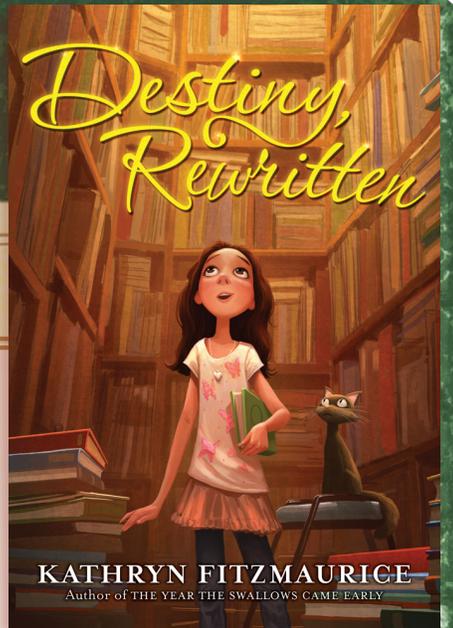


# Destiny, Rewritten

by KATHRYN FITZMAURICE



## DISCUSSION GUIDE

### ABOUT THE BOOK

Emily Elizabeth Davis has been told for her entire life that her destiny is to become a poet, just like her famous namesake, Emily Dickinson. But shortly after discovering that it contains an important family secret, she loses the special volume of Emily Dickinson's poetry that was given to her at birth. As Emily and her friends search for the lost book in used-book stores all across town, Emily's understanding of destiny begins to unravel and then rewrite itself, in a marvelous new way.

In her third novel, Kathryn Fitzmaurice again weaves a richly textured and delightful story about unexpected connections, about the stories that shape our lives, and about the most perfect kinds of happy endings: those that happen just on time.

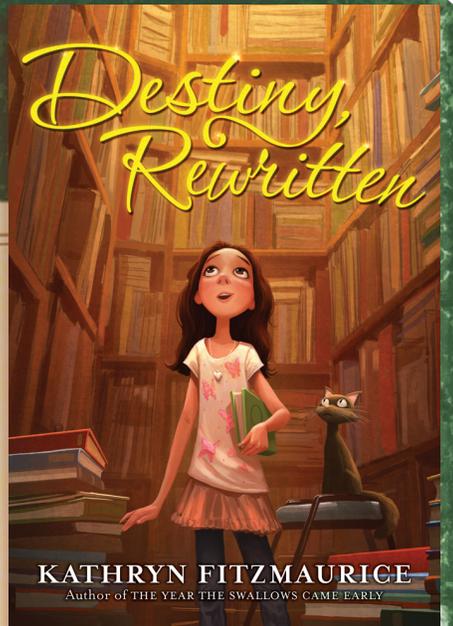
### QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. On page 17, Emily tells her best friend that she does not understand the mystery behind Emily Dickinson's poems. Specifically, she does not understand why Miss Dickinson places capital letters and dashes in her poems where, according to Emily, they do not belong. Why do you think Emily Dickinson wrote her poetry like this?
2. On page 30, Emily describes how her mother picked a special poem from *The Complete Poems of Emily Dickinson* to commemorate each milestone in Emily's life, such as when she was born, when she first walked, and when she spoke her first word. Write a short poem that celebrates a milestone of your life.
3. Mortie tells Emily her name doesn't quite fit her on page 41. What does he mean by this?
4. When Emily's book goes missing on page 42, why does she think it's possible she may have forced things? Which string of events is she referring to?
5. Emily's mother writes a haiku poem on the inside of Emily's forearm on pages 58-59. Why does she do this? If you were to write a poem on someone's arm, what would you write and whose arm would you write it on?
6. Mortie explains to Emily that the water cycle is too predictable on page 78. He says, "No one in the army would approve a strategy like that." That night, Emily decides to change a few things about her own life. Why does she do this, and what does she think might happen because of her decision?
7. Why does Emily write to Danielle Steel?
8. While Emily is searching for her book, there are several things she does that are very different, all of which cause her to feel uneasy. What are a few of these things, and why do they cause her to feel this way?
9. Why does Emily like to read and copy down the happy endings in romance novels? Where does she keep the happy endings she copies down?

CONTINUED . . .

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- 10.** On pages 173 and 248, Cecily Ann tells Emily how her cousin, Chet, and the tree sitters plan on saving the oak trees. Have you ever been a part of a protest? Did your actions help the cause you were attempting to aid?
- 11.** Emily sends a chart to Danielle Steel on page 205 showing people who might be considered experts on the topic of destiny. Referring to her chart, which person do you think is most like an expert and why?
- 12.** On page 211, Emily frames the signed photograph of Danielle Steel and places it on her wall. Why does this photograph mean so much to her? What promise does it hold?
- 13.** Emily collects plastic rings that come out of Cheerios boxes. On page 240, she finally has a complete set of all four colors, blue, green, red, and the long-awaited yellow. Why is this collection so important to her? What does it really symbolize?
- 14.** Why does Emily feel such a sense of relief on page 265 when she tears out the inscription page from her book of poems and gives it to Cecily Ann?
- 15.** Emily realizes at the end of the book that had she not given Mortie eight dollars, she might never have come to find out who her father was. Have you ever done something that seemed like a small event at the time but later turned out to somehow change your life? What was it?
- 16.** Destiny is defined as the hidden power believed to control what will happen in the future—fate. Do you think people make their own destinies or they are preplanned? Why do you think this?



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Kathryn Fitzmaurice taught elementary school in California before becoming a full-time writer. She lives in Monarch Beach, California, with her husband, her two sons, and her adored dog/writing companion, Holly. Her first book, *The Year the Swallows Came Early*, received many accolades and honors. *Destiny, Rewritten* is her third book.

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Discussion questions courtesy of the author.  
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