



## **Possess**

*Gretchen McNeil*

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Fifteen-year-old Bridget Liu just wants to be left alone: by her overprotective mom, by the hunky son of the police officer who got her father killed, and by the eerie voices which she can suddenly and inexplicably hear. Turns out the voices are demons - the Biblical kind, not the Buffy kind - and Bridget possesses the rare ability to banish them.

San Francisco's senior exorcist and his newly assigned partner from the Vatican enlist Bridget's help with increasingly bizarre and dangerous cases of demonic possession. But when one of Bridget's oldest friends turns up dead in a ritualistic sacrifice that mirrors her father's murder, Bridget realizes she can't trust anyone. An interview with her father's murderer reveals a link between Bridget and the Emim: a race of part-demons intent on raising their forefathers to the earth in human form. Now Bridget must unlock the secret to the Emim's plan before someone else close to her winds up dead, or worse - the human vessel for a Demon King.

## **Possess Details**

Date : Published August 23rd 2011 by Balzer + Bray

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Author : Gretchen McNeil

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# From Reader Review Possess for online ebook

## Jill Myles says

I got to read an early version. It was all kinds of BADASS. Scary and awesome all at once. Keep this one on your radar because it's going to be BIG. There's a scene in a doll store that will make you pee your pants. :)

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## Lindy says

I was so disappointed with this book. I had high hopes based on the cover blurb and the cover design itself. The premise sounded fairly unique--something different and interesting. But I really don't have anything good to say about it after reading it.

The plot was completely transparent--I knew the ending very soon into the book. The characters had no depth, and the relationships between them were not well developed, especially not in a believable way. One of your best friends since childhood is brutally murdered, you discover the body, and you barely spare him a second thought? I don't think so.

The protag, in particular, just got on my nerves with her bad attitude and the constant use of teenage catchphrases and pop culture references. Not to mention the fact that it was really hard for me to believe that a teenage girl would choose a priest as her closest confidante--her mentor. To top it all off, the ending was super cheesy.

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## Dana Wright says

Grabbed me from the first page! I loved this book.

Join me at <http://onthebroomstick.blogspot.com/> for a giveaway of Possess and an interview with Gretchen McNeil. The 10 Days of Halloween is in full swing! Tons of giveaways from October 21-31 and into November.

Check out more fun at <http://zombiegirlshambling.blogspot.com/>

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## Taylor Knight says

I read two of Gretchen's other books (Ten and 3:59) and I really enjoyed both. I had Possess on my shelf for a really long time and I finally for around to it. I didn't like it as much as Ten or 3:59 but it was still pretty good.

I didn't feel like Possess was really original, it was just normal demons and exorcist stuff, and the characters were not bad. I didn't really like them but I didn't hate them either.

Something that did bug me was how Bridget was half Chinese but it was completely ignored the whole book.

I love diversity in YA and I think there needs to be more but it also needs to be done right. Bridget was written to be half Chinese but she had none of the traits. The author keep talking about her blue eyes and extremely curly hair. About her being half Irish. It was a little frustrating to me.

Overall, Possess was an okay book. I didn't hate it but I didn't love it either. I wish I could change somethings about it and I wasn't really scared by this book like a lot of other people have said. I'm glad I read it but I doubt I'll be rereading.

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### **Dena Landon says**

I didn't read this book - I devoured it in one afternoon, only putting it down to take potty breaks. Possess grabs you from the beginning and doesn't let go until the last Hallelujah.

Bridget Liu is your typical Catholic high schooler - in steel toed boots, and with an attitude to match. She's just trying to survive high school as social outcast, with only her gay best friend Hector and her creepy-stalker friend Peter for company. She wants to be normal, but that's not what she's going to get. In the first two chapters we find out that Bridget can hear demons. Not only can she hear them, she can cast them out of demoniac's (people possessed by demons). Monsigneur wants her to embrace her destiny and help him fight off the powers of darkness, Bridget just doesn't want to flunk show choir. But there have been a rash of possessions around San Francisco, so many that the Vatican has sent a new priest to investigate, and the spirits aren't going to let Bridget ignore them for long.

McNeil's writing has a breezy, light style with humorous tones that lends itself well to her main character's smart-ass thoughts. But Bridget isn't just a smart-ass, she genuinely cares about her little brother, worries about how her mother is handling her father's murder, and doesn't like that cute boy who keeps hanging around. Really, she doesn't. As someone with only a passing familiarity with Catholicism I was able to follow McNeil's explanations of the demons and how to fight them, and enjoyed the mythology that she reveals over the course of the book.

Possess is a fun, entertaining YA novel with lots of plotty goodness that I think teens will enjoy. I look forward to the next book by this author.

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### **Stacee says**

Creepy and fun. Maybe a little campy at times, so a regular book by Gretchen.

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### **caren says**

How much did I love this book? Let me count the ways... Okay, I know, cheesy. But seriously... I've been in such a rut the past few weeks that I was discouraged. I didn't want to start anything because I was afraid I'd be disappointed with how it turned out.

