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THE ROLE OF FORTUITY IN *THE FAULT IN OUR STARS*

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**Abstract**

*The Fault In Our Stars* is a love story swinging between life and death beautifully written by John Green. In the hopeless life of Hazel Grace, Augustus Waters came like a shooting star and died after fulfilling her wish. According to Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory, characters in literature are seen and treated as living beings who belong to the created fantasy world. The same happened with Hazel when she read a book again and again and assumed herself as a fictitious character Anna and pursues the author of the book to discover more about her future. Eventually, she got the chance to meet the author and set out for a memorable trip to Amsterdam to fulfill her only wish.

**Keywords:** Psychoanalysis, life, death, love.

John Michael Green is an American author and YouTube content creator. He was born in 1977 in Indianapolis, Indiana, to Mike and Sydney Green. He later attended Indiana Spring School. He used Indian springs as the inspiration for the main setting of his first book, *Looking for Alaska*. He won the 2006 Printz Award for this debut novel. His sixth book, *The Fault in Our Stars*, was published in January 2012. The novel has been made into a movie of the same name, released in the United States in 2014.

A Hindi movie based on this novel, *Dil Bechara* also has been made and released in 2020, over the Internet. The title of the novel, *The Fault In Our Stars* is inspired by Shakespeare's play *Julius Caesar*. In the play, nobleman Cassius says to Brutus, "The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our Stars, but in ourselves, that we are underlying." In his novel, John Green has beautifully depicted how the protagonist's luck changes her life. Sometimes there is

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the sunshine of happiness and sometimes darkness of losing loved ones.

Hazel Grace is a sixteen-year-old girl, suffering from lung cancer, in Indianapolis. Her mother sends her to a weekly Support Group for Cancer Kids because she was worried that her daughter is getting depressed. The Support Group met in the basement of a church, shaped like a cross. All the members of the group, suffering from different types of cancer, were below eighteen except the group leader, Patrick. Isaac was also a member of the group and friend of Hazel, suffering from eye cancer. That day on his requested his best friend Augustus Waters also came. Augustus had a little touch of osteosarcoma more than one year ago but now he was fine, except he lost his one leg.

Hazel found Augustus continuously staring at her. He was a tall and handsome boy of seventeen with blue eyes. He offered Hazel to come to his house and watch a movie. She accepted the offer and so his friendship. He also gave his favorite book based on games. Hazel told him about her favorite book 'An Imperial Affliction'.

'An Imperial Affliction' was a story of Anna, a teenager suffering from cancer and her mother, with an open ending. Hazel was very curious to know about the dying protagonist and her mother's remarriage. She wrote many letters to the writer of the

book but didn't get any reply. She shared her disappointment with Augustus. He also read it and found himself in a pool of questions the same as Hazel. The book ended abruptly. Augustus was not disheartened. He made efforts because he was not habitual of the defeats.

He found a way to get his answers as he e-mailed the author's secretary Ms. Lidewij Vliegthart. To Hazel's surprise, he got a reply from the author, via her secretary, for he was not using any type of social media and other electronic devices. He had gone to, Netherland, from America, after writing the book and settled there. Hazel was impressed by Augustus' quality of getting whatever he wished by hook or crook. She asked for the secretary's e-mail address and wrote an impressive message loaded with emotions, praises, and a request for the climax of the book. She was knocked out by happiness when she got a reply and also an invitation to go to Amsterdam and meet the author personally.

The cancer patients, who are not sure about their future do not make big plans or if they desire something, they want to get it as soon as possible. They know that they do not have much time to fulfill their dreams. Augustus was not tired of staring at Hazel's face and told the reason that she was beautiful. Whenever they talked on the phone, it seemed to Hazel "like I was not in

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my room and he was not in his, but instead, we were together in some invisible and tenuous third space that could only be visited on the phone” (Green, 72). Hazel’s parents’ financial condition was not strong enough to send her Amsterdam. The organization Genie Foundation was in the business of granting sick kids one wish. Hazel had already used it. But Augustus had saved his wish and now he was going to use it for fulfilling Hazel’s wish. He talked to Honor Foundation and they were ready to finance Augustus and Hazel’s international trip.

