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Courage in the Universe

The universe is composed of an ominous black aura with sparse, shimmering stars contrasting the gloomy background. These lights of hope are representations of the courageous individuals who are able to overcome the dark abyss. Charles Dickens' *A Tale of Two Cities* and John Irving's *A Prayer for Owen Meany* are very similar in their views on the cruelty of the world and a desperate need for individuals to rise above its forces. Through the use of ill-fated plots, dauntless characters, and dark imagery, these authors explain that without the defining trait of courage woven into the universe, it would eventually collapse.

In a space exposed to constant commotion, gravitational fields often arise. A single person is easily influenced by the forces and emotions surrounding them. Thus, when a majority of particles group together a vacuum is created. Once the process begins, it accelerates exponentially until everyone is bound to the same ill-fated destiny. Through the use of plot structure, a predestined future is portrayed in the works of Irving and Dickens. In *A Prayer for Owen Meany*, Owen is tainted with the knowledge of his death date while he is still a child. By stating such a harsh, factual piece of information so early in the novel there is an emphasis on the tragic, predestined futures of even the protagonist. Owen’s acceptance of this fact, accompanied by a fearlessness to embrace his fate, illustrates his willpower to benefit from the pre-scripted future. However, Owen also passionately wanted to enter the Vietnam War in order to fulfill his destiny of saving the children (Irving 471). John, on the other hand, was hesitant. A cynical tone