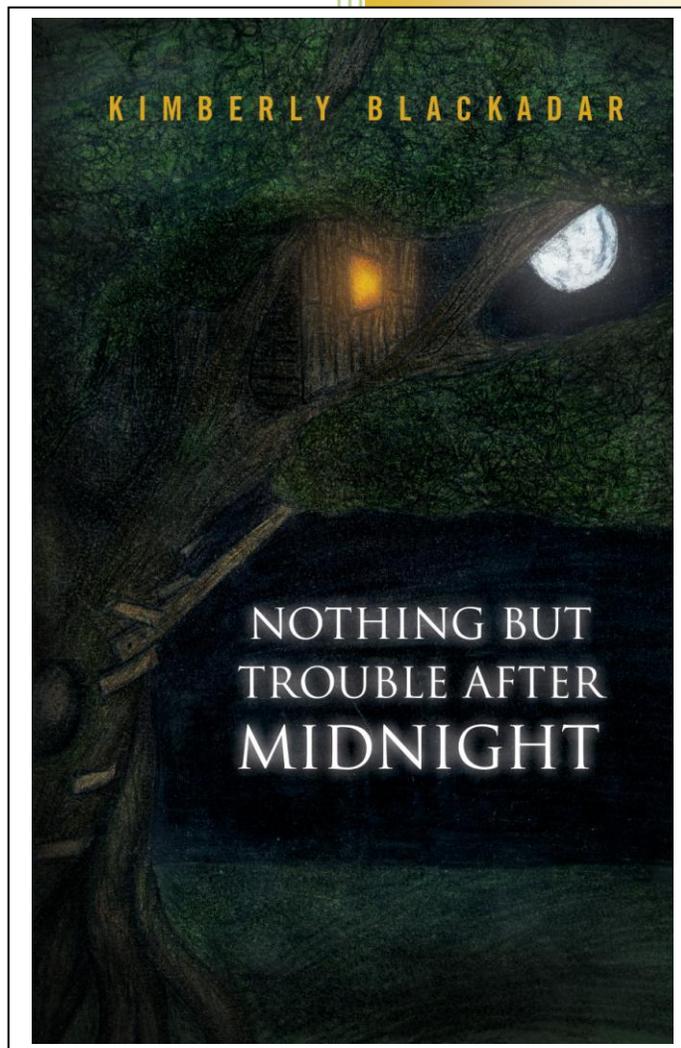


2011

Author Talk: Literary Analysis



~About the Author

- **Bio** Born in Massachusetts, but raised in Florida, Kimberly Blackadar graduated from Florida State University and then spent eight years in the classroom—as an English, social studies, and drama teacher. Now a homeschooling mom living in Minnesota, she draws from her teaching experiences to offer realistic fiction to her readers.
- **Website Links**
www.nothingbuttroubleaftermidnight.com
www.kimberlyblackadar.wordpress.com
- **Follow Kimberly Blackadar on Twitter and Facebook.**
- **Q & A**



~About the Book

- **Timeline for *Nothing but Trouble after Midnight***
July 2002. Wrote a novel sketch entitled “Secrets.”
August 2007. Found “Secrets” and began writing first manuscript.
September 2007. Borrowed lines from *Secrets* to write “Auburn Eyes.”
December 2007. Recorded a scratch demo of “Auburn Eyes.” Changed title to *Nothing but Trouble after Midnight* and began the novel over again.
April 2008. Wrote a timeline and began novel for the third time.
October 2008. Finished the now-published *NBTAM*.
January 2009. Sent *NBTAM* to a reading panel.
May 2009. Met with the publisher.
July 2009. Downloaded final copy of *NBTAM* to my publisher’s site.
November 2009. Publication date.
- **The Series** Entitled the **Seven C’s series**, *Nothing but Trouble after Midnight* (NBTAM) is the first of seven novels. Each book revolves around a different female protagonist and highlights a pertinent issue of adolescence: NBTAM centers around Chloe Preston and the loss of innocence.
- **Q & A**

~Literary Analysis of “Rewriting History”

Rewriting History

He rolled up my driveway, and the two of us walked through the woods, only stopping when we reached the base of the old oak tree. His eyes lifted slowly to the opening in the tree house. “After you,” he said, and I climbed the side of the tree, stepping on the wooden two by fours that served as the ladder. When I was about half way up, I glanced down at him, and he was looking away, just as he had done when I wore a dress as a little girl.

