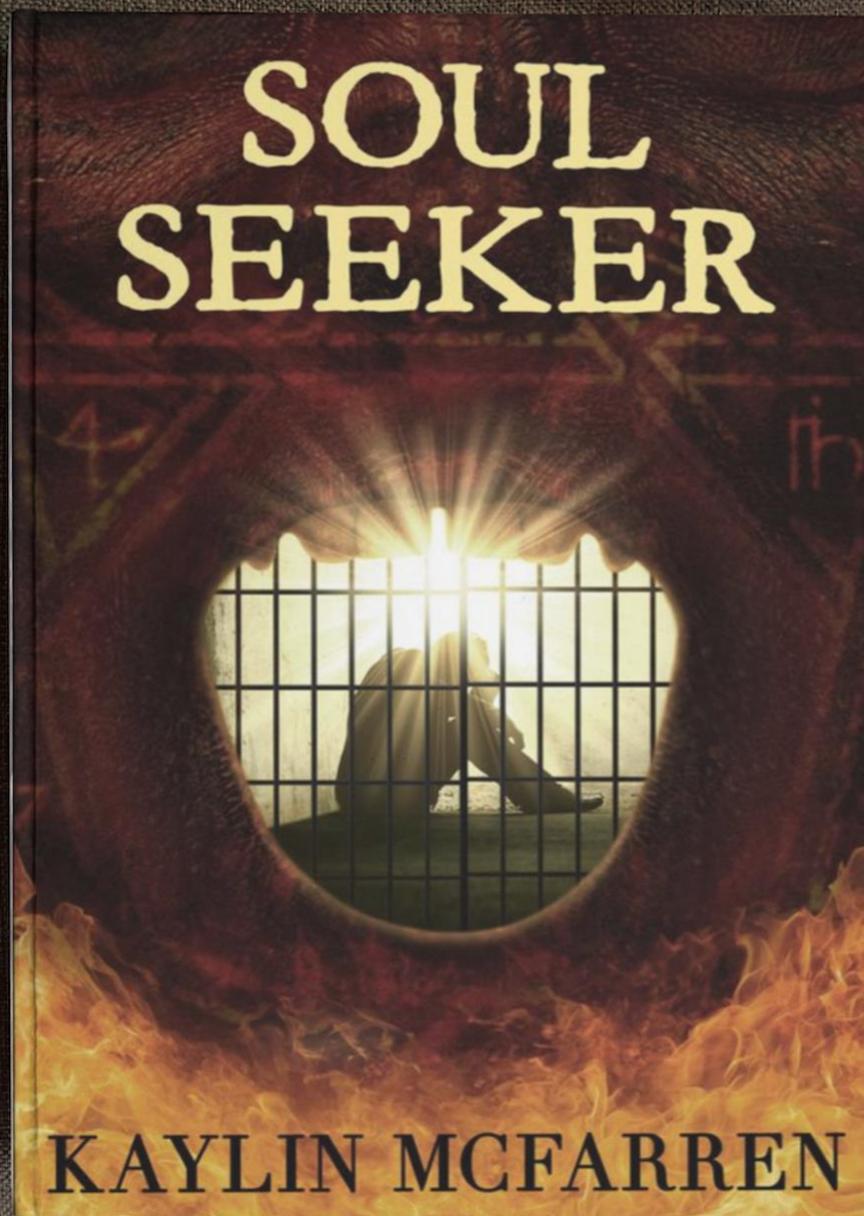


**BOOK CLUB KIT**



## ***Discussion Questions***

- 1) When *Soul Seeker* opens, Benjamin Poe is on death row awaiting his execution. He has always been an honest, hard-working man and even saved lives as a fireman. However, he claims that a demon tricked him into killing his son. With so many stories in the press about demon possession, would you give Poe the benefit of the doubt after hearing his story or assume he invented his unlikely alibi? Why does he believe the world is full of monsters? Would you feel the same way if you shared his experience?
- 2) *Soul Seeker* is set in Illinois in a non-existent town. However, this community represents small town America where tourism is crucial to the economy and gossip entertains the residents living there. When Crighton arrives, he is an obvious outsider, but what makes him seem that way? At the Lochton Police Station, why are the officers disturbed by him? What does he do and say that leads them to believe he's the devil?
- 3) This novel focuses on loyalty and the length some families will go to in order to protect their own. What does Benjamin Poe and his wife Lexi believe their son has done during his lifetime? Was it wise to ignore their fears, and if not, what kind of help should they have sought out? Did they wait too long to act?
- 4) Three people lose their lives in the College Inn fire. Did you think Gabriel Poe was justified in his actions, which resulted in their deaths? What emotion did he seem to be lacking when the truth was told? Did you think he was evil or just troubled, and if so, why?
- 5) This book is divided into two parts, which provides a glimpse into Benjamin Poe's life and Crighton's—the demon that tricked him into killing his son. How did you feel about viewing the demon's way of life? Did you sympathize with his plight? What redeeming qualities did he possess?
- 6) Ariel is an apprentice guardian angel and arrives at a car accident scene with every intention of rescuing survivors. Have you ever experienced a "close call" when you felt an angel's presence or believed you were saved from a horrible tragedy? How did you feel afterwards? Have you ever wished you could save someone?
- 7) Crighton and Ariel are forced into a relationship by the Sovereign Sector. As soulmates, they must accept each other's failings, as well as their strengths. What were these qualities for each of these characters and how did they use them to their advantage?
- 8) The angel and demon fought to protect each other, deepening their bond between each other. What kind of character growth did Crighton and Ariel experience?
- 9) What do you imagine happens next for Crighton and Ariel? Do you think they will settle down and build a life with their child or face more complications together? Would you like to see this story continue?

## *What does it take to master more than one genre?*



Everyone knows Stephen King for his scary stories, but did you know that the Master of Horror has also penned an alternate history of the United States, mysteries and hard crime novels, and even an epic fantasy? Like several of the other greats, King is one of many bestselling authors who has mastered more than one genre.

