

Reviews for The Beautiful American

"This book grabs the reader's attention from the first page and won't let you put it down till you are finished. The author has done her research to match the story line into some actual historical characters and happenings, which helps make the story believable and captivating." --Jon Mattheis, The Kindle Book Review

"La Belle Americaine" is a phrase often repeated in this story. It appears in the diary which Abby Long finds hidden in a beautiful antique desk she buys at auction. But it isn't used to describe the person I believe is the truly "Beautiful American" in this story.

Jasmine is a slave who providentially comes to live on the plantation of James Monroe around the time he serves as ambassador to France.

This story is about slavery only incidentally. Mostly it's about true freedom. The polar characters Gabriel and Jasmine exemplify two kinds of bondage. Gabriel rebels violently. He has reason to be bitter. But Jasmine serves cheerfully and dutifully. Jasmine asks for nothing but is given clothes, an education, and a privileged place in the household. The mesmerizing, powerful Gabriel seeks to take what he wants by force. Gabriel insists Jasmine is "his girl" and he is coming for her someday.

Andre is a charming example of the right kind of man, a rare thing in modern fiction. His master demands a hole in the roof to get the right lighting for his artist's work. But Andre isn't above climbing up to plug it when they need to keep out the rain. He is a gentleman even while being a persuasive wooer. He has plans, and he's not just dreaming about them, he's working to make them a reality. His possibilities in the midst of Jasmine's insistence on impossibilities make the story that much sweeter.

The frame tale in modern times also includes a good man, Nathan Edwards. He's also a hard worker, decisive, able to make dreams come true and lead Abby to find a new life. James Monroe is also a good man, loving his wife, calling her his "champion," finding ways to make his whole family stronger and wiser and happier in subtle ways. -- Mary Findley, Author and Reviewer.