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Viola

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because of controversy?

VD: Yeah, I think it definitely suffered from that because we were in an election year and because education is a hotbed issue. And people have strong opinions about public school education, unions, charter schools, and parent-trigger laws. Occasionally, the timing of a movie is just bad and I think, in the case of this movie, it was probably the worst.

KW: What interested you about Beautiful Creatures?

VD: What interested me was that the character wasn't what she appeared to be. That she had different secrets to be discovered. When you first meet her, she's kind of just woven into the fabric of this family. But then you see the tribal scarification on her back, and you see her channeling spirits. And then you learn that she's the keeper of a library that's the gateway to different worlds. I like that. I like when there are different layers to peel away. It was just subtle enough to play and to craft. That's what appealed to me about the role.

KW: Have you ever made a romantic fantasy before? Is Kate & Leopold the closest you've done to something like this?

VD: I didn't think of Kate & Leopold, but yeah, I guess so. It's the only other time I've tried this genre.

KW: In this case, the film is more akin to the Twilight and Harry Potter series.

VD: I love young adult fantasies. While I say that, I have not seen all of the Twilight and Harry Potter movies. But I've read all of the books, and I love them. I love them because I enjoy being transported to a different world and having my imagination challenged. That's a huge part of what we do as actors. We have to imagine ourselves in a different world. And when you are in a young adult fantasy, it challenges you in the best way.

KW: Did you see The Hunger Games? That's another adaptation of a young adult book that targeted teens and 'tweeners.

VD: Yes, it was fabulous!

KW: Editor/legist Patricia Turnier asks: Among all the characters you played, which one is closest to your personality and why?

VD: You know who? The character I played in Nights in

Rodanthe, a movie I did with Diane Lane. Jean was kind of fun, and tough, sarcastic, artistic, creative, quirky and a little sexy. She was probably the closest to the real me.

KW: Patricia also points out that you'll be receiving a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame this year. She'd like to know what that means to you.

VD: I keep forgetting about that until someone reminds me again. I kid you not. What does it mean? It's hard for me to say that I've made it, because no real actor feels that way. But it does represent a physical manifestation of my dreams coming to fruition, if that makes any sense.

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