



Mrs. Grant and Madame Jule

Jennifer Chiaverini

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The *New York Times* bestselling author of *Mrs. Lincoln's Dressmaker* and *Mrs. Lincoln's Rival* imagines the inner life of Julia Grant, beloved as a Civil War general's wife and the First Lady, yet who grappled with a profound and complex relationship with the slave who was her namesake—until she forged a proud identity of her own.

In 1844, Missouri belle Julia Dent met dazzling horseman Lieutenant Ulysses S Grant. Four years passed before their parents permitted them to wed, and the groom's abolitionist family refused to attend the ceremony.

Since childhood, Julia owned as a slave another Julia, known as Jule. Jule guarded her mistress's closely held twin secrets: She had perilously poor vision but was gifted with prophetic sight. So it was that Jule became Julia's eyes to the world.

And what a world it was, marked by gathering clouds of war. The Grants vowed never to be separated, but as Ulysses rose through the ranks—becoming general in chief of the Union Army—so did the stakes of their pact. During the war, Julia would travel, often in the company of Jule and the four Grant children, facing unreliable transportation and certain danger to be at her husband's side.

Yet Julia and Jule saw two different wars. While Julia spoke out for women—Union and Confederate—she continued to hold Jule as a slave behind Union lines. Upon the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation, Jule claimed her freedom and rose to prominence as a businesswoman in her own right, taking the honorary title Madame. The two women's paths continued to cross throughout the Grants' White House years in Washington, DC, and later in New York City, the site of Grant's Tomb.

Mrs. Grant and Madame Jule is the first novel to chronicle this singular relationship, bound by sight and shadow.

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