

50 BEHIND-THE-SCENES ENDING SERIES FUN FACTS

If you're at all like me, you get curious when you're reading a book you enjoy and you have *a lot* of questions about the characters, the storyline, maybe even the author. I always wonder how someone can describe something so perfectly that it touches my soul, or how an author came up with a quirky character that's so endearing you wish you could hug your arms around them. I always have questions for authors and rarely get to ask them, so I figured I'd provide some insight for *you*.

Here's a behind-the-scenes look at *The Ending Series*... Enjoy!

SPOILER WARNING

10 Fun Facts about The Ending Series:

1. Team Lindsey started writing after a book tradeshow in Oakland that we went to for the bookstore we were working at. We were inspired by all the books, authors, and amazing covers and decided to start a project together on the way home that day.
2. I don't read science fiction or much fantasy, however, I LOVE dystopian novels. So, it's funny that the first story I ever published was in the science fiction genre.
3. Team Lindsey spent an entire day at the University of Washington, studying DNA and various virus strands in order to include equal parts science and imagination to *the Virus*.
4. We picked Bodega Bay as the location for Zoe and Dani's childhood lives because it's so near to my home. I'm familiar with it and it was within easy visiting distance for research days. I've been there a number of times, but I don't think we ever did visit specifically for reference material. I can picture it perfectly in my head.
5. I (LP) grew up riding horses and competing, so I was able to share my experiences with LF since Wings is just a main part of Dani's story.
6. I really enjoyed writing all the "bad" characters, like Jones, Taylor, and Clara. I *loved* writing her prequel novella, *The Ending Beginnings: Clara*. The General was also fun to write.
7. Writing a series like our, with two different authors writing from two different character perspectives (sometimes three) is so complex that we have a database to track our chapter outlines, progress, POVs, characters needed, the setting, time of day... the list goes on. It was the only way we could make our chapters mesh and be succinct during the writing process.
8. Natalie Duke, The Ending Series audiobook narrator, originally auditioned for Zoe's voice and slammed dunked it. She auditioned for Dani, too, and she did a great job of distinguishing the two voices and tones. So, we hired her for both parts (and then all the character voices in between).

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9. Although LF's muse for Jason was originally Jensen Ackles, Jason's always been bigger, military guy in my mind, even after slimming down and turning into a well-honed apoc survivor. He'll always be a big, brawny brother in my eyes.
10. I'm in the process of getting an Ending Series graphic novel in the works ☺

After The Ending, Book One:

1. Dani's dog, Jack, was named after a kitten that LF rescued. Due to a fatal illness, Jack (the rescue kitten) was put down. Jack the German shepherd was created in his memory.
2. Harper was based off of my favorite Criminal Minds character, Derek Morgan.
3. We designed the *After The Ending* book cover (and there were a few different concepts we came up with), but due to how time consuming the process was, we decided to hire a designer to do the rest, with our input, of course.
4. Initially, *After The Ending* started a bit differently, opening with a chapter between Zoe and Dani called, The Call. They were having a conversation over the phone, but we removed it. We thought it was too silly and didn't get readers into the plot quickly enough. It's in the "Deleted Scenes" vault now and might one day be released to the public.
5. Originally, there was a scrappy boy in hiding at the Fort Knox base that Zoe and her team take in, but those chapters were removed from *After The Ending*. It was so long ago now, I don't even remember why we removed it.
6. *After The Ending* was originally ALL emails back and forth between Zoe and Dani. We changed it up because we wanted to explore their characters more and we couldn't do that if the internet was gone and the world had ended.
7. Bob Ross, painter extraordinaire, is referenced in the series a few times because I LOVE HIM and since Zoe is an artist, she does too ☺.
8. I originally got the idea of Jake putting on the fireworks show for Zoe four years ago. I was walking back up the hill from the fireworks to my house and the scent of sulfur was in the air. It's a humbling experience when you really think about what fireworks represent, independence and freedom and history. I guess you could say I was inspired.
9. In the beginning, I saw Jennifer Connelly when I pictured Zoe. Eventually, Zoe just became *Zoe* and I'm not sure I pictured anyone, but JC was my original Zoe muse, despite the age difference.

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10. I didn't originally know *why* I wanted Zoe's eyes to be so strikingly green/blue, but for some reason I felt like they had to be. It was later, after developing the whole prophecy idea and Jake's character, that I realized how it could lend itself to the storyline.

Into The Fire, Book Two:

1. Some of the most nerve-wracking, intense scenes were the most intriguing to write and were in *Into The Fire*, including Carolann's scene, the old crazy lady Jake and Zoe stumble across and where they find Shadow. Another scene was the anticipated moment between Jake and Zoe when they finally "get together", and finally, when Jason and Zoe open the box. Their relationship was really intriguing to me, and I loved writing their interactions with one another, especially as they started growing closer and more awkward, yet protective of one another.
2. Anna, or Dr. Wesley as some of you might be more familiar with, Zoe and Jason's mother, was written-off as dead in *After The Ending* because she *was*. We hadn't yet planned on weaving her back into the story until we started thinking more about *Into The Fire* and the direction we wanted to go with the Virus. We were like, YES! Then it all went to crazy-town from that book on.
3. This might be my favorite cover of the four with the flames and heat waves. It's a great contrast to the somber book one cover. The covers in general were really simplistic in theme but beautiful in that they are intriguing, metaphorical, and leaves potential readers wondering what the heck the books are about.
4. Alex Clare's song, Too Close, embodies this books for me. The beat alone personifies angst and action and sex and determination.
5. The prequel novellas were written after *Into The Fire*, and were a great way for both us and our readers to get to know some of our characters a bit more. For me specifically, I was able to delve into Becca, Clara, and Jake who play pivotal roles throughout the storyline. Especially Jake, so that I could feel comfortable writing his POVs in *Out Of The Ashes*.
6. Linkin Park music was my writing inspiration through all the books and all the Zoe chapters. *Crawling* was the first song that snagged my attention for book one because it reminded me of how I imagined Zoe felt as she began to hear and see things she shouldn't. She thought she was losing her mind. *Castle of Glass* was another favorite, but for book two because Zoe's life was turned upside down *again* within the span of less than a week, what with Dani being kidnapped and Becca showing up and Jake planning on

