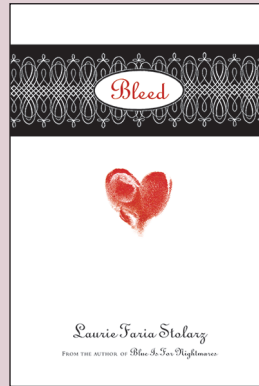


This guide was created by Tracie Vaughn Zimmer, a reading specialist at Endeavor Elementary and an award-winning children's author. Visit her Web site at www.tracievaughnzimmer.com to find hundreds of other guides to children's and young adult literature.



DEADLY LITTLE SECRET

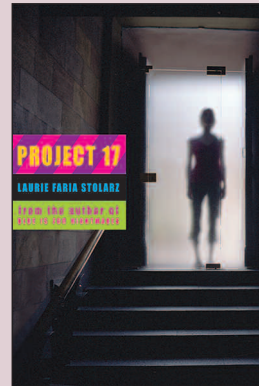
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PROJECT 17

Trade Hardcover
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Paperback
978-1-4231-2124-4
\$8.99
(summer 2009)

ALSO BY LAURIE FARIA STOLARZ

Blue is for Nightmares; White is for Magic; Silver is for Secrets; Red is for Remembrance

FORTHCOMING

Deadly Little Secret (paperback; fall 2009); Deadly Little Lies (fall 2009);

Black is for Beginnings

SHORT STORY ANTHOLOGY CONTRIBUTIONS

"The Legend of Anna Barton," *666: The Number of the Beast*;

"Sleeping with the Spirit," *Love is Hell*

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DISCUSSION GUIDE

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ABOUT THE BOOK

Until three months ago, everything about sixteen-year-old Camelia's life was fairly ordinary: decent grades; an okay relationship with her parents; and a pretty cool part-time job at an art studio downtown. But when Ben, the mysterious new guy, starts junior year at her high school, Camelia's life becomes far from ordinary.

Rumored to be somehow responsible for his ex-girlfriend's accidental death, Ben is immediately ostracized by everyone on campus. Except for Camelia. She's reluctant to believe he's trouble, even when her friends try to convince her otherwise. Instead she's inexplicably drawn to Ben . . . and to his touch. But soon, Camelia is receiving eerie phone calls and strange packages with threatening notes. Ben insists she is in danger, and that he can help—but can he be trusted? She knows he's hiding something . . . but he's not the only one with a secret.

From the best-selling author of *Blue is for Nightmares* comes this new story of paranormal romance that's sure to be a thrilling and chilling teen favorite.



QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- 1 Why do you think the author opens the book with the scene in the parking lot? What do we learn about the main character? What questions does it set up in the reader's mind? Why do you think Ben denies his involvement?
- 2 Why are some chapters in an odd font? Who is speaking in these chapters? What do we learn about him or her over time? What is the most disturbing thing about this voice? How does the voice change over the course of the novel?
- 3 Describe Camelia and her friends Kimmie and Wes. How do the friends complement each other? Of the three, whom would you want for your best friend? Why?
- 4 What does Camelia begin to receive in the mail? Would you be flattered or freaked out by this kind of attention? Are all secret admirers a little bit creepy? Would you want one for yourself or not? Why?
- 5 Who is Matt? How was he the perfect boyfriend? Why didn't Camelia want his particular kind of intensity? Was he trying to make her jealous? Would you date one of your guy friends or not? Can it ever end up well?
- 6 Ben has a reputation for having been a part of his ex-girlfriend's death. How do people treat him because of it? Do you think this kind of gossip and cruelty is typical of American high schools? Does Ben deserve it?
- 7 Why is Knead such a perfect place for Camelia to work? Who works at Knead? How does Spencer push Camelia about her sculpture? Why does he criticize her? What would be the perfect part-time job for you? How do you take criticism of your own artistic endeavors?

- 8 Explain how Ben and Camelia end up going out on dates despite his reputation. Would you be willing to date someone who had a violent past or not? Do you think part of the intensity between them is the sense of danger that Camelia must feel? What creates attraction between two people?
- 9 What do you think of Ben's extrasensory perception? Would you like to have this ability or not? Why? Find six adjectives that describe Ben.
- 10 How is Ben connected to Debbie Marcus? What ends up happening to her? How does it add drama and suspense to Camelia's own story? In the end, what happens to Debbie?
- 11 Why doesn't Camelia turn to her parents? Would you have called on your parents for help, and if so, when? Do parents tend to overreact to these types of situations? In the end, what happens? How do you think the experience will change Camelia?



