

A NEW BOOK PROPOSAL

The Marked Mademoiselle

A Historical Fiction Novel

by

Jocelyn Green

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Overview

ONE-SENTENCE DESCRIPTION

Betrayed by her father and branded as a criminal, Juliane Chatelet is exiled to French Louisiana; when she finds her soldier brother in New Orleans and learns he has deserted France, she must choose between appeasing him or remaining faithful to the military officer she has grown to love—and to the country that banished her.

HOOK

After spending two years behind bars for loving a man beneath her social station, nineteen-year-old Juliane Chatelet trades her Paris prison for exile to Louisiana, where her younger brother Benjamin is already assigned as a soldier. The colonizing scheme, which pays for her passage to a new life, also includes a forced marriage to a fellow convict. But when Juliane's new husband dies in New Orleans and she's exposed as a branded criminal, the blame lands on her—until military officer Sebastien Girard comes to her aid. Once Juliane finds Benjamin and learns he has deserted France, she must choose between appeasing her brother, or remaining faithful to Sebastien, the officer she has grown to love—and to the country which banished her.

TIME PERIOD:

1717-1722

SPIRITUAL THEME: Branded for Christ

“From now on let no one cause trouble for me, for I bear on my body the brand-marks of Jesus.” Galatians 6:17 NASB

In Old Regime France, the branding of the fleur-de-lys onto the criminal’s body publicly reclaimed that person for the king. It was both a symbol of the convict’s past and condemnation for a limited future. Our heroine, Juliane, bears this dreaded symbol on her shoulder and must determine that instead, she belongs to the King of Kings, and her very soul belongs to Him. Though marked by judgment, she is covered by indelible grace.

AUDIENCE

- Readers of historical fiction, especially those who enjoy work by authors such as Laura Frantz, Beth White, and J.M. Hochstetler, who all demonstrate unwavering commitment to historical integrity while immersing readers into the storyworld with believable characters, high stakes, and vivid imagery.
- Readers who enjoy the history of France, European colonies, New Orleans, or pre-Revolution America will also be interested in this novel set in the capital of French colonial Louisiana. Most colonial stories feature the British colonies, but the Brides for France series showcases the dramatic early years of France’s claim on Louisiana.

MANUSCRIPT

100,000 words, complete three months from signing contract.

SERIES EXTENSION POSSIBILITIES

The Marked Mademoiselle is written as the first in a series of three in the Brides for France series. Each book will highlight the journey of a different woman who emigrates from Paris to Louisiana:

1. *The Marked Mademoiselle* follows the story of Juliane du Chatelet, a branded convict forced into exile in lieu of her prison sentence.
2. *The Misplaced Mademoiselle* tells the tale of Elisabeth Delarue, a young orphan bride for a tobacco farmer whose plantation is surrounded by the Natchez Indians who will massacre hundreds of French colonists in 1729.
3. *The Midwife Mademoiselle* follows Marguerite Rousseau, a midwife caught by a press gang outside Paris and sent to deliver babies in French settlements.

The Market and the Competition

The Marked Mademoiselle will likely appeal to both historical women's fiction readers and historical romance readers.

One comparable title is *The Pelican Bride* by Beth White (Revell 2014), which garnered a starred review from *Publishers Weekly*. Set in 1704, this novel chronicles the first shipment of brides from France to Louisiana. But this book is set in Mobile, Alabama, rather than New Orleans, and dates sixteen years before the time period in *The Marked Mademoiselle*. The religious persecution of the Huguenots also plays a strong role in *The Pelican Bride*, but does not affect the story of *The Marked Mademoiselle* at all.

Readers of the following will likely be interested in the Brides for France series, as well:

- The American Patriot series (Sheaf House Publishers, 2012-2015), by J.M. Hochstetler. Those interested in British colonials will also be intrigued to learn about the lesser-known French colonials, who made their mark in the Mississippi River Valley well before the American Revolution.
- *The Frontiersman's Daughter* (Revell 2009), *Courting Morrow Little* (Revell 2010), *The Colonel's Lady* (Revell 2011), by Laura Frantz. These novels include some aspect of the French and Indian conflicts. Each book in the Brides for France series will also contain elements of conflict and tension with the Native American nations surrounding the French colonies, including the massacre of more than two hundred French men, women and children at Fort Rosalie outside Natchez in the second book, *The Misplaced Mademoiselle*.