My head emerged into the small opening, and the inside felt even smaller than I had remembered, and I took a deep breath of the past. The air was warm and muggy, and the smell inside reminded me of the lumber aisle at Home Depot.

On all fours, I crept across the wooden planks and found my spot against the wall, and when I stretched out my legs, they reached halfway across the floor of our childhood hideout. He joined me, taking his seat on my right, his long legs reaching way past mine now. Our shoulders touched lightly, and he offered his hand, laying an open-faced palm gently on my thigh. I rested my hand on top of his, and his warm fingers encircled mine.

The sounds of the night surrounded us. There was a rustling of the leaves, and the crickets strummed their only tune, but neither of us spoke a word. My head raced with thoughts, which never formed into complete sentences, as he peered out of the window on the right. The small opening had served as our lookout for years and was there in case we were ever attacked by neighboring invaders.

I drew a deep breath and squeezed his hand. “You’re my best friend, Rob. You were the only person who cared enough about me to find me on Monday. I was really hurt, more than you’ll ever know, but you made it better.”

“You’re my best friend too, and I’m closer to you than to anyone else.”

“But I don’t want to date my best friend.”

His voice registered his disappointment. “Okay.”

“Unless...” I felt the need to explain further. “We’re not just friends anymore, because I don’t believe in the whole friends-with-benefits movement.”

He turned, his eyes finding mine. “I don’t either.”

“But isn’t that what you meant earlier?”

“No.” He shook his head and smiled. “I know you’re not like that, and you should know that I’m not either.”

“But you’re leaving for school—”

“In four months.”

“But—” I tried.

“None of that matters, Chlo, because I want to be your boyfriend.” He smiled sweetly before he added, “Again.”

I smiled back. “But you have to promise me something.”

“What?”

“Promise me that we’ll still be friends no matter what happens.”

“I promise.” My heart fluttered as he spoke earnestly into my eyes, and very gently, he rested a palm on the side of my face. His thumb swept across my lips, and he looked like he intended to kiss me. “And...”

“Yes?”

“I do remember that day.” His smile warmed my insides. “You were wearing a pink swimsuit with a little ruffle across the top, and your hair was up in pigtails, and we were telling each other stupid knock-knock jokes. We were both cracking up, and I remember thinking that you were the coolest girl in the world and that I...anyway, I remember, Chloe.”

“Guess what?”

“What?”

“I know a good knock-knock joke.”

“There are no good knock-knock jokes.”

I started one anyway. “Knock, knock.”

“Who’s there?” he mumbled.

“Yeah.”

“Yeah who?”

“Aw, I’m happy too, Rob.”

“Oh, you’re so funny.” He went for my ribs, and I started laughing. I targeted his belly, but unfortunately, he didn’t have any good ticklish spots on his entire body. (Well, as far as I could tell.)

“Do you know what was *really* funny?” I asked, giggling.

“What?”

“The look on Riley’s face when she came into your room last night.”

“Yeah, I know.” We both started laughing, and my head tilted back as his lips found my ear. “May I kiss you?”

I felt six all over again, and even though it’s impossible to go back in time and relive the past, it is entirely possible to recreate the same exact moment and make it better. Much better. With his lips still near my ear, he added. “I’ve thought about this moment for a long time.”

I didn’t hesitate with my reply. “Me too, Rob.” I closed my eyes, completely under the spell of his intentions, and waited for his lips to meet mine...finally.

