

Dream Factory

By Brad Barkley, Heather Hepler



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When the Disney World character actors go on strike, teens are hired as replacements. Ella is assigned the role of Cinderella simply because the shoes fit. And every afternoon at three o?clock she gets married to Prince Charming. A perfect dream come true?except Ella doesn?t believe in dreams anymore. Meanwhile, Luke is one of the fur characters (Dale, the chipmunk), and his girlfriend, Cassie, plays his counterpart, Chip. Cassie is perfect in every way, so why does Luke want to be with Cinderella? Then Luke and Ella are brought together during a scavenger hunt, and as they uncover the Magic Kingdom?s hidden treasures, they discover an undeniable magic between them. Perhaps dreams really can come true after all?



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Editorial Review

From Booklist

"Maybe letting someone know me past the costume, past this summer, past this very moment, is just too much." After her brother dies and her missionary parents move to Africa, recent high-school graduate Ella takes a job performing as Cinderella at an enormous Disney-like amusement park. Luke, who works as Dale the chipmunk, is drawn to Ella, even though he's dating "perfect" Cassie. As in their debut collaboration, Scrambled Eggs at Midnight (2006), the authors contribute alternating chapters, flipping the funny, intelligent narration between Ella's and Luke's voices. The gleefully detailed theme-park background, with its oppressively manufactured "magic," is an excellent foil for the characters' sly, cynical humor and also their earnest questions about how to trust and recognize intuition and individuality, beauty and truth. The hot-pink cover shouts chick lit, but the strong male voice, the upended fairy tale, and the characters' honest struggles will broaden the audience for this thoughtful romance. Engberg, Gillian

Review

"An appealing love story." KLIATT

About the Author

Brad Barkley is the author of two adult novels (*Money, Love* and *Alison's Automotive Repair Manual*) and two story collections, the most recent of which is *Another Perfect Catastrophe*. Two of his books have been *Booksense 76* selections. His short stories have appeared in over thirty magazines. He lives in western Maryland where he teaches fiction writing and raises two children, both too smart for their own good. Heather Hepler grew up in North Texas. She has lived in Reno, on the coast of Maine, in the interior of Alaska, and near Death Valley, but she currently is being held against her will in Tyler, Texas. She holds a Master's in Library Science from the University of North Texas and an MFA in Creative Writing from the University of Southern Maine. She works as a reviewer for VOYA, *Kirkus Reviews, Publisher's Weekly, Library Media Connection*, and *The New York Times*. Her first novel, *Scrambled Eggs at Midnight* (Dutton) is set for release in May 2006. The second, *The Dream Factory* (Dutton) will be released Spring 2007. Her writing has also appeared in the *Southwest Review* and the *Cincinnati Review*.

Users Review

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Lois Wiggins:

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