- *Les Miserables* by Victor Hugo. Any fan of Les Mis who also appreciates Christian fiction will be drawn into the heroine of *The Marked Mademoiselle*—a sympathetic female convict from France trying to reinvent herself in a new land.

The Marked Mademoiselle and the rest of the Brides for France series holds international appeal, as well, since this piece of American history overlaps a dramatic yet lesser-known slice of European history. Fans of Jocelyn Green's award-winning Heroines Behind the Lines Civil War series are eager for more historical fiction about strong women in American history.

About The Book

Cast of Main Characters

Juliane Chatelet was imprisoned in a house of correction by her father when she was sixteen years old. Her crime: refusing an arranged marriage. But it was her bold interference between a guard and an inmate he was attempting to molest which earned her the brand on her shoulder. Now she is an eighteen-year-old branded convict, forced to marry another convict and exiled to Louisiana alongside hundreds of other orphans, prostitutes, and criminals. Betrayed by her father, sweetheart, and country, she's determined to make a new life in New Orleans, and to find her beloved younger brother who is a soldier somewhere in the territory.

Utterly weary of being judged by the brand on her shoulder, Juliane takes the time to study other people before forming opinions of their true character. Her instinct to protect the weak and vulnerable is just as strong as her tendency to distrust people in positions of authority. She cultivates resilience and ingenuity. Still, Juliane is haunted by the idea that if she doesn't learn to tame the bitterness she feels over her betrayals, she will lash out some day, perhaps causing great harm, proving that she deserves to be forever marked by the fleur-de-lys on her skin.

Simon LeGrange is a thirty-year-old thief who becomes Juliane's husband in a mass wedding ceremony just prior to their debarkation to Louisiana. Having grown up on the streets, he has no idea how a family is supposed to function.

Sebastien Girard looks older than his twenty-five-years and is a military officer in the French army stationed in New Orleans. One of the veteran soldiers in Louisiana, he is worn down by the

extreme heat, steady stream of desertions, continual looting of the company storehouses from fellow officers, and tensions with both Indian tribes and the British agents from Carolina. He longs for a wife and family of his own, but the girls and women France delivers do not match his ideal. When he gets to know Juliane Chatelet, however, his prejudices break down. After her first husband dies, he marries her. But his relationship with Juliane unravels when she discovers he's been harboring a secret about her brother.

Marc-Paul Delsalle is a fellow officer of Sebastien's, and completely corrupt. He docks the soldiers' pay just so he can pocket more coin himself, steals from the warehouse, and cavorts with the many prostitutes in town. When he's bored, he gathers a group of soldiers and attacks whichever group of Indians he comes across. With no police or lawyers in New Orleans, it's the perfect place to seek his own personal gain in any way he chooses. Marc-Paul is despised by most who know him, but no one holds him in more contempt than Sebastien Girard.

Benjamin Chatelet is Juliane's brother. He'd been a French soldier in Louisiana but had become broken down physically, morally, and spiritually by the malarial climate, threat of Indian hostilities, and by the lack of pay, provisions, and shelter. Following the trend of so many other soldiers, he deserted before Juliane arrived in New Orleans. The deal Benjamin made with Marc-Paul to escape his death sentence begins to prick what little is left of his conscience, but he's in too deep. He's torn between keeping his end of the bargain and being the upright man his sister believes him to be.

Francoise St. Jean, one of the women who came over as a bride for France years ago, is now a thrice-widowed innkeeper running a brisk business in New Orleans. Francoise makes it a point to give gainful employment to worthy women, but if they prove to be incompetent or morally deficient, she does not hesitate to dismiss them. After all, she runs a business, not a half-way house. Francoise hires Juliane as a cook.

Dancing Brook, age seven, has a French father and an Indian mother. When her mother dies, her stepfather delivers Dancing Brook to the man he believes is the girl's real father: Sebastien Girard. Dancing Brook is completely disoriented by the culture, and still grieving her mother. She is slow to trust Sebastien, even though he is clearly trying to reach out to her. But her new stepmother, Juliane, is just as clearly upset to have Dancing Brook join the family. The little girl has no idea how to fit into her new life.