“But,” he began, and I opened my eyes slowly. My gaze fell downward, and then he lifted my chin with his hand. “We’ll only have one first kiss, Chlo, so this moment will only happen once for us.” I smiled at his beautiful, calculating mind. “Think about it. Is this,” he hesitated, “exactly the way you imagined it?”

“Well, my imagination is usually better than reality...” He looked dejected, and I rested my hand against his smooth cheek, and very softly, I added, “...until now.” Then I wrapped my hands around his neck, feeling the warmth of his skin under my fingertips, and while his hands cradled my face, I closed my eyes. Then his warm lips pressed against mine.

“See, I didn’t turn away this time,” I whispered against his mouth.

He patted my cheeks. “Don’t worry. I wouldn’t have let you.”

Our mouths smiled against each other as his lips parted slightly. He kissed my upper lip a few times,

gently moving to my lower, softly sucking it. Slowly, he explored the contours of my mouth, and I let him, without thinking, without forcing my thoughts on him. I let him control the moment, knowing his sweet intentions and not wanting to spoil the moment with my growing desire for him. Gradually, his fingers crept from my face and into my hair. He found the tendrils on the nape of my neck and twirled them playfully with his fingers. As his mouth closed, he planted a final kiss on my eager lips. Even though his kiss bore the sweetness of a boy with his first girlfriend, we were no longer children experimenting with puppy love because desire tugged at our innocence. And while his lips lingered by mine, he pushed out a breath and spoke, “We need to take this slow.”

“I know.”

He guided me onto his shoulder, and gently, he caressed my hair. Words were unnecessary now, and I soaked in the afterthoughts of our first kiss. And now, with my lips dangerously close to his neck, my eyes wandered freely across his still body. Surely, my fingers and lips grew jealous of the places where eyes could travel without reproach: down his chest, I thought of the swirls of brown hair that I wanted to explore; and across his lap, the mystery of a man’s body still lay hidden to me; and out the length of his long legs, I envisioned our bodies intertwined while our fingertips discovered each other for the very first time. All my fears succumbed to fantasies, and I felt the warmest rush of affections for him. His hand caressed my back now, and his soft lips touched my forehead. I wanted him to kiss me again and cross the line of innocence, but into our quiet moment, a notorious neighborhood invader chanted in a singsong voice:

Rob and Chloe

Up in their tree

K-I-S-S-I-N-G

First comes love

Then comes marriage

Then comes baby

In the baby carriage.

Quickly, we separated like two kids getting caught in the act, and following the song, Courtney leaned all the way into the opening of the tree house. “Aw, I’ve always wanted to sing that to you two.” Then she giggled back down the tree.

Rob turned toward me with an enormous smile. “Too bad she didn’t sing it ten years ago. Then you would’ve known that the baby comes after marriage and *not* the K-I-S-S-I-N-G.”

I shoved him into the corner and scampered across the floor, meeting Courtney at the base of the tree.

She bit down on her lip. “So, tell me, how was your date?”

“It was nice,” I said evenly.

Then Rob joined us. “Yeah, we had a good time.”

Courtney looked at us with narrowing eyes. “That’s all I get.”

“Yup,” we chorused.

“My two best friends go out on a real date, and *that* is all I get!”

We nodded in unison.

“Wanna’ know what Josh and I did tonight?”

“Sure.” Rob took the bait.

“Each other.” She spun on a heel and marched home.

“She’s kidding, right?”

I nodded, and he followed me into the woods with another question. “How do you know?”

“Because we tell each other everything.”

“Everything?” he repeated uneasily.

“Yeah,” I said. “Is that a problem?”

“Not yet,” he returned with a smile, and then he led me toward the garage door. Under the coach lights, he offered one last kiss on my lips and repeated his line from the previous night: “Goodnight, Chloe, and sweet dreams.”

He got into his Jeep, and I entered my house, dark and quiet, and climbed the stairs to my bedroom. I

sprawled across my window seat, pulling up the blinds a few inches and gazing into the woods behind my house. I watched as the faint glow of his headlights illuminated the darkness, and while touching the humid glass, I whispered a soft “I love you.”