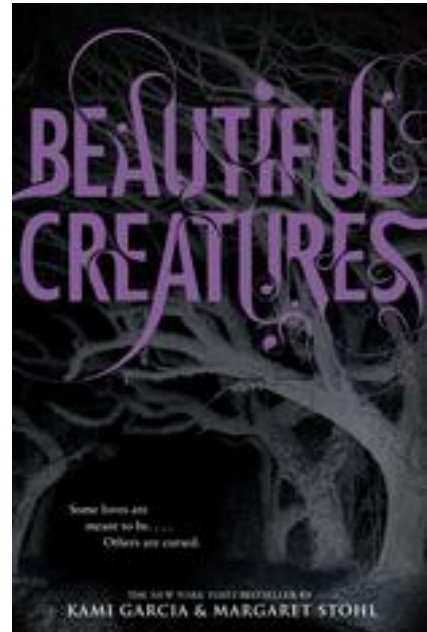


Beautiful Creatures

Discussion Questions

1. Describe the small town of Gatlin. Why does Ethan want to leave when he turns 18?
2. Why is everyone at Jackson High School so surprised when Lena Duchannes enrolls as a new student?
3. Describe Ethan's best friend, Link. How is he different from the other students at Jackson High School?
4. Who are the Daughters of the American Revolution (the DAR)? What influence do they have in Gatlin?
5. What is so unique about Lena's family, the Ravenwoods and the Duchannes?
6. Does Lena have a specific power? What kind of Casting can she do?
7. What happens when Ethan and Lena touch the locket that they find? What personal connections do they have to their visions?
8. Why can't any Duchannes children decide if they will be claimed by the Light or the Dark? What happens to Casters who are claimed by the Dark?
9. What secret about Lena's Claiming does her family keep from her? Why doesn't her Uncle Macon want her to know the truth?
10. When Lena learns that she has to Claim herself, she is told that either choice will have consequences. What are those consequences? Is there one right choice?
11. How does Lena avoid being Claimed? Is she safe forever?
12. Will Lena finally Claim herself on her 17th birthday? Which side will she choose?
13. Why do you think that Ethan and Lena can communicate with each other through their thoughts?
14. Is the love between Ethan and Lena cursed, or is it meant to be?
15. Even though the people of Gatlin want to have her expelled, Lena is determined to stay in school and experience "normal" things like the winter formal. Are Lena's experiences at Jackson High School "normal" teenage experiences?
16. Would things be easier for Ethan and Lena if they lived in a place that was bigger than Gatlin? What are some of the benefits of small town living? Given a choice, what type of town would you want to live in? Big or small? North or South?



About the Authors

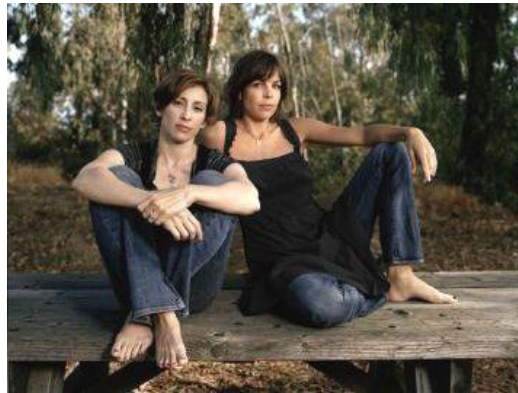
Margaret Stohl

Writing has gotten me in and out of trouble since I was 15 (back then, mostly just in trouble.) I have written everything from video games and video game manuals to live action screenplays, as well as poetry in the UK & the US. For 10 years, I designed &/or wrote for lots of video games, one of which was nominated for “Most Innovative Game Design,” but I lost to a rapping onion. If you know games you get why my two bad beagles are named Zelda and Kirby.

School; I spent more years in it than a person ever should, because let’s face it, reading books is so much better than having a job. I fell in love with American literature at Amherst and Yale, earned an MA in English from Stanford, and studied creative writing under the late great poet George MacBeth at the University of East Anglia, Norwich. I taught Intro to Film as a TA at Yale and Romantic Poetry as a TA at Stanford. Don’t tell the people at Yale, but sometimes I taught the section before I’d seen the movie it was about...

I live in Santa Monica, CA, with my family, most of whom were enslaved into working with me in one form or another on my forthcoming YA book for Little, Brown. I’m not kidding; when my daughters wanted to go to school I said “Why are you so selfish? Get back in there and edit,” and by said I mean yelled and maybe threw things, it’s all a haze. I have a writing partner named Kami and she is why we ever get anything done. (Well, K and the daughter-slaves...)

And so we wrote a book this year, and it’s going to come out in lots and lots of countries in a few months. And I am really, really hoping there is no hot title about a rapping onion coming out at the same time.



Kami Garcia

I grew up outside of Washington DC, but it always felt like I had one foot in the South. By the time I was thirteen, my family moved in with my grandmother and great-grandmother, and we had four generations of women living under the same roof – two born and bred in North Carolina. I grew up drinking sweet tea, eating vegetables cooked with a little bacon grease, and biscuits made from scratch. I mean, didn’t everyone’s great-grandma know how to skin a chicken, tat lace, and make dresses without a pattern?

I wasn’t exactly like either of them. I wore a lot of black, a lot of rings, and spent hours writing in my journals. By the time I graduated high school, I had probably filled a hundred of them and gotten my friends more than a few dates with my poems. That was the beginning of writing for me.

I have an MA in education, and taught in the DC area until I moved to Los Angeles ten years ago. In addition to writing YA fiction, I am a Reading Specialist and continue to teach and lead book groups for children and teens, part-time. I have learned more from my students than I ever learned in school. I still live in LA, with my husband, son, and daughter. I’m very superstitious and have lots of charms. I love disaster movies, and I could easily live on pizza and Diet Coke.