Writing isn't an easy career path to follow and finding success in one genre is hard enough as it is. Breaking into the literary fiction world is a feat similar to reaching the peak of Everest, and even getting noticed in a smaller popular fiction genre can feel impossible. Yet, there are some authors whose names appear in several sections of the library and who have amassed huge followings across the book world. Although I can't claim the same success, I can expel on the enjoyment of mixing genres while writing and also challenging myself by branching out—writing books ranging from thrillers and mysteries to women's fiction and paranormal fantasy.

If you do a quick Google search on advice on writing in more than one genre, you will find the internet will spit back the same warning: Don't do it! Literary agents, critics, and everyday readers seem to share the opinion that crossing genres makes an author less appealing, harder to market, and more difficult to build a brand around. While that may be true for many beginners who are just dipping their toes into the bookish pool, some of the greatest writers of our time have found success crossing genre lines.

Best known for his work in the dark fantasy genre with books like *American Gods* and *Coraline*, Neil Gaiman has also mastered the art of comic books, graphic novels, audio theater plays, children's books, short fiction, and even poetry. Whether you are in the mood for an otherworldly adult read like *The Ocean at the End of the Lane*, a

lighthearted children's story like *Chu's Day*, or even a touching poem like "Blueberry Girl," Gaiman's nearly endless library is perfect for you.

The aforementioned Master of Horror Stephen King is actually a multi-genre master. Not only have his bestselling scary stories like *It* and *Carrie* been delighting (and terrifying) readers for years, his works of science fiction, fantasy, mystery, and suspense have kept his readers going back to his library time and time again. For readers who have been avoiding the literary giant because of his reputation for horror, mystery books like *The Colorado Kid* and Gothic fantasies like *The Green Mile* provide a great alternative.

You've seen her name plastered on the cover of vampire novels and witchy stories, but did you know Anne Rice is also a master of erotic romance? Under the pen name A.N. Roquelaure, Rice has published the popular *Sleeping Beauty* quartet, erotic BDSM fantasy novels that make *50 Shades of Grey* seem tame. If you like her dark fantasy but are looking for something a little sexier, fear not: the master knows her way around the bedroom as well as she does the graveyard.

So, my advice to writers is to read whatever appeals to you and that means reading a lot! Then write in the genre you enjoy most. No one puts you in a box as an author unless you allow them to or you climb inside yourself. Therefore, be original, be creative, and take a risk once in a while. When you explore your creativity and step outside your comfort zone, you might even surprise yourself. I sure did!

--Kaylin McFarren

