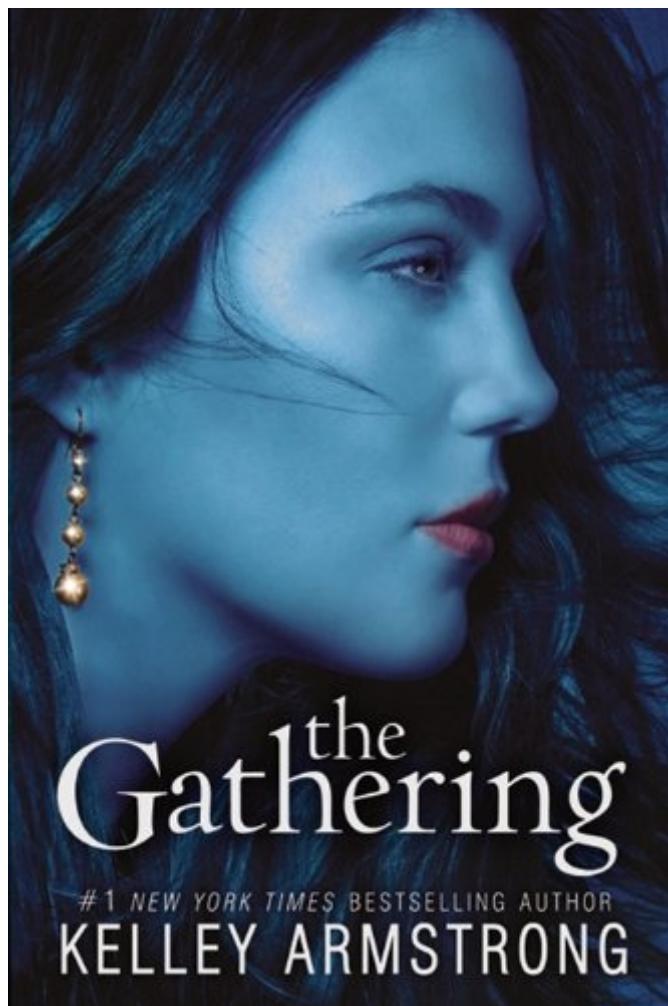


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# The Gathering (Darkness Rising Book 1)



## **Synopsis**

Strange things are happening in Maya's tiny Vancouver Island town. First, her friend Serena, the captain of the swim team, drowns mysteriously in the middle of a calm lake. Then, one year later, mountain lions are spotted rather frequently around Maya's home— and her reactions to them are somewhat . . . unexpected. Her best friend, Daniel, has also been experiencing unexplainable premonitions about certain people and situations. It doesn't help that the new bad boy in town, Rafe, has a dangerous secret, and he's interested in one special part of Maya's anatomy— her paw-print birthmark.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

After re-reading the Darkest Powers series while my 11.5 yr daughter read it for the first time, I felt grateful to Armstrong for taking a youth audience seriously -- not holding back with the horror, pain, and confusion of changes during teen growth and exploration. Her metaphor of supernatural coming of age is strong. When my daughter picked up The Gathering immediately afterward, I didn't jump into the simultaneous reading right away (I was reading something else). Then she came to me and

said "This book is more grown up mom. There's making out, and the girl had her drink drugged." Needless to say, I grabbed my own copy immediately so I could see what was up. Again, Armstrong takes teen issues head on, portraying realistic social interactions, both good and bad, responsible and irresponsible. The main character has a good head on her shoulders, and departing from stereotypical YA formula, she has a good relationship with her parents. Who are both alive. And pretty awesome. She is open in talking (even joking) with them about dating and sex, and it's clear she's educated comprehensively about sex. The teens in this book do normal teen things -- make out, sometimes without all clothes on. There are illusions to making out and having sex in back seats of cars. Some of them drink beer, some of them don't. They all make wise and unwise choices, can be kind and unkind to each other, can be both responsible and irresponsible. My daughter and I had lots of great open conversations about how she'll have similar choices in the future, what our values are, what's safe and not safe. We talked about the actual risk of having a drink drugged, why that would happen, and how to potentially prevent it. So much YA lit avoids these complications, instead glossing over actual teen sexual and drinking behavior. Armstrong portrays it in the book as the realistic situation it is. So refreshing. Characters are well-developed with flaws and strengths. Relationships are also well-developed and stay in line with character growth. It's definitely a first book - many mysteries are left open-ended, leaving you wanting more. Both my daughter and I enjoyed the book immensely. Would I recommend it for any 11yo? Depends on the kid, and you know your kid better than anyone else. You might want to give it a read yourself first, if your kid is 13 or under.

Ya generally follows a strict structure in my opinion and though it isn't always horrible, it gets annoying after the thirteenth book in a row that seems to be an echo of the first twelve. Pros to this book are endless. There is no insta love. The romance is realistic for their age group. Rounded out characters: everyone has a personality and aren't just one dimensional. The plot is intriguing, the writing detailed in a way that easily builds the picture of every scene yet, doesn't make you feel like you're reading a text book. The plot isn't typical or overly done and I'm loving the Navajo legend interwoven in there while also incorporating a more scientific spin. It's interesting and engaging. I was never once bored while reading this and that's saying something. I'm sensing some tension between Daniel and maya that she's either too oblivious to notice, or I'm just so used to annoying love triangles in Ya that I'm creating it in my head. (I'm all for a little addition and subtraction between a couple but throw in geometry and the romance tends to just irritate me) can't wait to read next in series. Which will be in three...two...one. one click?. Click

After losing her best friend Maya has been trying to find normalcy again, with her birthday coming up she is looking at what is next in her life. Living in a sheltered environment, Maya is close to her best friend Daniel who is her protector. Rafe, a new student keeps trying to make the moves on Maya but she is not having it, however Rafe has more in common with Maya than she thinks. A paw print birthmark, a journalist looking for answers, and a hidden danger that is surrounding their tiny town is about to unveil some hidden truths that they may not want the answers for. Overall an intriguing story, I thought it was a bit slow at times and wanted to see more progress in the story than at the end. Has a bit of a cliffhanger type ending but you do feel like you get a complete story. I liked all the characters in the story didn't have much of a romance more of just a young adult paranormal/fantasy story. Will check out the next book.

I liked Armstrong's Dark Powers series for YA but this one kind of dragged. It was repetitive in that she didn't know what was happening when she touched an animal and was sucked in and she had figured out what she had to be halfway through the book but she was in denial till almost the very end. I didn't even finish but about 75% of the book because it was going nowhere. The heroine was likable and very snarky which I liked but it's like you never got to know her and the hero isn't my idea of a hero if he's in the county illegal and brings bad guys with guns hunting for him and your girl gets hurt (and he's only like 17!). And the way that Armstrong kept describing how good the town's educational system was because of the Company and the Company gives us this and the Company is great because of that...you have to stop and wonder doesn't these people think it's kind of weird to be living in a town that solely exists because of the Company that built it and allowed only certain people to live there? I could go on and on but you get my point. If you want a sorta ok YA paranormal book it'll do but I suggest her Dark Powers series.

I felt like I was reading two books at once. Maybe even three... From the beginning I knew it would be about weres... then they got all tribal out of the blue and everything became centered on that. Then you have the mystery surrounding her best friend's death. Then there is the research facility and that conspiracy.... maybe more books would tie it together but I won't be reading anymore... skipped through most of this one because it was too confusing to follow

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