Marguerite Rousseau, a young midwife from Paris, was forced to emigrate when she could not prove her employment to a press gang who caught her outside the city late one night after attending a birth. Once in New Orleans, she manages to put off marriage longer than most girls, since the work of a midwife is extremely valuable to a king trying to populate his floundering colony. She becomes good friends with Juliane and delivers her babies. (Marguerite is the heroine of book 3 in this series, *The Midwife Mademoiselle*.)

Plot Synopsis

Paris, 1720. For refusing an arranged marriage, Juliane Chatelet's father had her imprisoned in a house of correction in the notorious Salpetriere. But it was her interference on behalf of an inmate about to be molested by a guard which earned her the brand on her shoulder. Later, when she discovers that her family is on the brink of financial ruin, guilt assaults her. This could have been prevented if she had married her father's wealthy match for her. The cost of keeping her in Salpetriere means her father can't afford the medicine her mother needs. Raised as a gentleman and therefore unable to work a trade in Paris, Juliane's younger brother has joined the army and has been sent to Louisiana.

Desperate to help remedy the situation, the nineteen-year-old volunteers to be sent with the next shipment of inmates to French Louisiana, which is desperate for new settlers. Her father will no longer need to pay for her upkeep, and she'll be able to look for her brother Benjamin. But to her shock, she must first wed a male convict before embarking on the voyage.

With France once again at his back, military officer Sebastien Girard is assigned to keep order among the ship passengers on his return to his post in New Orleans. When he overhears Juliane mention her intent to find her brother Benjamin upon landing, he realizes she is the sister of a deserter he gave the order to execute.

In New Orleans, no one admits to having seen Juliane's brother. In addition, a few months later, Juliane's convict husband dies, leaving her pregnant and without provisions. Judging her by the fleur-de-lys on her shoulder, some people assume she killed him herself to be free, and they persecute her publicly.

Determined to make an honest living rather than succumb to the rampant trade of prostitution, Juliane is hired as a cook by the innkeeper Francoise. Sebastien's nemesis, Marc-

Paul Delsalle, poisons one of Francoise's customers for coming too close to the truth about illegal activity in which Marc-Paul is engaged. Since it happened at the inn's tavern, Juliane, as the cook, is once again blamed. Though there is no proof, Francoise dismisses her. Hope plunges.

From observing Juliane and from the letter Benjamin dictated to Sebastien before he was sent to his death, Sebastien doesn't believe her to be a criminal. He sees both strength and vulnerability in her and senses they have a mutual enemy in Marc-Paul. He proposes marriage as a business arrangement. Juliane struggles against distrust before she accepts. After all, the King had ordered her to marry, and to marry again if widowed. Sebastien needs a cook and housekeeper of his own—and wants provide her the security her brother might have, if he were still here. Over time, both Juliane and Sebastien long for more than a mere partnership.

Juliane almost dies delivering her convict husband's baby. Marguerite, the midwife, saves her life, but not the baby's. Sebastien does his best to comfort her in her grief, but she wonders if she is cursed and being punished. When she asks about her brother, Sebastien tells her Benjamin died of fever, thinking to spare her the disgrace of having a deserter in the family.

The Girards' marriage grows stronger, and eventually, Juliane conceives. During her second trimester, a seven-year-old girl named Dancing Brook is delivered to the Girard house. The Indian who brings the child says the girl's mother has died, and that it's time for Dancing Brook's real father to raise the "half-breed." Sebastien had no idea he had a child, but admits that it's possible. Years earlier, French soldiers had to winter with friendly Indian tribes to survive. There was much drinking, and Indian fathers offered their daughters to the soldiers as a form of hospitality. Sebastien, a teenager half out of his mind from hunger and cold, had stumbled.

Dancing Brook has no idea how to fit into her new family, and her "uncivilized" habits—indeed, her very presence—grate on Juliane. Though Sebastien vows he has long since repented

and is faithful only to her, she struggles against the bitterness of what feels like yet another betrayal. But if she brands him adulterous for one past indiscretion, she wonders, is she any better than those who judge her a criminal forevermore?

