

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Just Flirt

BY LAURA BOWERS

*Author of BEAUTY SHOP FOR RENT,
which Publishers Weekly called “a delight”
in a starred review.*

It’s summer, sweet summer!

Self-proclaimed Superflirt Dee Barton can’t wait to spend the summer practicing her Nine Rules of Flirting on the cute guys who stay at her family’s campground. Why not? Flirting is fun and makes people feel good—which is the exact opposite of her relationship with her toxic ex-boyfriend, Blaine. Sabrina Owens’s summer plans include keeping her over-the-top karaoke DJ mother in check, maintaining her status as the queen of the popular crowd—and being the perfect girlfriend to Blaine. Each girl sees the other as the enemy. But when a secret blog embroils them in a frivolous lawsuit, they must team up and embark on a risky, flirt-filled plot to set things right again.

Laura Bowers’s new novel is a heartfelt and hilarious story of friendship, family ... and flirting!

A “sweet and lively summer read,”
Publishers Weekly

*“Amidst summer’s onslaught of dystopian thrillers
and paranormal romances, it’s refreshing as a dip in
a cool, blue pool to read this sassy novel,”*
Washington Parent Magazine

*“Bower’s fun read about flirting—and the
fun/disastrous consequences it can bring—is
enjoyable and has a positive, unexpectedly feminist
message. I loved it and so will teen girls!”*
Lauren, Goodreads



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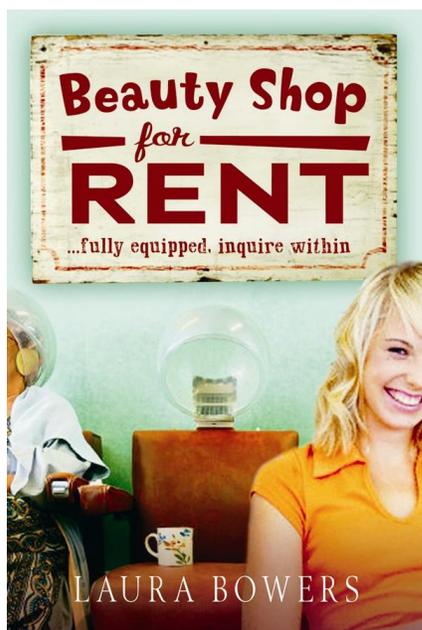


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**One of Bank Street College's starred
Best Children's Books of the Year 2007**

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The Kentucky 2009 Book Award
South Dakota's 2009-10 YARP Reading List
Missouri Association of School Librarians 2009-10
Gateway Readers Award

Hypothetical Question of the Week: If you were forced to have an extra body part implanted on your back, which would you choose? A finger, ear, breast or nose?

Abbey Garner is used to killing time by reading questions from the snarky tabloids in Granny Po's struggling beauty shop. It's not like there are a lot of customers to help, anyway. Mostly just the feisty Gray Widows, who are there to primp, polish, perm ... and, of course, gossip.

Abbey is there to work—to get a head start on the million dollars she intends to earn by the time she's thirty-five. She doesn't have time for boyfriends, parties, or hanging out with friends. But with the arrival of a trendy young woman who rents the beauty parlor and turns it into a modern-day spa, at least Abbey has a chance to make some *real* money. All of this fades into the background when Abbey's mother, who abandoned her on Granny Po's doorstep four years ago, suddenly shows up with a wild scheme of her own.

In her debut novel, Laura Bowers has written a hilarious and heartbreaking story about family—both the one we are born to and the one we create for ourselves.

“Teens will find Abbey’s emotional turmoil rings true, as does the reason behind her final act of forgiveness. But it’s the multigenerational friendships—the feisty, sniping conversations with Granny Po and her close circle of friends, “The Widows,” brim with humor—that make Bowers’s first novel a delight.”
—starred review, *Publisher’s Weekly*

*“As homey, gossipy, and charming as a small-town beauty shop, Laura Bowers’s first novel will soothe your mind, cleanse your pores, and make your hair curl with laughter.”—E. Lockhart, author of *The Boyfriend List* and *Fly on the Wall**

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Laura Bowers lives in New Windsor, Maryland with her husband, and enjoys writing, reading, running, and watching her two boys play sports. Some of her past job titles include waitress, secretary, telemarketer, real estate agent and during her college days, one of those roving characters you see at malls during holiday parades. (The time she had to wear a painful candy cane costume makes quite an interesting story!)

In 1998, Laura decided to pursue her dream of being a writer. Her first novel, *BEAUTY SHOP FOR RENT*, a “Steel Magnolias for teens,” was inspired by a rusted sign in front of a charming older house. Her second novel, *JUST FLIRT* was inspired by family camping trips, and now, she can honestly say that being a writer is a thousand times more than being a candy cane.



<http://laurabowers.net>

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A CONVERSATION WITH LAURA BOWERS

Both of your novels have been about teens. What did you write when you were a teenager?

Despite getting an A+ in Creative Writing, (which should have told me something,) I never wrote much as a teen, nor did I have aspirations of becoming a writer. In my mind, it wasn't possible for me to be an author—someone who wasn't on the newspaper committee, or had big college plans. This preconceived notion followed me for years until I finally realized that everyone has a voice worth sharing—even me.

When did you decide to be a writer, then?

The notion of being an author kept growing stronger during my twenties, but I brushed it aside because I had a very stressful job and young kids. But at the age of twenty-nine, a severe migraine put me in the hospital and I realized it was God's way of telling me I needed to change my life. On that very day, I stumbled to my computer—half-zombied on painkillers—and started to write a mystery novel. And let me tell you, what I wrote was very amusing!

How were you inspired to write JUST FLIRT?

After Beauty Shop for Rent sold, I was working on a novel that I loved but was going nowhere. After struggling for two years, it was time to wave the white flag, so one morning, I crawled on the sofa with the intent of not getting up until I had a new book idea. After a few hours, memories of book I started a long time ago came to mind. It was about a gal who gained independence from a very bold move—a fist fight. For some reason, I thought about flirting instead of fist fights. And wouldn't it be cool to use a campground for the setting, since my family has always loved camping? Soon, the pieces fell in place and Just Flirt was born, which was good, because I really wanted to get off the sofa.

Other than your main character, who's your favorite character in JUST FLIRT, and why?

I love them all, but my heart is most smitten for these two grubby, rebellious twins called the Cutson brothers who are always getting into trouble! They also say my favorite line from the book: “We ain't seen nothing, puppy hater.”

It makes sense. Really!