

Persuasion

By Martina Boone

Synopsis

Her gift. His love. Which will she fight for?

Romeo and Juliet meets *The Raven Boys* in the spellbinding second novel in the Heirs of Watson Island trilogy that "skillfully blends rich magic and folklore with adventure, sweeping romance, and hidden treasure" (*Publishers Weekly*, on *Compulsion*).

Grieving the death of her godfather and haunted by her cousin Cassie's betrayal, Barrie returns from a trip to San Francisco to find the Watson plantation under siege. Ghost-hunters hope to glimpse the ancient spirit who sets the river on fire each night, and reporters chase rumors of a stolen shipment of Civil War gold that may be hidden at Colesworth Place. The chaos turns dangerous as Cassie hires a team of archeologists to excavate beneath the mansion ruins. Because more is buried there than treasure.

A stranger filled with magic arrives at Watson's Landing claiming that the key to the Watson and Beaufort gifts--and the Colesworth curse--also lies beneath the mansion. With a mix of threats and promises, the man convinces Barrie and Cassie to cast a spell there at midnight. But what he conjures may have deadly consequences.

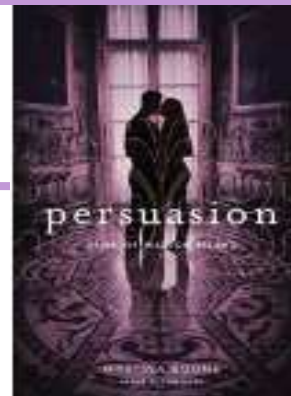
While Barrie struggles to make sense of the escalating peril and her growing and forbidden feelings for Eight Beaufort, it's impossible to know whom to trust and what to fight for--Eight or herself. Millions of dollars and the fate of the founding families is at stake. Now Barrie must choose between what she feels deep in her heart and what will keep Watson's Landing safe in this stunning addition to a series filled with "decadent settings, mysterious magic, and family histories rife with debauchery" (*Kirkus Reviews*, on *Compulsion*).

Welcome Activity

In *Persuasion*, Obadiah first shows himself in the form of a raven. Ask your guests as they arrive to answer this question privately on a piece of paper: "If you could disguise yourself by turning into an animal, which animal would you be?" Have all of the guests put their answers into a container.

After everyone arrives, the host will read the answers one at a time. The guests can guess which person wrote which animal. Whoever gets the most correct can win a prize. As each correct answer is revealed, that person could explain why they chose the animal they did.

Want a fun prize to award your guests with? Email us and let us know and we'll send you bookmarks and additional goodies! Contact CompulsionForReading@gmail.com and put Book Club in the subject line.



Praise for *Compulsion*

Kansas State Reading Circle Selection

Fall 2014 Southern Independent Booksellers Alliance Okra Pick

"Skillfully blends rich magic and folklore with adventure, sweeping romance, and hidden treasure . . . An impressive start to the Heirs of Watson Island series."

—*Publishers Weekly*

"A little bit *Gone with the Wind*, a little bit *Romeo and Juliet* . . ."

—*School Library Journal*

"Boone's Southern Gothic certainly delivers a compelling mystery about feuding families and buried secrets, not to mention a steamy romance."

—*Booklist*

"Darkly romantic and steeped in Southern Gothic charm, you'll be compelled to get lost in the Heirs of Watson Island series."

—#1 *New York Times* bestselling author
Jennifer L. Armentrout

"A fresh twist on the Southern Gothic—haunting, atmospheric, and absorbing."

—Claudia Gray, *NYT* bestselling author of
A Thousand Pieces of You and the
Evernight and Spellcaster series

"*Compulsion* is a stunningly magical debut with a delicious slow burn to be savored. I want to live in this story world!"

—Wendy Higgins, *USA Today* and *NYT*
bestselling author of the Sweet Evil Trilogy

"Beautifully written, with vivid characters, a generations-old feud, and romance that leaps off the page, this Southern ghost story left me lingering over every word, and yet wanting to race to the compelling finish. Martina Boone's *Compulsion* is not to be missed."

—Megan Shepherd, author of



Pre-Reading Discussion Questions

- ◆ *Persuasion* is the second book in a series that started with *Compulsion*. What questions do you still have after reading *Compulsion* that you hope will be answered when reading *Persuasion*?
- ◆ Would knowing that your future opportunities are limited to a particular place or occupation make you less motivated or make you more determined to break away? Why?
- ◆ How do gender roles play into decisions about a couple's future? Should one person ever give up their personal dreams to be with someone? Why or why not?
- ◆ Do difficult circumstances determine a person's character or do they reveal it? Give an example that supports your argument.
- ◆ How does what people are fighting for, whether in a family, a social movement, or a war, become more complex once they begin to fight? How does this make it more difficult to stop hostilities?
- ◆ What are some forms of persuasion and which are appropriate to encourage someone to consent to what you want them to do or think?
- ◆ What does consent mean and how can you tell if someone has consented?

