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Logan Leiter Mrs. Fiedler English 10. 1 12 October 2012 Ethan Frome: Fate No, I don't believe Ethan, Zeena and Mattie deserve their fates. I don't think it's right to deserve fate, if it is forced upon them. The actions of other characters led to their fates. For example, in the story Edith Wharton wrote this, " It was the fate she was forcing on Mattie - why not let her try it herself... " (203). Since Mattie was employed to Zeena and Ethan, she could not have demanded to stay when she was sent away because they were hiring someone new. Mattie had no control over the situation, so she had no control over her fate.

The only character who really had control over their situation would be Ethan. He never could find the courage to stand up to Zeena. He was angered, but chose not to express it to conceal his relationship with Mattie. Therefore, Mattie had no control over his decision which led to her fate. Zeena's fate could have been changed multiple times in the book. Ethan could have ran off with Mattie and left the farm in Zeena's hands with all the financial troubles along with it. However, Ethan's conscience catches up with him before he could ever make his move.

So Zeena's fate was also influenced by another character. This forced-fate was a reoccurring theme throughout the book, it just hides in the text. That is whyI believethe characters did not deserve their fate. Another example of fate being forced upon a character was when Ethan and Mattie made the decision to commitsuicide. In the story, Edith Wharton wrote this, " Her sombreviolenceconstrained him: she seemed the embodied instrument of fate. " (258). The book says Mattie constrained Ethan to join her on the sled. This led to his fate and he hardly had any control over his feelings for Mattie.

However, something that I noticed while reading the novel was how none of the characters would stand up for themselves. Every situation they were put in, they had no affect on. They seemed cowardly and not willing to stand up for what they believed in. This pushed me in another direction to believe that every character deserved his or her fate. Ethan, throughout the whole book, would not follow his passions. Wharton wrote, " You can sell the farm and mill, and keep themoney. His pen paused on the word... " (201). Ethan was writing to Zeena, saying he was going to leave the farm in her care and try his luck West.

But, he never really went along with it, he couldn't ever pull himself up to execute his passion to run off with Mattie. Ultimately, I have mixed feelings over the topic about whether the characters deserve their fate or not. If I had to pick one it would be that no character deserves his or her fate because they had no control over them. I think Edith Wharton aims at teaching the reader a lesson about being in control of your own life. To not let others control your life and to be the pilot of your own life. Wharton used the concept of fate to teach the reader how choices of others could cause ruckus in your own life