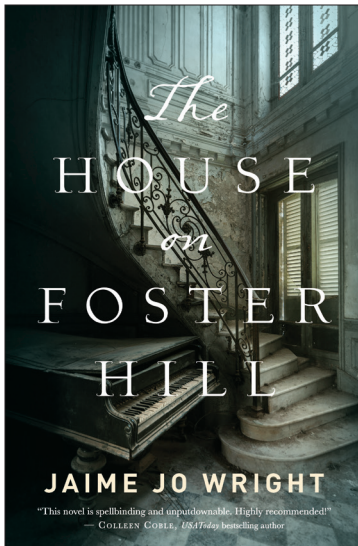




QUESTIONS & ANSWERS WITH JAIME JO WRIGHT



The House on Foster Hill

by Jaime Jo Wright

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1. Why did you write *The House on Foster Hill*?

I have always been fascinated by old things. Whether a building structure, old photographs, or antiques, such things make me feel as if time and history have been trapped within them, and if they could only speak, the stories they'd tell would be stunning. I really grabbed on to that saying "If these walls could speak" and envisioned an abandoned house with an unsolved mystery attached to it, one that spanned a century. How would that affect the generations? How might it create future individuals affected by a history they knew nothing about? So I determined to explore that idea in the telling of Ivy's and Kaine's stories, and most of all in the unknown life of a dead girl named Gabriella.

2. What faith message do you want readers to take away from your novel?

Hope! One of the central themes in the novel is asking questions like, "What is hope when life offers none?" And "Where does a person find hope in tragic life events that God could have stopped?" I want readers to travel through the gritty hardships of three women's lives and come to understand that our limited vision can underestimate God's far more magnificent vision. We must learn to look with hope beyond life's circumstances and to promises not limited by this world.

3. You mention on your website that you write "suspense stained by history's secrets." What does this mean?

I created that phrase when I was repeatedly asked what I wrote, and when I answered "suspense," I received questions about the FBI, police, murder investigations, and so on. So I wanted to define that my stories are far more vintage in nature, and that while there are present-day mysteries and suspense stories, they're all very stained and saturated with the secrets of the past.

4. In many suspense novels, the victim of a murder is merely a launching point for the story. Why, in *The House on Foster Hill*, do you make the victim such a central and active part of the book?

It sounds weird, but Gabriella demanded to be the central figure of the story. She's the tie between the house, Ivy, Kaine, and the story that's aching to be told. Gabriella, as the victim, had as much to tell as the house on Foster Hill, and together their story unraveled in a unified tale.

5. Explain how romance can fit into a story as eerie-sounding as *The House on Foster Hill*?

The human story doesn't stop when mystery and suspense abound. Sometimes it is those circumstances that thrust individuals together and create an unbreakable bond. I enjoy incorporating romance as a subset to the mystery in my stories. Sometimes, honestly, a darker theme needs that lighter reprieve, and hope is laced throughout romance. Hope for a future, for love, and for belonging.

6. Do you personally relate to any of the characters you created in the novel?

I relate a lot to Kaine. I'm a fierce protector of those I love, but not so much for myself. I question myself often, have a very distinct awareness of common sense, and despise emotionalism in myself. Yet, in spite of that, I find I am far too often a bit irrational and inclined to respond from my heart versus my head. It's almost an unrealistic pairing, so I figured that if I must suffer with it, so would Kaine.