Psychoanalysis is a theory about the human mind. It is the fact that the literature is an expression of its author’s persona. The psychoanalytic view of human behavior helps in finding the interaction of conscious and unconscious elements of mind. Its main aim is to cure mental illness or disorders. Sigmund Freud named his ideas 'Psychoanalysis' in 1896. According to him, people are motivated by their desires, fears, and conflicts unknowingly. All of it goes at the bottom Of our unconscious mind. In his opinion, the unconscious mind is more dynamic and active. We have partial access to it through our dreams and creative activities. Hazel’s favorite author Van Houten, whom she considers as her best friend after her parents without his knowledge, had a little daughter suffering from cancer. Even when he lost her, when

she was a child, but he kept her alive in his book as a teenager. His love for her daughter forced his creative activity but he couldn't reach the conclusion. So he ended his book without telling if Anna died or her mother remarried with the Dutch Man or not.

Hazel's mother’s life was revolved around her daughter. From morning to evening, she took care of her, her needs, her medicines, her treatments, her studies, and even of her entertainment. She drops Hazel to the college, to the support group, to the malls, and keeps waiting for her outside in the car. She used to take her to the movies, to shopping, to parks, and wanted her to make friends and enjoy the life of a normal teenager. Hazel knew that she was everything for her mother, so she was worried about what will she do after Hazel's death. What will be the aim of her mother's life after her, what if she would divorce her father? Hazel related to the fictitious character Anna and her mother with herself and her own mother. So she desperately wanted to know what happens with Anna's mother after her death.

Hazel accepted the friendship of Augustus but did not want to get close with him or with anyone. She did not want to hurt him because it is human nature, whoever is intimate to a dying person, will

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be definitely more hurt than others Augustus already suffered this pain of losing his beloved Caroline Mothers who died a few months ago with a brain tumor. Hazel did not want to push him again in the ditch of pain and suffering. Hazel called herself a grenade when her parents encouraged her to befriend with Augustus. She shouted “I’m Like a *grenade* mom. I’m a grenade and at some point I’m going to blow up and I would like to minimize the casualties, okay?” (Green, 99) Although her dad tried to convenience her that the thinking about her cancer makes them sad but the joy she brought them is so much greater than the sadness. So is a source of happiness for them.

After a lot of discussions, Hazel's doctor granted her permission to go to Amsterdam, with the condition that her mother will accompany Augustus and her because after doctor only she can understand Hazel’s medical conditions and emergencies. Hazel had to carry everywhere an oxygen cart with a pipe stuck in her nose. Finally Hazel boarded on the flight to Amsterdam with her mother and Augustus. She watched Augustus getting nervous during the flight. Obviously, he was taking all pains for her sake. Hazel, who tried hard not to fall in love with him, inclined towards him spontaneously. The first day in Amsterdam, the sin city was memorable for Hazel and

Augustus, for Lidewij had already arranged a splendid dinner for them in a beautiful restaurant by the side of the canal. Hazel savored the delicious cuisine of the Netherlands as well as the soothing company of Augustus. It was a perfect dinner date of her life. She felt blessed and thanked Augustus who was looking desolate little bit. But Hazel was excited about the next day's meeting with the author. Peter Van Houten, whose book she read million times with the same interest.

Finally, the D-day came when Hazel and Augustus were standing at the door of the author. It was like a bolt from the blue that the author recognized them not was aware of their visit. He shut the door on their faces. After some moments his secretary Ms.Lidewij opened the door and felt embarrassed about his behavior. She told them about the author’s forgetfulness due to age. Lidewij supposed that the visit of the author's fan from America would have a positive impact on his mental status. The author was finally convinced to talk to them. But soon Hazel found that he was talking about worthless things and not answering her questions about the novel. Although Houten noticed that Hazel was dressed up the similarly as the character Anna, continuously drinking liquor, he cleared his views about Hazel and Augustus' transatlantic travel that it was a childish idea to be eager to know about the

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fictitious character of a novel as if they are historical characters. He spoke harsh words to Hazel that the children like her become a burden on their parents.

