

Twist on 'Romeo and Juliet' 'Beautiful Creatures' yields magical element

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"Beautiful Creatures" is a new film just in time for Valentine's Day. It has young lovers, romantic music and Gothic scenery — and one of the teens is a witch, which throws a kink into the typical happily-ever-after ending.

Lena Duchannes (Alice Englert), a 15-year-old Caster — or witch — moves into a small Southern town and meets Ethan Wate (Alden Ehrenreich). Ethan and Lena fall in love, but her family tries to keep them apart. Lena is meant for greater things than love with a mere mortal.

In a phone interview, Englert discussed why she was attracted to the script.

"What made the supernatural quality of it really stand out to me was that it was still based in a human world," she said. "It was the magic ... [that] seem[ed] to be an extension on these people and their lives."

Lena is faced with a dilemma. When she turns 16 she will submit to the Claiming, where she will be chosen to use her powers for either the light or dark. What's a girl to do? She must make a choice: Ethan and the light or power with the dark side.

The movie has been called a Romeo and Juliet story.

"It's like star-cross[ed] lovers, people who really just want to be together, but due to outside forces that [is] just made so difficult for them," said Thomas Mann, who plays Wate's best friend Link.

Academy Award winner Emma Thompson, the town's leader Mrs. Lincoln, wants to banish Lena since she is a Caster, but the conservative Mrs. Lincoln is not all she seems. Her darker side is Serafine, the most powerful dark Caster, and she wants Lena on her side.

Lena's uncle Macon Ravenwood, played by Academy Award winner Jeremy Irons, thinks Lena is strong enough to resist the dark claiming her. Ravenwood tells Lena she controls her nature, that she does have a choice in which way she turns.

The film portrays strong female characters such as Ridley Duchannes, Lena's cousin played by Emmy Rossum. Rossum thinks the movie is good for young girls to find role models.

"We are showing the females in the Duchannes family as the ones with the power," she said. "One thing that I fell in love with ... was that it was really about showing female strengths."

With a score that richly blends symphonic and electronic music and a coming-of-age romance with supernatural elements mixed in, "Beautiful Creatures" is sure to be a great pick. Men, take your girlfriends



Ridley Duchannes, played by Emmy Rossum, is one of the strong female characters in the film "Beautiful Creatures" made by Warner Brothers. The film opens on Valentine's Day.

Photo Courtesy Amy Marie Latimer

and wives. They will be sure to love you for it.

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