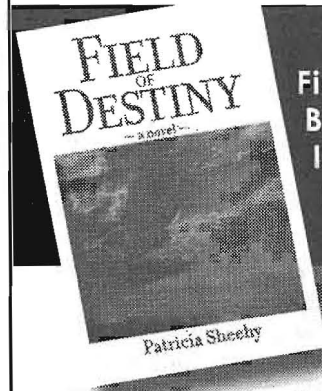


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Book Review by Karen M. Rider



Field Of Destiny
By: Patricia Sheehy
ISBN: 1892343487
Publishers: Oak Tree Press

I read a wide variety of contemporary and literary fiction and I enjoy most, if not all of my selections. Still, it is rare that a book stirs something so deep within the fabric of my being that I am compelled to reprioritize my to-do list to sit down and write a book review as soon as I finish reading the book. Without a doubt, *Field of Destiny* by Patricia Sheehy, is worth every moment of time I am dedicating to writing this review. I am certain that you, Inner Tapestry readers, will feel the same way.

When was the last time you rethought a choice you made years ago, perhaps days or even hours ago? We've all done that; no doubt, most of us have also thought equally about the rippling effects of those choices versus the alternate path of a life that "might have been" had we chosen differently. Not everyone may use the terms "free will," "fate," or "destiny" but that's exactly what we are wondering about when we ponder, "What if?" in regard to the choices we have made or are about to make.

Patricia Sheehy tackles these big questions in her novel, *Field of Destiny*: What is the nature of free will? How does free will interact with one's destiny; or, as Caroline Myss might put it, what happens when a person's free will alters her sacred contracts?

Destiny's heroine, Natalie Davenport, has a sacred contract to fulfill, lessons to be learned so that she may evolve spiritually. Natalie's destiny is derailed when her birth mother makes an impetuous choice and creates a life woven with deceit and betrayal. Natalie is a compelling character, remarkably bright, uncommonly beautiful and witty. The novel follows Natalie from her fateful birth to an unwed mother, Marilyn, who

refuses to release Natalie to her adoptive parents. We follow Natalie as she comes-of-age during the Sixties and matures into womanhood in the late Seventies and early Eighties. Readers will cheer for her and weep with her as she struggles to learn karmic lessons of loyalty, truth, and love against the backdrop of social and racial shifts. Natalie must discover Truth for herself and determine to whom or what does she owe her loyalty. Does she follow her heart or her well-intended "master plan" for her life?

Natalie's fate is challenged by the free will choices made by the people in her life (and her past lives, but that's a twist in the plot I'll leave the reader to enjoy—and to ponder). Marilyn is a gold-digging wench who puts social position above a mother's love for her child, though she doesn't see it that way. Marilyn's version of motherly advice is to encourage Natalie to polish her etiquette and snag a wealthy husband. In contrast, Aunt Willie tries to encourage Natalie to trust the wisdom that resides in her heart, not her head. Annie, Natalie's tree-hugging, hippie friend stands by her no matter what—a friend anyone would be lucky to have. The men in Natalie's life are Chad and Johnny. To both she owes karmic debts—to one forgiveness and the other unconditional love.

Every character is emotionally and physically vivid, ripe with their own flaws and redeeming qualities. Readers will quickly love (or hate) each character accordingly. The physical locations, from Hartford, CT to Boston and Cape Cod, MA to Saint Martin, are beautifully portrayed against the social customs of both place and time. Sheehy is a masterful storyteller whose style is poignant, evocative and powerful.

When *Destiny* came to its end, I wanted more... much more... of the characters, the story, the lessons, the penetrating questions that reading this book birthed in my own mind. I have no doubt that everyone who reads this book will feel the same way.

Karen M. Rider, M.A. writes a variety of articles, stories, and reviews to educate, enlighten and entertain the reader. As a promotional copywriter, Karen specializes in helping holistic health businesses communicate to their target audience with clarity, integrity, and creativity. Karen resides in Connecticut where she shares life's adventures with her husband and daughters. She is working on her first novel. KarenM_Rider@cox.net.