But Hazel was not angry at this because she was very well aware of this fact although her parents never showed any gesture of it. Instead, she got furious when the author totally refused to answer her questions. She at once smacked the author's hand that was holding the glass of Scotch. It splashed across his face. Lidewij was also very much irritated by the author's rude behavior towards Hazel and Augustus, who traveled so far just to know the climax of the novel. She said that she was going to resign from her job. Lidewij didn't want Hazel's trip to be totally spoiled, so she followed crying Hazel and offered them to visit Anne Frank House, as it was planned earlier. Hazel accepted it, for she wanted to make this trip with Augustus, memorable. Hazel saw that climbing the stairs of Anne Frank's house was not a cup of tea for Augustus too. His love and care moved Hazel towards him and they both confirmed their deep love for each other. Just before returning from Amsterdam, Hazel came to know about Augustus' illness. Everyone knew it except Hazel. Just before the trip to Amsterdam, Augustus felt pain and went through medical tests. The cancer was back and spreading like the Christmas tree in his chest, left hip, and liver. Augustus felt pity

for Hazel that her boyfriend is not a healthy man.

Augustus resumed his treatment after returning Indiana and Hazel visited him as frequently as she can. She witnessed the change in him, how an energetic, handsome 'conquering everyone around him', boy was lied down on the bed. Hazel experienced that pain is blunt and non-specific diagnostic instrument. Now she was watching Augustus suffering from this pain and visiting the hospital at the short intervals, "... the supernova exploding inside my brain, and endless change of intracranial firecrackers that I was once and for all going, But just like always, I didn't slip away. I was left on the shore with the waves washing over me, unable to drown."(Green, 105).

Augustus was a believer in metaphors and symbolized the situations at hand. As he was habitual of putting an unlit cigarette in his mouth, something of a trade Mark, as he explained it, "They don't kill you unless you light them... And I've never lit one. It's a metaphor, see: you put the killing thing right between your teeth, but you don't give it the power to do its killing"(Green, 20).

He was a good basketball player before cancer took him in its grip. Augustus was a true friend of Isaac and always supported him in his hard times. Isaac went

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blind after surgery. Even in the middle of painful cancer treatments when Augustus heard about Isaac's being upset because his girlfriend Monika broke up with him and didn't ask how he was after the surgery, he got up and headed towards her house with Hazel and Isaac. He asked Hazel to buy some eggs on the way and they stopped in front of Monika's house. Augustus give eggs to Isaac and guided him to throw at Monika's car. All three cancer patients enjoyed this egg-throwing prank.

Hazel was astonished to see the charming personality of Augustus in the Support Group. She first time heard his attractive voice when the leader of the group asked him about his fears. Augustus said that he feared being oblivion like a proverbial blind man, who is afraid of the dark. Hazel chose to reply to him, "There will come a time...When all of us are dead... There will no one left to remember Aristotle or Cleopatra, let alone you. Everything that we did and built and wrote and thought and discovered will be forgotten and all of this"(Green, 12).Augustus wanted to remain always in the hearts of his adoring people. He was afraid of being forgotten.

Finally, Augustus passed away, leaving Hazel and Isaac, crying with the swing set, he desired for. In his last days, Augustus wrote few things to Peter Van Houten, describing Hazel's nature and requested

him to write a beautiful eulogy out of it. Hazel came to know about it through Isaac and after a great effort, she found it. "Hazel knows the truth... People will say it's sad that she leaves a lesser scar that fewer remember her, that she was loved deeply but not widely. But it's not sad, Van Houten. It's triumphant. It's heroic" (Green, 312). He also admits that she is extremely beautiful and he loved her deeply. Augustus was of the notion that a human being cannot control life and death but definitely can love the life in-betweens.

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