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- leaving. And let's not forget that she finds out her mom *left* and wasn't dead. I can imagine feeling like my walls might crumble at any moment in the middle of all that.
7. I had the biggest crush on Jake while I was writing him.
 8. Trying to figure out what everyone's developing Abilities were was difficult. LF came up with EMP for Carlos because we needed Abilities that would be useful as they continued to fight against the Colony and Herodson and the Crazies.
 9. Becca coming back as a Re-gen was a really interesting plot twist. Again, not one we originally planned on when writing book two, but we wanted everything to happen for a reason when it came to each of our characters, and Becca coming back—revealing more of Jake's history with his sister *and* with Gabe—was really important to the development of the rest of the story and to show how long all of this had been going on for.
 10. *Into The Fire* is the shortest of all the books and takes place in the shortest amount of time—about a week.

Out Of The Ashes, Book Three:

1. We thought this book would be essential to the storyline. There's so much happening between book one and two, we knew we needed more character development to keep readers connected to the story, and what better way to learn about each character than through the eyes of Zoe, who loses her memory and has to learn about everyone all over again. Through her memory loss we were able to ask questions that hadn't been asked before.
2. I used to be an event manager, so given that I'm so familiar with Bodega Bay, it was easy and fun to come up with Zoe's décor ideas for Dani and Jason's wedding celebration in *Out Of The Ashes*.
3. We didn't know we were going to have Monitors until we started brainstorming book three. That's when we decided it would be Sarah and Ky, which worked out perfectly because in book one, Zoe isn't initially close with Sarah (who's Zoe's roommate's friend), in fact, Zoe even asks the question, why the hell is Sarah always around, even when Jordan isn't? Now we know 😊
4. *Out Of The Ashes* is the longest book in the series.
5. I'm not sure why, but *Some Nights*, by FUN, is a song that embodies Zoe and Dani, their friendship and everyone hanging out around the campfire.
6. We used a real farm, a wedding venue in Bodega Bay, as our setting inspiration for the location outside of New Bodega where the group start to make their home—The Farm.

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7. *Out Of The Ashes* has over 30 deleted scenes.
8. It is the longest book in the series, beating *Before The Dawn* by a little more than 10 pages.
9. I don't think we knew what Grayson's Ability was until close to the end of the series. Even then we never outright stated it, though his ability to tell stories and gain people's rapt attention is implied.
10. Annie and Vanessa weren't planned characters until they showed up in Carlos's novella. LF decided she loved them and wanted to bring them into the last two books.

Before The Dawn, Book Four:

1. Zoe's dreams didn't originally have a specific purpose, other than they just felt right to include, but as the series went on and we could use them to develop the storyline more and more, I capitalized on their power and what they could mean. Everything seemed to tie together seamlessly in the end.
2. We didn't know Peter would be in the story until book two and even then we didn't realize he'd play such a huge role in the final book. That came close to the end.
3. Carl's character in *Before The Dawn* is based on Daryl from *The Walking Dead*.
4. One of our Ending Series fans chose the character name, Larissa, in *Before The Dawn*.
5. This was the easiest book to write because the characters were all established, the main plots were ready to be summed up, and it just felt like the perfect way to end the series, at the perfect time as well.
6. My favorite scenes to write in this book were the Zoe and Carl chapters. They were different and edgy and a nice change from being on the farm.
7. As an author, I liked Tavis (pronounced Travis without the "r") but I didn't have any real connection to him. I didn't have any qualms about what I did with his character in the end, probably because I had a couple books to gear myself up for the inevitable.
8. Tom Cartwright, Zoe and Jason's dad, was sort of difficult to write because he had to be a different man than the one Zoe had known and described through the first couple books. No longer meek and lonely and lost, Tom had to be shown as protective and intelligent and forgiving since he was in on everything Anna and Gregory were doing from the beginning. He was heartbroken, yes, but he was also putting on a show for Herodson in case he was watching.
9. Since the day *The Ending Series* became a reality, we knew there would have to be a battle scene—good versus evil. All I could picture was the epic scene from *LOTR: Two Towers*, when Gandolf and Shadowfax lead the Knights of Rohan down to the keep and help slaughter the dark army. I saw something like that happening with the Re-gens, coming to

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save Zoe et all from Herodson's army. It worked out a bit differently, but I was still able to keep a flavor of that by having the Re-gens go MIA and showing up at the end to help the groups of "good guys" scattered between the road and the Farm.

10. Linkin Park's Iridescent is the song that personifies the final book for me. It's the final battle, the ending to loss and cold that these characters have been wading through, the death, the fear that they are finally overcoming. It's both the strife and the victory, and every time I hear it, I get chills.
11. Although we tied the series up with a pretty bow at the end, we purposely left ample opportunity to develop other Ending Series works.