And after a string of meh-so-so books, this was a complete turn-around. It had everything I like in a book: a main character that didn't annoy me, humor, cute boys, romance and a kickass story. Which I wasn't sure

about at first... Though I've always been a huge fan of supernatural paranormally type stuff, especially when it comes to Angels and Demons and possession, I had yet to find one that actually interested or intrigued me. When I was a kid, my brother and I had a huge love for horror films and even though most times they scared the crap out of me, I still wanted more. That's what this book was for me. It wasn't particularly frightening, but there were some seriously creepy moments that definitely had me looking into dark corners looking for shadows. Or talking dolls...

Let me tell you a little about what happens. Our MC, Bridget, is still reeling from the death of her father when she discovers she has the ability to communicate with ghosts. Specifically: demons. After learning about her 'ability,' she sets off on a journey of discovery: about her power, about herself, about love... and about what really happened the night her father died.

There are a few moments that are a bit predictable. There are a few points where Bridget's immaturity shines through (but come on, she's fifteen for goodness sake), but there were so many other highlights for me that it didn't even matter. I enjoyed the ride and I didn't want it to end. Sadly... it did, but it ended well. No cliffhangers! No questions! A real life beginning, middle and end! I've started to think authors don't know what those are anymore... Of course, the possibility for a second novel was left open (which makes me happyhappyhappy), but I'd be fine if there wasn't one. (Even though I would love to see more demon butt-kicking and of Bridget and Matt together)

Bridget was a little badass with a sharp tongue and great wit, she had me laughing and crying and cheering her on. There's one line in the status updates I posted that still owns me right now. It was seriously perfect.

And the boy... Matt Quinn. God, he was sweet. And I still can't get the picture of him in the fedora out of my head. What is it about a damn fedora that's so appealing? His feelings felt genuine and real, and I may have swooned more than once at his persistence for Bridget's attention (definitely need more closet time in book 2, just throwing that out there).

It wasn't just them, though. There were so many great characters in this book. Sammy, Bridget's little brother. Hector, her gay best friend. Sergeant Quinn, Matt's father. Fumbly little Father Santos. Poor, poor Peter Kim with the crush. Loved them all.

It's been a while since I've thrown out the five-star rating, and in this case, I feel the book deserved it. If for nothing else than it really renewed my love for young-adult fiction at a time when I didn't think there was a book left out there that would have everything I wanted in it. I hope you decide to give it a chance and read, and even if you disagree with how much I loved it, I'll be happy if you take the chance.

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### **ChristaCarol says**

I read an earlier version of this and it kicks total ass (and so does the heroine). The creepy spookiness and interesting mystery of what's behind Bridget (the MC) is written perfectly, not to mention a yummy romantic interest. This is a must read for any YA lover!

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### **Kristin (Beneath Shining Stars, I Read) says**

If you scare easily, do not read this book at night. You have no idea how serious I am about this. I read it in the morning and was still seriously freaked out at times--although *Possess* was so freaking amazing that I had to keep reading. That's the thing about *Possess*, it doesn't slow down and you will be glued to the page.

Bridget lives in San Francisco, a city that has been seeing an usually high level of demonic activity lately, and attends St. Michael's Prep--yes, a Catholic school. With her unique gift, she'll learn to kick some demonic butt and banish them to Hell with the help of a certain priest. However, things aren't quite that simple. A cryptic note given to her by demons reveals that someone near her might not be working for the greater good. But demons lie, right? It's what she's been told--one of the supposed rules of banishment--although perhaps it would be best to keep an eye on the persons in question. After all, what if they're right? Someone has been trying to summon one of the kings of Hell into their world and it'll be up to Bridget to put a stop to their plans.

Bridget Liu is half Chinese, half Irish, and really hopes that her ability will go away so that she can be normal again. She hangs out with two guys (occasionally a third) and her best friend, Hector, is gay. There's also Peter Kim, a boy who has been crushing on Bridget forever and it's been reaching stalker levels lately. Part of me feels terrible for Peter, but the other half of me really wanted Bridget to tell him off. Alexa is Bridget's archenemy of sorts at St. Michael's Prep and I hope Bridget goes head to head with sometime in the future--as it didn't happen in *Possess*. Lastly there's Matt, Bridget's love interest, son of a cop, and all around good guy. She's been avoiding him and he's been worrying about her (as well as trying to talk to her). Favorite characters? Bridget and Hector, hands down. Bridget's younger brother Sammy admittedly wasn't my favorite person in the world--but I'm pretty sure that's because I couldn't imagine dealing with my younger brother at age eight again. But that's family for you; you've got to love them regardless.

