“Teens mingle with music, memories, rivalries, fun and the future in this imaginative tale by Ivy Cayden.**

The cast of characters is nearing the end of their junior year of high school, poised for partings and ready to party. Ethan, Brixton and Angus are the boys in a band who have ambitions to participate in a competition that could win them a contract. Ethan’s sister Kila wants what her ex-friend Reese has: Angus. Anna is longing for Brixton, Maya wants Ethan, and Reese is the girl who can have what she wants, just making her classmates jealous and wary. When the group decides to spend a weekend together – no adults present – nature will begin to take its course. Maybe. There will be food, music, and a scary psycho killer movie. And someone has written a song about – someone.

Cayden, a nature lover and supporter of small business efforts, writes smoothly, showing a particular gift for dialog, which is essential in any book about teenagers who customarily speak in secret languages and culture-swathed nuance. They often express intellect and sensitivity, more than one might expect; yet if you think about it, adolescents are constantly on the brink of discovery, and able use their minds to positive effect when they choose to. But there is also confusion – who really likes who? It takes a lot of intuition and a lot of false starts to eventually sort that out, with Kila as a central player, always, it seems, fascinated by the wrong partner.

*Everything All At Once* has several dominant themes, with music having a special role, since the book includes a playlist that can be accessed on Spotify to “sing along” with the action. Song titles appear in bold in the text to cue the reader, though the book flows easily without the aural accompaniment. The aspirations of the band members are a constant underpinning to the well-constructed, multi-layered plot. Teen hormones are another factor, and Cayden has orchestrated passionate temperaments mixing and matching without a loss of decorum. A couple pulsing the rhythm of a song with held hands, and Kila delicately wiping from a boy’s lips her extra thick lip-gloss provide credibly steamy, but not salacious, touches. Too, the ability to move so many through so much in such a short period of time, making a long engaging read, is further proof of the author’s crafting skills.

Teens will especially enjoy Cayden’s vibrant book, and it might be sneaked away by some parents, too, who will see in it a glimpse of their own youthful hopes, fantasies, and romances.”

**-Five stars, Barbara Bamberger Scott, *A Woman's Write***