Post-Reading Discussion Questions

- ◆ The Heirs of Watson Island series fictionalizes actual events in South Carolina and weaves together mysteries in the present, the Civil War period, and the turn of the 18th century. Analyze why the author chose to bring together the different time periods in this way. How does the use of the three-hundred year history of the Watson, Beaufort, and Colesworth plantations change your view of the events in the modern storyline?
- ◆ Seven Beaufort, the father of Eight and Kate, deliberately kept Eight from knowing that he would be magically confined to the plantation. Analyze the reasons Seven gave for keeping his son from knowing about the Beaufort binding and that Eight would inherit that restriction on Seven's death. How might knowing about the binding have changed Eight's life and what he dreamed for himself? Seven says that dreams shape who we become. Discuss examples from your own life or the news that support or disprove this statement.
- ◆ Discuss the title of the book in the context of the story. How does the author use different forms of "persuasion" in the story? What is the line between asking someone to do something voluntarily and making them do something they'd rather not do? Which of these methods have you used to persuade or have been persuaded by?
- ◆ How is the relationship between Barrie and Eight similar to the relationship between Pru and Seven? How is it different?
- ◆ Barrie reflects that "human memory clung to pain and terror so much harder than it grasped at joy." Do you think this is true? Why or why not? Give an example from your life or the life of someone you know.
- ◆ Eight comments "There's no such thing as a pure white hat or a pure black one. Everyone comes in different shades of gray." Do you agree with his statement? Why or why not? Give an example that supports your opinion.
- ◆ Obadiah comments to Barrie that "you want both your Beaufort boy and your magic. You'll have to figure out for yourself which is more important." If you were Barrie, which would be more important to you and why?
- ◆ Based on the evidence you have seen so far, do you believe Obadiah is a villain? Is he good, or evil? Why or why not?
- ◆ Barrie tells Cassie, "If you don't fight to survive, you will never know how strong you are." Share an example from your life when this was true.



More Post-Reading Discussion Questions

- ◆ Obadiah tells Barrie, “The spirits here are powerful because they have something important they wish to protect. That same purpose keeps them locked here in this reality.” Many people believe that spirits of the dead do remain because they have left something unfinished. What do you think of this belief?
- ◆ How much does what we know about history or current events depend on how various people presented facts? What forms of persuasion do you see on a day-to-day basis that change how you think or feel about something that’s going on in the world?
- ◆ The lingering and often debilitating effects of violence, especially sexual violence, are major themes throughout the book. Today, someone in the United States is sexually assaulted every 107 seconds, most often by someone they know, and 44% of victims are under the age of 18. As in Cassie’s case, 68% of rapes are never reported. Discuss why Cassie never told her parents or reported the assault to anyone. Why might someone keep silent? Would you keep silent if it happened to you? How do you think this effected Cassie’s behavior and view of herself?
- ◆ Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is a pattern of symptoms that war veterans, sexual assault victims, and others sometimes develop after going through a traumatic event. The symptoms can be very different from person to person, but up to one-third of sexual assault victims will develop PTSD shortly after, or sometimes years after, their assault. Discuss how Barrie’s perception of Cassie changes as she becomes aware of Cassie’s PTSD. Does this excuse Cassie’s behavior in locking Barrie in the tunnel? In your opinion should Barrie trust Cassie any more once she suspects what happened to her cousin? Or does the fact that they know each other better and have some basis for mutual understanding give them a way to move forward? Do you know anyone who has experienced PTSD?
- ◆ Nicknames are important elements in the Heirs of Watson Island series. In *Compulsion*, we learned that Barrie’s real name is Lombard, after the crooked street in San Francisco, because her mother wanted to remind herself and Barrie not to fall in love with crooked men. Eight Beaufort is the eighth Charles Beaufort in his family, and the family has resorted to using numbers as a form of shorthand. Barrie initially uses “baseball guy” as a nickname for Eight because of his baseball scholarship. We often have many reasons for calling someone a particular nickname. Do you think that Barrie might be using the name as a defense mechanism, to remind herself that Eight was out of her league and realm of experience? Why or why not? At the end of *Persuasion*, Eight accuses Barrie of calling him “baseball guy” because she doesn’t think he is smart. Do you think that was her intention? Does her intention matter? How do names make us feel about ourselves? Do you use a nickname for yourself or others? Why or why not?
- ◆ In *Persuasion*, Barrie and Eight are discovering things she didn’t learn in school about slavery and the roles their own families played in the past. The exploitation of both African Americans and Native Americans as a terrible and undeniable part of the United States history. Do you believe that it is important for current and future generations to learn about this history, even if it makes some people uncomfortable? Why or why not? How might this influence our understanding of current events and help us to shape the future? Discuss whether we should we alter historical situations, books, or cultural context to reflect modern sensibilities.
- ◆ Eight walks away from Barrie at the end, and the relationship seems to be in jeopardy. Which of Barrie’s actions do you think hurt Eight the most? Is he being entirely fair to Barrie? Do you think he is gone for good? Why are why not?
- ◆ At the end of the book, a raven feather reappears and Barrie feels the tug of her finding gift. What is the unfinished business she needs to complete that you expect will be a focus in *Illusion*, the end of the trilogy?
- ◆ Everyone has a ‘gift’, even though it may not be magical like Barrie’s or Eight’s. What do you think your gift is? What purpose does/could your gift have?