During one of Sebastien's deployments, Juliane's brother Benjamin arrives in New Orleans. They are shocked to see each other, and Benjamin is even more shocked to learn she has married the man who ordered his death. He says he escaped his sentence by running to Carolina with the help of Indians allied with the British.

When Sebastien returns, Juliane confronts him on the real cause of Benjamin's death until he confesses. The trust that had grown between them takes another blow. But Juliane now has her own secret to keep, having sworn to hide that Benjamin still lives.

Juliane gives birth to twins, with Marguerite's help. Dancing Brook turns out to be an indispensable help with the babies. Juliane and Dancing Brook learn that they need each other and have much in common: abandoned by their parents, uprooted and sent to a foreign land, and judged by the color or markings on their skin.

Sebastien has too many close scrapes out in the field and in New Orleans to deny that someone wants him dead. He fights against nagging suspicions that it could be Juliane, that maybe she really earned her brand with a capital crime. And now that she knows he gave the order for Benjamin's death, she has motive. Meanwhile, Juliane's secret makes her seem distant, but she, too, notices that Sebastien is in danger and worries for his life.

Benjamin makes a few more trips into New Orleans. Juliane begins to suspect her brother's motives as he pressures her to sail to Carolina with him.

During one of these visits, Dancing Brook learns that Benjamin has been collecting intelligence to sell to the British—intelligence which could put New Orleans in danger. When she

tells Juliane, Juliane races to find her brother before he leaves. At the docks, she follows him onto his ship, but is knocked unconscious shortly after boarding. When she wakes, she is locked in the hold of the ship, and sailing east, presumably toward British-held Carolina.

Benjamin comes to bring Juliane food, and explains that Marc-Paul had blackmailed him into spying for the British in return for his life. When Sebastien had givev the order for the execution, Marc-Paul had waived the sentence as long as Benjamin agreed to work for him as an agent selling intelligence to the British, and splitting the profits. Later, when Benjamin had threatened to stop, Marc-Paul had promised harm to Juliane. In fact, Marc-Paul had been responsible for Juliane's first husband's death as well as the man at the inn, both of whom were killed for coming too close to learning his secrets. Believing Benjamin had become sloppy on his errands and that Sebastien suspected their operations, Marc-Paul had also been plotting to arrange Sebastien's death as a necessary precaution. Benjamin apologizes, but says he cannot free her.

Meanwhile, Sebastien and his men are burning French-held Pensacola right before allowing it to return to Spanish possession. As they sail away from Pensacola, the weather worsens. A hurricane is on the way.

Sebastien spies Benjamin's ship sailing east and signals to it. Instead of cooperating, Benjamin's ship speeds away from Sebastien. Sebastien orders his own men to chase and open fire on the retreating ship.

The battle between the two ships gives way to a fight for survival against the hurricane thrashing them all. The water rises dangerously high in the hold where Juliane is trapped, but Benjamin frees her before she drowns. Benjamin is injured by a falling mast before they both tumble into the sea. Distraught, Sebastien spots them in the water and throws a rope to Juliane. She uses it to secure Benjamin to a floating mast, then spots Marc-Paul flailing in the water

within swimming distance of her. He is only using one arm, and she assumes he has been injured as well. So seriously, in fact, that without help, he will surely drown.

Juliane considers leaving Marc-Paul to his fate. The man deserves to die after all he'd done, she reasons. Ultimately, she realizes that allowing him to drown when it's within her power to help bring him to safety, would be murder. If she did that, she would truly deserve the brand on her shoulder. She struggles to his side and helps him onto a plank to keep him afloat.

Eventually, the storm relents, and they are all brought to safety. Juliane and Sebastien have an emotional reunion while Benjamin and Marc-Paul held under guard on Sebastien's battered ship.

When their ship finally drags in to the harbor at New Orleans, they find the town has been nearly completely levelled. They find Dancing Brook has kept the twins safe with the help of Marguerite. Just as the town must rebuild from the ground up, Juliane and Sebastien decide to rebuild their life together from the ground up as well. They make a new beginning for themselves, together with Dancing Brook and the twins.

For Juliane, the fleur-de-lys no longer holds the power over her it once did. She learns that those visibly or invisibly marked by judgment—including herself, Sebastien, Benjamin, and Dancing Brook—can be covered by indelible grace.