PROJECTS

Reading

Create a character map for the character who most intrigues you as a reader. Take notes on the four ways a reader gets to know a character—what she [he] says, what they do, how others react to them, and how they change over time. Be sure to list page numbers that show these details.

Writing

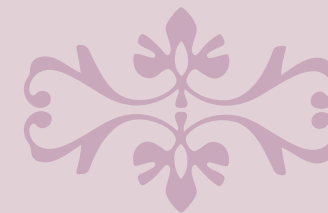
Laurie Faria Stolarz has an amazing ability to write dialogue that sounds like that of friends who have known each other for years. Try to write a scene of dialogue that sounds like dialogue your friends might speak (without actually just stealing words out of their mouths!).

Music

Create a playlist to listen to while reading this novel. Explain your choices in a brief journal.

Art

Sculpture, of course with an open subject. Follow Spencer's advice: "Search. Examine. Sculpt from the inside out, and not the other way around. Don't be afraid to screw up along the way." (P. 175)



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Laurie Faria Stolarz is the author of several popular young adult novels, including *Project 17* and *Bleed*, as well as *Blue is for Nightmares*, *White is for Magic*, *Silver is for Secrets* and *Red is for Remembrance*. Born and raised in Salem, Massachusetts, Stolarz attended Merrimack College and received an MFA in creative writing from Emerson College in Boston. She is currently working on the second book in the *Touch* series, a sequel to *Deadly Little Secret*, as well as a fifth book in the *Blue is for Nightmares* series.



For more information, please visit her Web site at www.lauriestolarz.com.

AUTHOR INTERVIEW

1 What is the best thing about writing for teens?

There's so much I love about it. First, though I loved telling stories and being creative, I wasn't a big reader as a teen. If a book didn't grab my attention, I normally closed the cover. When I first started writing for teens, I wanted to create books that would have appealed to me as a teen. I wanted my main character to be flawed—to not be the most popular, or best looking, or best in school. I didn't want her to get along so well with her parents; I wanted her to have secrets, and I wanted there to be drama amongst her friends, and problems with her love life. In other words, I wanted a character readers could relate to. And so I took all those character and story elements and wrapped them up in a mystery. Mysteries were my favorite as a young adult—the ones that kept me turning pages. It's so rewarding for me now to get reluctant readers—those who were just like me—to be excited about reading.

Also, I love teen culture. I love the films geared for teens, the TV shows, books, magazines . . . I love the energy teens have, and I admire them for their passion and creativity. I think young adulthood is such an exciting time in one's life. There's a lot of opportunity there for a writer.

2 What advice do you have for teens who want to be writers?

My biggest piece of advice is to persevere. I have close to a hundred rejection letters for my first novel, *Blue is for Nightmares*, which has now sold almost 200,000 copies.

Also, read what it is you love. Ask yourself why you love it, why you feel it works. What technique does the writer use that works for you? What point of view? What do you like about the dialogue? The characters? Do the same for books that don't appeal to you. Become a better reader—by answering some of these questions, you'll become one. You'll be able to identify what works for you as a reader. Then, apply those elements to your writing.

Consider joining a writers' group—one that can offer inspiration as well as critique. I rely heavily on mine. We support each other through every step of the process—from that first idea to the finished book.

And lastly, of course, it goes without saying that before you send anything out, know the market. Know which editors are looking for your type of book, what their policy is on reading unsolicited manuscripts, if you'll need an agent, and which agents are accepting new clients in your genre. Also, be sure to ask your agent for a client list, check that they're a member of the Association of Authors' Representatives, and never pay reading fees.

3 What can your fans look forward to next?

I'm currently doing edits on the sequel to *Deadly Little Secret*, book number two in the *Touch* series, which will be released in the fall of 2009. I'm also working on the edits for *Black is for Beginnings*, the fifth book—a graphic novel—in the *Blue is for Nightmares* series, which is due out in the summer of 2009. Additionally, I have a short story—"Sleeping with the Spirit"—which will be published in the *Love is Hell* anthology; it's due out in November 2009.