



Destined for Greatness and Other Stories

L. M. Gil

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“You people have a thing for secrecy. Like you don’t want to talk about anything, you know, real. Like you’re afraid of your own shadow. Most of you are running from something, and you’ve turned love into a villain, into lust in your mind. And when you turn a friend like love into an enemy, you become confused. [Now the] ... conflict’s come to the surface. That inner struggle, beyond the well-brushed hair and the collar. And that’s tough to witness when you’re used to thinking that what you see on the outside is what’s inside.” A bartender, one of the characters in *Destined for Greatness and Other Stories*, shares her observations of the Roman Catholic seminarians that visit her tavern one winter evening. She fills their cups each time they ask, watching them drink to excess and act in ways that are unbecoming of priests-in-training. When one of the men blames her alcohol for the behavior of his fellow seminarians, she tells him the truth he does not want to understand. She explains that the behavior was there all along. “Alcohol,” she says, “only brings reality to the surface.” In *Destined for Greatness and Other Stories*, we see this secretive behavior, symptomatic of bigger issues, in the reprisal of characters we met in L.M. Gil’s first novel *Fragile Creatures*. Even though each story stands on its own (which readers new to L.M. Gil’s writing will appreciate), these stories (ten short stories and one novella) examine questions left answered in the first novel. We find out what happened to Stanley Gonzalez that left him temporarily paralyzed, how Rafael’s and Sister Tere’s relationship transformed itself from a hateful one into one of love, and why Juan Maria had to travel all the way to Spain to find Lorca. In revisiting these moments, all readers see how one person’s choice can profoundly affect others involved and how different one situation can appear, depending on perspective.

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