

# The Fate of Mercy Alban

by Wendy Webb

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## About the Book

Grace Alban has spent more than 20 years avoiding her childhood home, the stately Alban House on the shores of Lake Superior, for reasons she would rather forget. But when her mother's unexpected death brings Grace and her teenage daughter back, she finds more is haunting the halls and passageways of Alban House than her own personal demons.

Long-buried family secrets, a packet of old love letters, and a lost manuscript plunge Grace into a decades-old mystery about a scandalous party at Alban House, when a world-famous author took his own life and Grace's aunt disappeared without a trace. The night has been shrouded in secrecy by the powerful Alban family for all of these years. Her mother intended to tell the truth about that night to a reporter on the very day she died --- could it have been murder? Or was she a victim of the supposed Alban curse? Grace soon realizes her family secrets tangle and twist as darkly as the mansion's secret passages.

With the help of the disarmingly kind --- and attractive --- Reverend Matthew Parker, Grace must uncover the truth about her home and its curse before she and her daughter become the next victims.

Wendy Webb is the author of *THE TALE OF HALCYON CRANE*, the 2011 winner of the Minnesota Book Award for genre fiction, an Indie Next Pick from the Independent Booksellers Association, a Midwest Connections Pick from the Midwest Booksellers Association, and a Great Lakes, Great Reads Pick from the Great Lakes Independent Booksellers Association. She lives in Duluth, Minnesota.

## Discussion Guide

1. When you were reading the novel, how many times did you think you had figured it out but then had to change your assumptions? What did you originally think happened to Adele? What did you originally think happened at the party so long ago?
2. Grace came from a family of extreme wealth. Were you able to relate to her despite that? Why or why not?
3. Is there any part of Mercy's storyline that made you feel sympathetic toward her?
4. Redemption is a theme of this novel. Who is redeemed, and who isn't?
5. Did the romance provide a welcome distraction from the suspense?
6. Discuss the significance of the characters' names.
7. This novel includes a book-within-the-book. What did you think of that?
8. Wendy Webb mixes real-world danger with paranormal intrigue. Did that work for you?

## Author Bio

Wendy Webb is the bestselling, award-winning author of eight novels of gothic suspense, including *THE TALE OF HALCYON CRANE*, *THE FATE OF MERCY ALBAN*, *THE VANISHING*, *THE END OF TEMPERANCE DARE*, *DAUGHTERS OF THE LAKE* and *THE HAUNTING OF BRYNN WILDER*. Her stories are set in the Great Lakes region where writers haven't set gothics before, so reviewers have dubbed her the Queen of the Northern Gothic. Her books are sold worldwide have been translated into more than a dozen languages.

Wendy lives near the river parkway in her beautiful hometown of Minneapolis, where she's at work on her next novel when she's not walking one good dog and another who needs to work on leash manners.

## Critical Praise

This second novel by Minnesota Book Award-winning writer Wendy Webb has all the elements of a downright haunting story ? and it is. Be prepared to be scared ? and entertained."

? Minneapolis Star Tribune

"If you're craving a good old-fashioned ghost story to scare you on these cold nights, this is it. There's a big house with secret passages (think Glensheen in Duluth), a body that may have left the crypt, a beautiful apparition dancing on the lakeshore in the moonlight, a hidden manuscript, a book of curses and an old relative who may be insane."

? St. Paul Pioneer Press

"I haven't picked up a thriller/horror novel this good in ages. This is the kind of book that gets your pulse racing as you frantically flip to the next chapter to find out what happens."

? No Map Provided

"Webb is amazing at writing a spooky, gothic atmosphere that will chill you to the bone. This is definitely a novel you don't want to read late at night while you're alone."

? S. Krishna's Books

"Ghosts, witchcraft, family secrets, money and power, and pure evil run through this book. I certainly enjoyed it! A fun read and sure to keep you turning the pages. And you just have to keep reading to find out who the heck Mercy Alban is?you'll be fascinated by the story this author weaves."

? Bookalicious Book Reviews

"This is a first by Wendy Webb for me, but if anything else she writes is even remotely like this book then she has a devoted reader and fan in me. I was hooked from the very first page and I refused to let go. Honestly, by the time I reached the final page I did not want it to be over. I felt like I hadn't explored every hidden passageway and secret tunnel that Alban House held, and I wanted to spend more time there. I honestly have not read a book that kept my attention like this in a long time."

? Dwell in Possibility Books

"I was spellbound. Webb's novel had me hooked from the get go and I would not put it down until I had finished the last page."

? A Bookish Way of Life

"Webb has crafted a modern take on a classic genre - the Gothic ghost story. Family secrets, haunted houses, family curses with a little witchcraft thrown in as well. Webb's plotting is intricate and keeps us guessing with many red herrings and switchbacks on the way."

? A Bookworm's World

"Filled with multiple plot lines including a budding romance, family secrets, and a hint of the supernatural, it is hard to put this book down once you start reading. The ending to this tale almost leaves you to think there might be a sequel...and I would love that!!! I loved reading about the history of this house - all the secret passageways, the rooms, the porch and the grounds - this seems like a great house to live in. I love houses with so much history steeped in them - they just beg to have their stories told. And the characters were all richly developed - there wasn't one that I didn't like."

? Always With a Book

"**The Fate of Mercy Alban** is a chilling, good read! This book just might make you glad you don't live in an old, haunted mansion."

? Cheryl's Book Nook

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## **The Fate of Mercy Alban**

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