As a writer and reader, I'm drawn to stories that bend the boundaries of genre, mashing up elements of the realistic and the speculative without fitting squarely into one category or box. I'm thinking of books like Laura Ruby’s *Bone Gap* or *The Ocean at the End of the Lane* by Neil Gaiman—books that ask interesting “What if?” questions; that explore our hopes, our fears, and the mysteries of life, love, and loss; and that make us think about what, exactly, makes us who we think we are. I got the idea for *Everything I Thought I Knew* after I heard a story about organ recipients who felt like they’d inherited habits and memories from their donors. Whether or not this concept of “cellular memory” is even possible, I couldn’t stop thinking about how strange it must be to know that a part of you—in fact, a part that’s essential to your life itself—once belonged to someone else. So I started writing, and then I just kept asking “What if?”, following the questions to Chloe, and Kai, and Jane, and wherever else they wanted to lead. I love where it all ended up and hope you will, too.

**Shannon Takaoka** has worked as a writer, editor, and public relations consultant in the technology and life sciences field. She is a lover of all things nerdy—from time travel to weird science and dragons. *Everything I Thought I Knew* is her first novel. She lives in the San Francisco Bay Area with her husband and two children.