Immerse Yourself in Southern Cuisine at the Watson Tearoom

Encourage your guests to dress-up, and have everyone bring a dish to share (see below for ideas). As Barrie did, decorate with string lights and luminaries (tea lights inside paper bags weighted with sand) to enhance the atmosphere. You could advertise the night by making a banner similar to Daphne's web design and call it a 'Magical Night.' (see page 209)

Menu Ideas from Persuasion

- Tomato, roasted corn, and boiled peanut salad
- Fried green tomatoes
- Cucumber and assorted tea sandwiches
- Bacon and cheddar hush puppies
- Beef pot roast
- Maple bacon cupcakes
- Mississippi mud brownies
- Chocolate hazelnut truffles

Mesclun Salad with Goat Cheese and Candied Pecans

(Recipe courtesy of Kirsten Werk)

Dressing:

- 2/3 cup salad oil
- 1/3 cup wine vinegar (red or white)
- 1 tsp Dijon or brown mustard
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 2 teaspoons chopped onion
- 1/2 tsp. salt, sprinkle of paprika & black pepper to taste

Salad:

- 1 bag of baby spinach
- 1 bag of spring mix lettuces
- 1/2 cup of dried cranberries
- 1 apple or pear chopped (skin on)
- 1/2 cup of goat or feta cheese, crumbled



Candied Pecans:

- Put 1/3 cup of sugar and 1 to 1/2 cups of pecan pieces in a medium sized skillet over medium heat.
- Stir continually until all of the sugar melts and the pecans are coated with the melted sugar.
- Pour onto a cookie sheet to cool for about 15 minutes. Once cooled, break apart.

Directions:

- Make the dressing ahead of time by tossing all of the dressing ingredients together and chill.
- Make the candied pecans ahead of time and set aside.

Just before serving, toss the salad ingredients together. Add the dressing and toss. Add the candied pecans and toss. Serve.

About the Author

Martina Boone was born in what is now the Czech Republic and moved to the United States when she was seven. The books she read when she was a teen have stayed with her all of her life. Now she creates new worlds and writes about teen characters who change their worlds.

She is the founder of AdventuresInYAPublishing.com, a *Writers Digest* Best Websites for Writers site, and of YASeriesInsiders.com, a site dedicated to sharing news, fun, and the love of the best Young Adult series literature. She is passionate about school safety and literacy, and loves to ski, ride dressage horses, travel, and read beautiful, slightly twisted fiction. She eats Nutella on pretty much anything, adores marzipan, has guilty cravings for stale sugar-free licorice, and drinks chocolate-flavored tea with milk.

Martina and her husband live in Virginia with two kids, a shelter cat, Auggie the Wonder Dog, and a backyard visited by rabbits, groundhogs, foxes, bald eagles, squirrels, deer, and even the occasional curious bear.

Find more information at <http://www.MartinaBoone.com>

Did you know?

South Carolina was the first state to secede from the Union. Six more states quickly followed, and in December of 1860, South Carolina seized all Federal property in the state and laid claim to Fort Moultrie and Fort Sumpter in the Charleston harbor.

Union troops under Major Anderson failed to vacate despite a Confederate siege, and General P.G. Beauregard of the new Confederate States Army bombarded the fort on April 12, 1861. By the time Union troops finally evacuated, neither side was willing to back down.

Abraham Lincoln called for 75,000 troops to bring the states to heel, as a result of which, four more states seceded and the Confederate army, in turn, received an influx of volunteers. The Union captured Port Royal near Beaufort, SC, giving them control of the sea islands on which Watson Island is loosely based. It also let move up the coast to blockade Charleston harbor and lay siege to the city, which remained in Confederate control until the end of the war.

Many of the plantations around Charleston were destroyed or burned in the Civil War. General Sherman's Special Field Order no. 15, which confiscated certain properties within 30 miles of the coast of South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida and redistributed them to freed blacks, also applied. Yet some plantations inexplicably remained intact. For any families to remain on their plantation homes required quite a bit of persuasive magic! Use your imagination to speculate how the Beaufort gift might have come in handy.

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