

Makay
Grade 12
North Branch
Genre: Original Fiction
Title: Destiny's Door

Most people blessed with The Sight grew up to be wise oracles or powerful leaders. But not Felix Cobbledash. His visions caused him to be obsessed with two things: another world and a metal door that wouldn't open. The best thing the townspeople of Meadowshire could say about Felix was that he was persistent. But they almost never said that, as they were more fond of calling him an ungrateful hooligan or a crazed fantasist. However, Felix didn't have time to preoccupy himself with what his neighbors said, for he was on a mission.

The other world he saw in his visions and dreams fixated him. He was like a moth drawn to a flame (only hopefully not in danger of dying). It was a world filled with a strange but alluring type of magic: buildings touched the clouds, hot water spewed from facets on command, people had conversations from opposite sides of the planet, and a machine called a toaster warmed bread slices to perfection. Felix knew the place he saw in his visions was far from perfect, but he loved it with his whole soul. His heart leaped whenever he saw this other realm with all its noise and excitement and color. It constantly pulsed with unwavering energy, and it called to him like a siren's song (except hopefully not luring him to his death). He knew his visions showed him the only place he could ever belong.

It was so different from Meadowshire, the land he grudgingly called home. Magic was only given to the elite, like warlocks and fairies, while the common people were left to become farmers or soldiers and die of disease or boredom. Almost everyone spent their entire lives idly waiting for something to happen. Felix was bored with his mundane life in the most painful way; it seemed to rub against his skin and irritate him all day. Leaving Meadowshire was in all his thoughts and filled all his dreams. However, his visions had shown only one way to enter the bright and beautiful world, and it was proving to be difficult.

High on Crowcrag's Peak, there was a door built into the mountainside and hidden behind a forest of spindly pine-nettle trees that seemed to constantly shed their black needles. It was exactly Felix's height, and made of dull iron that had strange symbols carved into it. The only problem was that the door had no knob or latch. Its annoyingly smooth surface was an interesting design choice on the behalf of the builder. Felix knew that all he had to do was open the door, and the other world would be there waiting for him with all its electric splendor.

However, the door had proven to be a worthy opponent. No matter what Felix tried, he couldn't get it to budge. He found exceptionally pointy sticks and tried to pry the door open. He poured acid over the door's metallic surface. It remained unscathed, although Felix's hands weren't so lucky. He tried to melt it down with contained bursts of fire, but the fire soon ceased to be contained and the forest almost burned down. He bribed a centaur to run through it at full speed. Felix ended up having to pay the healer's fee and the door remained closed. Nothing made the door budge in the slightest, but Felix didn't even consider giving up. He just gritted his teeth and thought about air conditioning and sports cars and memory foam

pillows and tried harder. His current, highly sophisticated technique now involved banging his head repeatedly against the door's unforgiving surface. Think about the toasters, he thought. Or the restaurants that give you food every hour of the day. This inspired him, and he banged his head with renewed gusto.

"Um, I think you need to find a less destructive hobby," a voice called. Felix stopped hitting his head and looking up, annoyed to have lost his progress. It was the closest thing he had to a friend in Meadowshire: Leif, a forest spirit who spent his days picking daisies and hugging trees and worrying about Felix.

Felix grunted in reply, hoping that Leif would leave. Instead, the spirit drifted closer.

"Why do you want to leave so badly, anyway? What about your parents?" he asked.

"You mean the ones who died from the plague five years ago?" Felix replied.

Leif's mud-brown eyes grew wide. "Uh, my condolences and forget I ever said anything about that. I'm just worried about you, is all. You haven't left this spot in over a week and you're not eating the roaches I leave for you. The townspeople think you're dead!"

"Leif, I know you don't eat, so let me tell you: roaches were never meant to be consumed by humans. And trust me, I've never been better." Felix said as he massaged his throbbing forehead.

"Listen, you have the Sight! You could easily be a war general or a prophet! Or you could at least find a girl and raise a happy family of radish farmers! What's so bad about that?"

"I have bigger plans than leading soldiers to their deaths or forcing my children to pick radishes. There's nothing here for me, but my destiny is behind this door."

"I hate to be the one to say this, but destiny chose for you to be born in Meadowshire. Why is that?"

And for the first time, Felix sat and thought. He tasted the crisp night air and heard the chime of the fairies drowsily moving about. He saw the golden moon and the stars that danced across the purple sky. Life wasn't easy here. Felix had struggled to survive every day since his parent's passing and he became strong and resourceful. He fought for a dream that no one else believed in and he became clever and resilient. He knew where he truly belonged because of the time he'd spent here, and he'd been primed to reach his full potential. This was his birthplace, and he was just as much a product of the land as the marsh grass growing by the river. He owed everything he was and could be to Meadowshire. It had shaped him like a potter made a vase out of sloppy mud.

"Thank you", he whispered to the land, to the trees, to the sky, to everything. And with those words the iron door creaked open on its own. Felix was at last ready to live his dream in the faraway land of Earth because loving his dull past was the key to his glorious future.