



Interview with Mom's Choice Award-Winner Ivy Cayden

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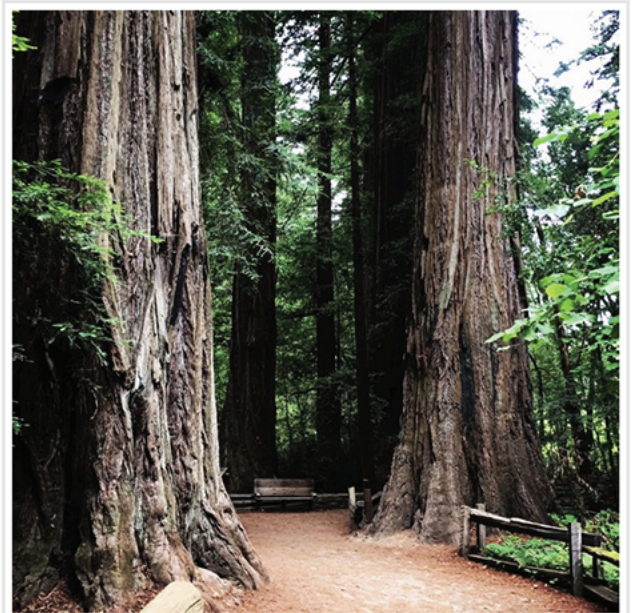
Mom's Choice Awards is excited to announce another post in our [interview series](#) where we chat with the inventors, designers, publishers, and others behind some of our favorite family-friendly products.

Hello, Mom's Choice readers! Thank you for joining us for another installment in our interview series! For this interview, we were delighted to speak with Ivy Cayden, the author of the Mom's Choice Award-winning book, [Everything All At Once](#). [Everything All At Once](#) is a beautiful story about young love and first crushes. [Everything All At Once](#) is definitely filled with everything all at once, including teenage angst, humor, friendship, adventure, romance, inspiration, and dreams. There's also a fun and killer playlist included within the book that goes along perfectly with all the emotions throughout the story. Keep reading to find out more about Ivy and how [Everything All At Once](#) came to be!

MCA: Hi Ivy! I would first like to start the interview by congratulating you on your Mom's Choice Award. [Everything All At Once](#) is a story that everyone can relate to, with an awesome playlist to match! Can we first start the interview with you telling us a bit about yourself?

Ivy: I'm my happiest when I'm on a hiking trail, reveling in the sights, sounds, and scents of nature. Just a few hours north of where I live on California's rugged Central Coast, Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park is home to some of my favorite trails. Exploring amidst the tall trees in Felton stirs my soul and sparks my creativity. My fondness for Felton made it an obvious choice for the setting of the Chorduroys And Too Many Boys™ series. (I can't imagine my characters living anywhere else.)

Second to my love of the outdoors is my love of music. I think many authors are inspired by other authors; I'm inspired by music. I'm not a musician, but I get to interview them. Four years ago, I fulfilled a childhood dream by launching My Multi-Track Mind—an indie music blog dedicated to rising indie artists—where I cover new releases, post in-depth interviews, and share moody playlists. I consider it an honor to share the artists' stories and celebrate their music.



REDWOODS INSIDE HENRY COWELL REDWOODS STATE PARK.

MCA: Mother Nature can be a such great spark for creative writing. Was it your love of nature that lead to your path in becoming a writer? What inspired you to start writing?

Ivy: I grew up in a quiet coastal town in New England. From an early age, I was a big local public library fan. In those years, there was something special, maybe even something cool, about working on homework with classmates *at* the library. Being surrounded by all those books, all that knowledge, and all those stories made me feel more at home than I did in my own house. I couldn't quite put my finger on it then, but it makes complete sense to me now. Writing was my calling—even though I didn't know it yet.

In middle school, I can remember spinning stories about my friends (set to music) at sleepovers, and, shortly afterward, my fascination for old book stores took root. As a young adult, I also learned that few things were as romantic as reading aloud or being read to. Yet, it wasn't until after college, when I was working in the corporate side of the film industry in Los Angeles, that I found myself writing the first words to Everything All At Once (Book 1 in the Chorduroys And Too Many Boys™ series).

Looking back, I think I always had the story in me waiting for the right moment to come out. One evening my best friend encouraged me, "Just write it." That night, I picked up a blank journal, thinking only a few words would materialize, but I found myself scribbling on page after page, my fingers barely keeping up with the strokes of my pen. The following day I purchased a small laptop, and, over time, experienced the pure magic of several pages morphing into several hundred pages.

MCA: That's so interesting that you felt you always had the story within you. Can you tell us more about your inspiration for writing *Everything All At Once*?

Ivy: I wanted to tell a story about the things that matter: family, friendship, love, and dreams. There's a moment in every teenager's life where things morph from ordinary to enthralling. Everything All At Once captures that moment, as it unfolds a little differently for each of the main characters in the story on one life-altering, parentless weekend.

MCA: There's a section at the front of the book entitled All About The Playlist, what is the significance of this section within the book?

Ivy: The "All About The Playlist" section relays where to find the book's elaborate, 67-song playlist and provides some easy-to-follow instructions for listening to the songs while you read along.

MCA: Can you discuss the 67-song Spotify playlist within the book and what it does for the reader's experience?

Ivy: The idea for the playlist existed before I had written any of the story. In my mind, I had already associated certain songs with certain scenes. The music acted as a gateway from my world into the story's world, and I wanted my readers to have access to that gateway, too. Although it seemed like a rigorous task, I somehow knew if I could stitch songs into the book in a precise and purposeful manner, it would result in an exciting, immersive experience for the reader.

Music is transporting. When the characters are listening to music in their homes, in their cars, or at a café, and you—as the reader—are also listening to those same songs at those same moments, the characters seem to breathe, and the story feels more real. The sound of the playlist leans indie-alternative, given my love for that genre, but there's also some dream pop, classic rock, 90s throwbacks, hip hop, and even a touch of folk music. I wanted the book's playlist to honor and mimic the intense, kaleidoscopic emotional range of teenagers.

MCA: Music truly is transporting, especially the music within *Everything All At Once*! What has the response been like from your readers?

Ivy: I get the warm fuzzies every time I see a glowing review online or receive social media messages from readers, telling me which character(s) and song(s) they loved most and gushing about what they hope happens next. (Spoiler: Book 1 ends in a cliff-hanger.)

My most memorable message to date was from a mom who told me her daughter actually put down her phone and read a book cover to cover. I was grateful it was mine!

MCA: We've read that *Everything All At Once* also just took 1st place in three categories of the prestigious 2020 Royal Dragonfly Awards: Young Adult Fiction, Performing Arts, and New Author: Fiction. What does this mean to you and the future of the Chorduroys and Too Many Boys™ series?



Ivy: As a first-time indie author, I couldn't be more thrilled by this unexpected achievement. I let my characters celebrate over the holidays but recently informed them it was time to get back to the story. We have a second book to release, and we're deep in the thick of it now—solidifying scenes and selecting songs.

Book 2 will pick up right where the first left off. I've envisioned the whole story as a vibrant saga that follows the tight-knit group of teens into adulthood. Regardless of the total number of books, the Chorduroys And Too Many Boys™ series will continue to feature Kila Lorens, her older brother Ethan, and all of their friends. And each book will always have its own intricate playlist.

MCA: That is very exciting, we can't wait to continue their story. Please keep us posted!

You can learn more about Ivy Cayden and her award-winning book, *Everything All At Once* by visiting her MCA Shop pages.