About The Author

Jocelyn Green inspires faith and courage as the award-winning author of ten books to date, including fiction and nonfiction, with her eleventh set to release in the spring of 2016. A former military wife herself, she offers encouragement and hope to military wives worldwide through her *Faith Deployed* books and *The 5 Love Languages Military Edition*, which she co-authored with best-selling author Dr. Gary Chapman. Her passion for military families spills over into her fiction, as well. Jocelyn's Heroines Behind the Lines Civil War novels (River North Fiction), inspired by real heroines on America's home front, are marked by their historical integrity and gritty inspiration.

Jocelyn's first novel, *Wedded to War*, was a finalist for the Christy Award in 2013, won the gold medal from the Military Writers Society of America (historical fiction category), and third place in the Inspirational Readers Choice Award (women's fiction category).

Widow of Gettysburg, the second in the series, took the silver medal in historical fiction from MWSA. *Yankee in Atlanta* also earned a medal from MWSA this year, but whether it's gold, silver, or bronze will not be revealed until the conference at the end of September, 2015.

Jocelyn graduated from Taylor University in Upland, Indiana, with a B.A. in English, concentration in writing. She is an active member of the Advanced Writers and Speakers Association, American Christian Fiction Writers, and the Military Writers Society of America. She is a frequent public speaker.

Jocelyn lives with her husband Rob and two children in Cedar Falls, Iowa. Visit her at www.jocelyngreen.com, facebook.com/jocelyngreenauthor, and twitter.com/jocelyngreen77.

Sales History

Fiction:

Wedded to War (River North Fiction 2012): 12,326

Widow of Gettysburg (River North 2013): 12,550

Yankee in Atlanta (River North 2014): 5,495

Spy of Richmond (River North 2015): 4,000

Nonfiction:

Faith Deployed: Daily Encouragement for Military Wives (Moody 2008): 29,462

Faith Deployed . . . Again: More Daily Encouragement for Military Wives (Moody 2011): 7,800

Stories of Faith & Courage from the War in Iraq & Afghanistan (AMG Publishers 2009): 18,415

Stories of Faith & Courage from the Home Front (AMG Publishers 2012): 2,960

Military Wives' New Testament with Psalms & Proverbs (Zondervan 2012): 1,115

The 5 Love Languages Military Edition, co-authored w/ Gary Chapman (Moody 2013): 92,835

TOTAL SALES since 2008: 186,958 books

Platform

Because of her firm foundation in both fiction and nonfiction, Jocelyn is a sought-after public speaker across the country and speaks an average of fifteen times a year. Some of her venues have included the Seminary Ridge Museum in Gettysburg, PA; Marietta Museum of History in Marietta, GA; Iowa Reading Association Conference in Ames, IA; military events in Norfolk, VA; and various libraries, writers conferences, book clubs, and community events.

Her nonfiction books have also opened up opportunities in radio, such as the Focus on the Family Jim Daly Show, Building Relationships with Dr. Gary Chapman, Chris Fabry Live, Midday Connection, and Family Life Today. Her military-themed fiction rests securely on the broad platform she has built with her nonfiction military books and speaking.

Jocelyn frequently writes for Christian Fiction Online Magazine, BreatheConference.com, TheLaundryMoms.com, StartMarriageRight.com, and the Munce Group's *MTL More to Life*, in addition to her own Web site and blog tours through the Christian Fiction Blog Alliance.

As a homeschooling mother herself, Jocelyn has tapped into the homeschooling demographic. Her novels have been recommended as appropriate reading for history units on homeschooling blogs such as hecoa.com (Home Education Council of America), SoYouCallYourselfAHomeschooler.com, and others. Her free supplementary unit guides are designed for homeschooling parents and classroom educators.

Jocelyn's online presence includes:

- her Web site and blog: JocelynGreen.com: 900 blog and enewsletter subscribers
- Facebook.com/faithdeployed: 55,000+ fans
- Facebook.com/jocelyngreenauthor: 1700+ fans
- Twitter.com/jocelyngreen77: 530+ followers
- Twitter.com/faithdeployed: 970 followers
- Pinterest.com/jocelyngreen77: 1800+ followers