I really loved that *Possess* has a constant pacing to it. Once things pick up, they don't slow down until you get to the ending--at which point, I found myself completely in love with Gretchen McNeil's writing style. I wouldn't call the ending a cliffhanger, but it certainly left off in such a manner that I suspect--and seriously hope--that there will be another book. You have no idea how much I want to gush about *Possess* and am refraining from saying because the things I want to tell you about are spoilers. Let's just say that the demons are seriously interesting and that Mr. Moppet is more than just a cat with an interesting name.

*Possess* really is a book that I'd recommend to you. It's a page turner, involves demons and exorcists, and has just the right amount of romance. But again, if you scare easily, consider yourself warned. As much as I want to tell you what freaked me out in *Possess*, I think it'd be better for you to read it and see. :)

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### **Colette says**

I never pictured myself as a horror fan, but *Possess* by Gretchen McNeil converted me into a YA horror novel lover! Overall 5/5 stars; next up is *Ten* by Gretchen McNeil!

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### **cEe beE says**

The high ratings for this book baffle me. It tried to be a mystery, and action filled paranormal book but it is so unoriginal, it's a repeat of books and films seen many times before. There were gaping plot holes and I guessed who the bad guy was long before the character did. There are superior Nancy Drew mysteries than

this.

What really annoys me is the depiction of Bridget Liu as half Chinese. Why bother making her half Asian when she doesn't remotely resemble one - the author keeps emphasizing her very curly hair, blue eyes and being half Irish. The other half of her ethnicity was like an accessory she wore. It was not part of her identity as a character, nor did it add depth or relevance to the story. There's even a stereotypical Asian nerd, whom the character ignores and feels sorry for.

Is the author trying to be multi-cultural? If she did, she failed. Epically. She should just have stuck to her own roots, and just made Bridget all Anglo.

**Attention authors; listen closely**, if you are going for diversity in your books, *try to have some first hand knowledge of the culture you're going to write about*. Didn't they tell you at writing class to write about what you know best?

There were all sorts of wrong with this book and I could rant more but that is just exhausting.

ZERO stars.

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## Veronica Morfi says

Rating: 4/5

Possess is the second book by Gretchen McNeil I've read and it was much different. This book has demons, exorcists, angels, Nephilim and everything in between. In Possess 15-year-old Bridget discovers she can hear and banish demons after her dad is murdered. With the help of two priests she starts taking up exorcisting job. But the possessions in her town are becoming more and more frequent. And the demons are warning her about a King of Hell that is about to rise.

Possess was really good. I loved all the action and creepy exorcist moments, and trust me there were a lot of them in the first half of the book. Then there is the main character, Bridget, she is so sarcastic and kind of kick-ass that I couldn't help but adore her. Also, I loved the lore about angels and Nephilim, Watchers and Emim, the Order of St. Michael, it made the story really come to life and I'd love to see another book set in the same world as Possess.

The second half of the book was more about the mystery behind Bridget's father's murder and who is the man conjuring the King of Hell. The outcome wasn't really socking. Gretchen McNeil gave us a lot of clues to figure out who was the bad guy and everything else, but still the story flew really well. I would have loved for a big twist at the end, but it never came. Still, I did enjoy that the romance in the second half of the book progressed. It was so cute and adorable.

All in all, this was a great, fast paced book. With an exorcist MC who can kick some demon ass and find some great come back lines in the process. I am really enjoying McNeil's books and can't wait to read more.

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## **Colleen Houck says**

Ms. McNeil is a master at who-done-its. She gets me every time. I loved this heroine and her love interest. She's smart and sassy. Favorite scene was at the end which I won't describe since spoilers. Also liked her shopping for a dress with her best friend and that she went for purple. Me, I always go black. Brave color choice my girl.

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## **Rebecca says**

I didn't like this as much as I expected to. I liked the idea a lot -- teenage girl has the ability to banish demons -- but the execution left me cold. For starters, there were no surprises. I spotted the bad guy on page 5.

Bridget Liu is an interesting character, daughter of a Chinese psychiatrist and Irish school teacher who has always attended Catholic school, but I didn't like her much. Devastated by her father's murder, Bridget is prickly. She doesn't get along with anyone, only socializing with a few select boys at her school, one of whom, Peter, is basically stalking her and the other 2 seem to be gay. Not that I care about that, but Bridget isn't that nice to these few friends either. When Peter is murdered, Bridget feels bad about it for all of a page and a half and then immediately moves on. She also doesn't get on well with her mother, standard for a teenage girl with issues but the fact that she couldn't have a positive relationship with **SOMEBODY** really bugged me.

Of course, Bridget was fond of her 8 year old brother, Sammy, who's a genius but, when about to be sacrificed to a demon by a priest, comes off as incredibly clueless. I mean, the kid is stuck in a church at midnight with black candles everywhere and Satanic symbols all over the floor and he's whining "You said you'd give me ice cream" to the demented nutcase in the clerical collar.

I think teenage readers will enjoy this book but, for anyone who's read a lot of YA, they'll realize they've seen this story before. There just wasn't anything original in it.

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## **Jodi Meadows says**

I am never going into a doll shop and you can't make me.

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