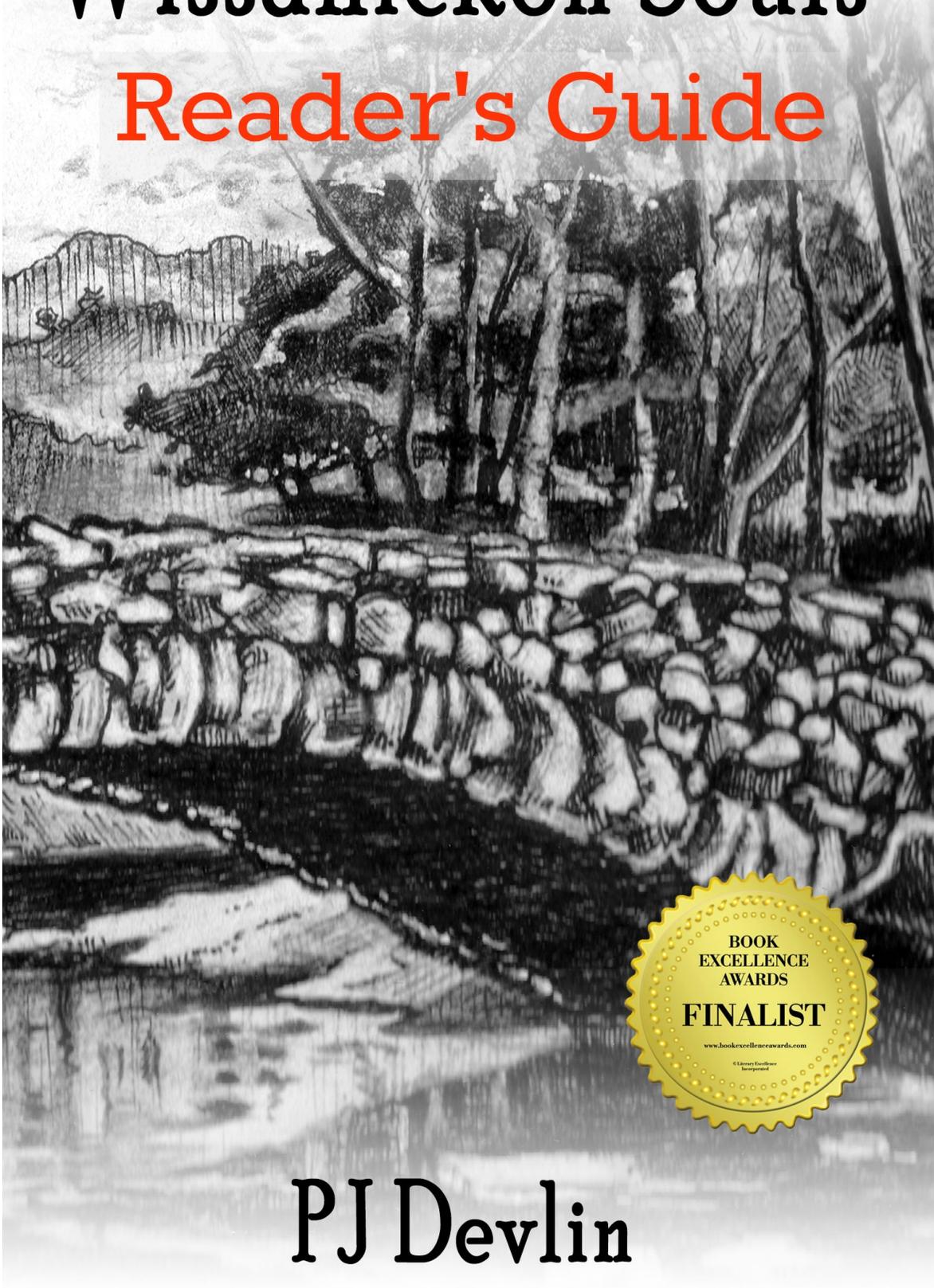


Wissahickon Souls

Reader's Guide



PJ Devlin

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR *Wissahickon Souls* by PJ Devlin

GENERAL

Main characters:

Claire, Lawrence, Anna, Raymond, Moses, Elizabeth, Granny, Samuel, Felix, Pretty Boy

Secondary characters:

Molly, Hamish, Duff, Reuben, Young Hamish, Sky Blue, Old Caesar, Mary Baker, Anthony, Jolie, Genevieve, Sebastien, Marie, Henri, Donal, Reds, Jonah, Ruth and James Forten Chestnut

Settings:

Philladelphia, Germantown, Wissahickon Farm, Haiti

1. What is the significance of the title, *Wissahickon Souls*? Do you think it represents the story? What might an alternative title have been?
2. When writing historical fiction, balancing real facts about the setting and time period with creative license to support the story is essential. Did the settings in *Wissahickon Souls* feel authentic? Were you able to picture them, or picture yourself there? What did you think about the role that the Wissahickon Creek played in the story? Do you think Claire and Lawrence made the right choice to flee to Haiti?
3. The major themes of *Wissahickon Souls* are race, regret and reconciliation. Do you think these themes were adequately explored? Did you see any other themes in the novel?
4. *Wissahickon Souls* takes place over a long period of time and as such the structure of the novel is important to help readers navigate. *Wissahickon Souls* is broken into three sections, or some might say, three acts. What did you think of this structure? What about the chapter headings? Did they help you stay fixed in time and place? What are some other ways that a story like this could be structured?
5. Which scenes resonated most with you? Why?
6. What surprised you the most about the book?
7. Were the racial, cultural, gender, sexuality and socioeconomic factors at play in the story realistically portrayed? Was anything surprising to you? Did anything prompt you to learn more about that historical element or period of time?

CHARACTERS

1. Who was your favorite character and why? Your least favorite character?

2. Were there too many characters to keep straight? Or did the variety of characters help you get immersed in the world of the novel?

3. There are those that believe dialect should never be used, and those that believe that it's necessary for authenticity and helping the reader understand the character and the era. What did you think about the use of dialect in *Wissahickon Souls*? Did it help to set the scene and establish characters, or was it distracting?

4. Did the actions of the characters seem plausible and appropriate to the time and place?

5. What is Claire's motivation or longing? How does that influence her choices?

8. Which situations and/or characters did you identify with the most? The least?

9. Which characters change the most throughout the story?

10. What are the dynamics of power between the characters, and how does that affect the outcome? Specifically, Claire and Anna; Claire and Lawrence; Claire and Raymond; Lawrence and Henri? Lawrence and Anna?

11. What is Anna's relationship with Anthony and Jolie? How does that relationship result from and/or change her relationship with Claire?

12. How does the way Claire sees herself differ from how others see her?

THE ENDING

1. What did you think about the ending? Was it satisfying?
2. Have any of YOUR views or thoughts changed after reading this book?
3. What do you think will happen next to the main characters?

OVERALL

1. Are there any books that you would compare this one to? What are the similarities and differences between them?

2. Did you feel transported back in time as you read the book?
3. What was your favorite thing about the book? Your least favorite?
4. What surprised you most about the book?
5. What emotions did the story evoke in you?

The author, PJ Devlin is always interested in talking to readers to answer questions or just talk about any aspect of the book. Connect with her on Facebook at PJDevlinStories, on Twitter at PJDevlin10, or email her via her publisher at Info@possibilitiespublishingcompany.com.