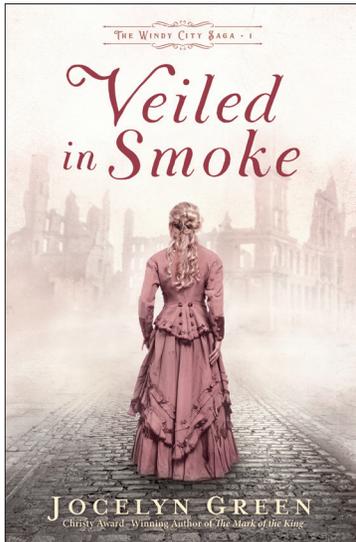


**QUESTIONS & ANSWERS WITH JOCELYN GREEN**



**Veiled in Smoke**

THE WINDY CITY SAGA #1  
by Jocelyn Green

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**1. Your last book, *Between Two Shores*, is set in colonial America and explores the Seven Years' War and the tensions between the British, French, and Native Americans. What inspired you to go a hundred years later into the 19th century and write about the Great Fire?**

I'm always looking for settings that are rife with conflict and great change, regardless of the century. The Seven Years' War certainly met that requirement, but I've always been fascinated by the Great Chicago Fire, as well. It was an unprecedented disaster that made 100,000 people homeless overnight—a third of the city at the time. Writing about the resurrection of the city, individuals, and families after such an event allows me, as an author, to explore themes of resilience, community, and faith in powerful ways.

**2. What kind of research went into this book?**

A lot, and I loved every minute of it. Aside from reading every book and article about the fire and its aftermath that I could find, I toured Chicago with a guide who designed the excursion based specifically on what I wanted to know and see before I started writing the novel. On the same trip, I spent time in the Chicago Historical Society's archives reading primary source material, such as letters, diaries, first person accounts of the fire, etc. Through the wonder of microfilm, I read newspapers published in Chicago during the weeks and months following the fire. An ongoing correspondence with CHS staff after I went home helped me fill in any blanks I had in my manuscript.

Other than the historical research, I also consulted with an art professor, a bookstore owner, a psychologist specializing in work with combat veterans, a surgeon, and a physical therapist to help me get other details right in my characters' personal journeys.

**3. Which character was your favorite to write?**

You know what I'm going to say—answering this question is like choosing a favorite between my actual children. But I will say the character who completely stole my heart was Stephen, the patriarch of the family and a veteran of Andersonville. After writing four books set during the Civil War (the HEROINES BEHIND THE LINES series) earlier in my fiction-writing career, it was really interesting to pick up with a veteran six years after the war ended and see how he and his family were doing.

In Stephen's case, they weren't doing great, and their struggle was gut-wrenching and isolating. By giving Stephen his own scenes, readers get to understand his mind and heart, as well as the Cook County Insane Asylum and its misguided methods treating what they referred to as "Soldier's Heart." The symptoms would be in line with what we now call PTSD.

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**4. This is your first novel in THE WINDY CITY SAGA series. Where do you see the series going from here? Are there other aspects of that time period and place besides those in *Veiled in Smoke* that you are excited to explore in your next books?**

I'm really excited about this series because we get to watch a family grow through three generations and see Chicago grow, too. *Veiled in Smoke* really is a family story, but it focuses more on Meg Townsend, one of the bookshop-owning sisters. Book 2 will be set in Chicago during the World's Fair of 1893, and it's the story of Meg's sister, Sylvie, who will be 43 years old when the story begins. Book 3 in the series will pick up with Meg's adult daughter, Olive, in 1915, which is when the Eastland Disaster took place in the Chicago River. Each book explores a seminal part of Chicago's history and how the Townsend family overcomes in the face of change and trials.

**5. Are the novels in this series classified as mysteries?**

Readers will discover that these novels have an element of mystery to them, but they remain firmly in the historical fiction genre. The main priority of the story, as ever, is given to the developing characters and the history-in-the-making around them.