APPENDIX

BIOGRAPHY OF LIBBA BRAY

Libba Bray was born on March 11, 1964 in Alabama, she is an author of young adult novels, including the books *A Great and Terrible Beauty*, *Rebel Angels*, *The Sweet Far Thing* and *Going Bovine*. She lived in Texas until she was 26 years old. After that, she moved to New York City, New York, where she now lives with her husband and nine-year-old son. Her father was a preacher and her mother is a teacher.

At the age of eighteen, Bray was involved in a serious car accident and had to undergo thirteen surgeries in six years to reconstruct her face. She has an artificial left eye because of this accident.[1]

Bray graduated from the University of Texas at Austin in 1988 as a Theatre major. As a budding playwright, she felt it important to be in New York. When her childhood best friend, already living in Manhattan, called saying she was looking for a roommate, Bray was soon on her way to New York. Her first job was in the publicity department of Penguin Putnam, followed by three years at Spier, an advertising agency specializing in book advertising.

Bray was encouraged to write a young adult novel by her husband, Barry Goldblatt, a children's book agent and Ginee Seo, an editor at Simon & Schuster. Before this, using a pseudonym, she had written three books for 17th Street Press (a publisher of romances).

Video Awards. She wrote two more books to finish the trilogy she had started with *A Great and Terrible Beauty: Rebel Angels* and *The Sweet Far Thing*.

Libba is friends with many young adult authors including Maureen Johnson. Bray is also good friends with fellow YA fantasy authors Holly Black and Cassandra Clare; all of them are represented by Bray's husband, a literary agent. Her blog can be read on http://libba-bray.livejournal.com/.

Bray has recently published a new novel titled *Going Bovine* which is a dark comedy about a 16 year old boy named Cameron who has mad cow disease and a 16-year-old dwarf named Gonzo whom he met in the hospital. Gonzo is a video gamer who thinks that everything is trying to kill him. Cameron has visitation from a punkish angel named Dulcie who has a propensity for spray-painting her wings. They are all on a mission to cure Cameron's mad cow disease. *Going Bovine* was released in 2009 and received the 2010 Michael L. Printz Award for excellence in young adult literature.
SUMMARY OF A GREAT AND TERRIBLE BEAUTY

Gemma Doyle, the series' protagonist, is determined to leave India and return to London for an education and a proper upbringing. On her sixteenth birthday, Gemma and her mother are walking through the Bombay market when the two encounter a man and his younger brother. The man relays an unknown message to Gemma’s mother about a woman named Circe, and Gemma's mother panics and demands that Gemma return home. Becoming angry at her mother’s secrecy, Gemma runs away, and has a vision of her mother committing suicide while searching for her, which she later learns is true. Gemma becomes haunted with the images of her mother’s death.

With her mother dead and her father’s growing addiction to laudanum, Gemma is shipped off to a finishing school near London, Spence Academy for Young Ladies. At first, Gemma is an outcast at the school; however, she soon finds the most popular and influential girl in school, Felicity, in a compromising situation that would ruin Felicity’s life. Gemma agrees not to tell Felicity’s secret and the girls soon form a strong friendship, along with Gemma’s roommate Ann, and Felicity’s best friend, Pippa. But Gemma is still tormented with her visions and is warned by the young man from the market, Kartik, a member of an ancient group of men known as the Rakshana, dating all the way back to Charlemagne, that she must close her mind to these visions or something horrible will happen.

During one of her visions Gemma is led into the caves that border the school grounds. There, she finds a diary written 25 years earlier by a 16-year-old girl named Mary Dowd who also attended Spence Academy and seemed to suffer from the same visions as Gemma, along
with her friend, Sarah Reese-Toome. Through this diary, Gemma learns of an ancient group of powerful women called the Order and becomes convinced that her visions are linked to it. Members of the Order could open a door between the human world and other realms, help spirits cross over into the afterlife, and also possessed the powers of prophecy, clairvoyance, and what was considered the greatest force of all, the ability to weave illusions. Gemma, Felicity, Pippa and Ann decide to create their own Order in the caves to escape from the monotonous lives that they are expected to lead.

As the girls read further and further into the diary of Mary Dowd they realize that the actual Order existed at Spence Academy and that Mary was a part of it along with her best friend Sarah and the original Headmistress Eugenia Spence, who all died in a fire at the school in the East Wing. Gemma tells her friends the truth about her powers and together they travel to the realms. There Gemma finds her mother alive and well, and the girls find that they can achieve their hearts’ desires. Gemma wishes for self-knowledge, Felicity for power, Pippa for true love and Ann for beauty. The girls continue to sneak out to the caves in the middle of the night and visit the realms. However, Gemma’s mother warns them not to take the magic back into their own world, for if the magic leaves the realms, the evil sorceress Circe will be able to find Gemma and will kill her, leaving the realms unguarded.

After Gemma confronts her mother, she confesses that she was once a member of the Order and escaped the fire thinking the others had died, she also discovers that her mother was Mary Dowd and Circe was her friend Sarah Rees-Thoome. In Mary Dowds' diary Mary says that she has sacrificed Mother Elena's little girl to get back the decreased power of Sarah, after reading this, Gemma thinks of her mother in another way and hates her for what she had done.
The only way for her to ever be at peace is for Gemma to forgive her. When Gemma and the other girls go back to the realms, they realize that something has changed. Before they can leave, the creature that killed Gemma’s mother appears. Frightened, Pippa runs off and Gemma does not have time to bring her back. Gemma takes Ann and Felicity to back Spence, leaving Pippa trapped underwater. As the three friends awaken, they see Pippa seizing on the ground. They run to get help from the headmistress and Kartik. Nonetheless, Pippa dies shortly.