

Redesigning Destiny

Fate is one of the most common tropes in modern young adult literature. Characters are constantly discovering that they are destined to rule a kingdom, change the world, or fall in love with their sworn enemy. What makes these characters so memorable is either their embracement of these challenging fates or their challenge against the fates. In our everyday lives, fate is often not as clear as in the stories. We do not have oracles or prophecies telling us who we are destined to become. Therefore, our fate is in our own hands. Each day, when we are going to school, college, or work, we are working towards our dreams and redesigning our fate, just as these passionate characters do in their fictional worlds.

The novel, *Heartless* by Marissa Meyer, is entirely about a character who is determined to choose her own destiny. The main character, Cath, dreams of starting her own bakery, while her family has other plans for her. Although she goes along with those plans for a while, she eventually decides that she is going to take control of her fate. Before announcing to her parents that she is going to open her own bakery, she tells her friend, "Sometimes your heart is the only thing worth listening to" (Meyer 257). This also applies to the choices faced throughout every person's life. In every decision a person makes, they can either make a choice that is pushed on them by other people or they can make a choice that will make them happy and fulfilled in life. By choosing a choice that will lead to personal happiness and fulfillment, it is listening to your heart and choosing your own destiny, just as Cath did in this scene.

Britta is the main character in Erin Summerill's novel, *Ever the Hunted*. This novel is entirely about Britta's fight against fate as she tries to discover who killed her father and a way to claim the lands that should have been left to her. Bravery is a main component of controlling your destiny. Britta chooses to be brave so that she can make the difficult choices that will lead her to fulfilling the destiny she has made for herself. She tells the importance of bravery when she states, "But all I can think of is Papa saying, *Bravery is a choice that is yours to make. Don't let fear steal your will*. Something tells me that this hunt won't end well. But since I am a brave fool: 'Yes I'll go'" (Sumerill 92). To control your own destiny is to take risks, especially in the modern era. Britta's bravery is very similar to the bravery I, and many other students, must have when pursuing a career, considering it could take years of hard work until a result is seen.

While *Ever the Hunted* and *Heartless* have shown choosing fate in worlds quite different than the one we live in now, Francisco X Stork's novel, *The Memory of Light*, paints redesigning fate in a very real and common picture. The characters in this novel deal with a problem that is plaguing millions of people across the world: depression. This is a problem that can only be fought with bravery and by making the choice to control your destiny. Two of the characters discuss what it is like to redesign your fate on page 162, when it is stated: "Huichi is about being brave. About not being defeated by anybody or anything. Rising up every day and doing what you gotta do. Shining your light so that people and things around you can live. The fight is hard, else you wouldn't need to be brae. It's all caliche, so what's the use whining about it? The rocks are everywhere. You have to dig around them without getting pissed at them. I expect the rocks to be there. Sometimes I think they're put there on purpose so I can learn not to be angry about them" (Stork). This is yet another example of how people can control their destinies.

All three of these examples have had one thing in common: bravery. Bravery is a key factor to having control over your destiny. Each step people must take to reach their goals in life involve a little bit of bravery. Redesigning fate is in almost every choice someone makes. For me, by choosing to go to college to get a degree in a field I am passionate about and moving to another state for a job opportunity, I am molding my future to be pleasing to me, not to others. Essentially, in every decision someone makes to be happy, they are taking control of their fate. You do not have to be a character in a book to control your story, just brave enough to take control and make yourself happy.