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1. Public School Classroom Excellence & Fair Teacher Pay
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5. Improve Local Traffic Flow Without Tolling Existing Free Lanes
6. Require Immigration Background Checks In All Jails Statewide
7. Oppose Obama's Government-run Healthcare Proposal
8. Lower Electric & Gas Utility Costs
9. Lower Healthcare, Auto and Homeowner Insurance Costs
10. Lower State College & University Tuition Costs
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12. Protect Private Property, Gun Owner & Homeowner Rights
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reading room

Plano author spawns urban fantasy series

IT'S NO GRAVE SECRET that America's youth have been bitten by the vampire bite since the release of *Twilight* and *The Vampire Diaries*. Well, beware! The Sabina Kane series, written for a mature audience, promises a heart-stopping journey into the paranormal realm. The second book in the series, *The Mage in Black*, releases April 1.

Written by Plano author **Jaye Wells**, the series spotlights Sabina Kane, a half-vampire, half-mage assassin who is caught in the middle of a brewing war between two races, vampires and mages. (Mages are magicians.)

"Coming from mixed blood, Sabina is an outcast and she is thrown into a profession that marginalizes her," said the author. "Assassins are enforcers under the control of the Dominae. When Sabina is asked to kill someone—a friend of hers—she begins questioning her loyalty to the Dominae. Will Sabina join the mages? Book 2, *The Mage in Black*, is the fallout of her decision."

The Sabina Kane series falls under the urban fantasy genre, and while sparks fly between Sabina and a mage, the author explained that her books are not romance novels. "In a romance, you have a happily-ever-after and some of the characters that are mentioned in the first book are probably mentioned in more detail in the next; whereas in urban fantasy, readers follow one story over a span of books. Sabina Kane is the main character in Book 1 as she is in books 2 and 3."

To better understand the context of Sabina's story and her dysfunctional family history, Wells recommends reading Book 1, *Red-headed Stepchild*.

The urban fantasy genre grabbed Wells for its compelling mix of folklore and mythology set in modern day reality. At first, the author had hesitations about writing books about vampires because she didn't want people to presume she was dark and Gothic. "Obviously I'm not," she said. "I'm a mom to a 7-year-old and I live in the suburbs."

Wells has lived in Plano for five years. She worked for a publishing company writing and editing magazines before switching to fiction. "I talked about writing fiction forever and I finally did," she said.

Wells credits her art history degree from Southern Methodist University for the symbolism found in her books. For example, the vampires in the Sabina Kane series all have red hair, which is taken from folklore and the Bible. "After Cain killed Abel, he was punished by God and sent out to wander alone for the rest of his days," said Wells. "God marked Cain so that no one would kill him, thus he regained his immortality in a sense. People debate what this mark actually was. Some say it was red hair..."

Because Sabina comes from mixed blood, she has black hair with red streaks. She also has an 8-pointed star birthmark, another symbolic trait. "The number 8 represents rebirth and regeneration," says Wells, then jokes, "I had it first." (Wells has a tattoo of the star.)

The author's wit is conveyed in her books through funny one-liners from Sabina's minion Giguahl, a scaly green demon with horns. "Giguahl gets the best lines," said Wells. "He keeps the plot from getting too heavy." (You can follow Giguahl on twitter.com/giguahl. No joke.)



Author **Jaye Wells**. Profile photo

AUTHOR, AUTHOR

Whom does the author credit for her wicked sense of humor? "I made a pact with the devil," she teased. "My dark master feeds me witty lines through my dental fillings."

Reverting back to the recent hype about vampire books and movies, perhaps Wells explains it best by examining her own writing: "I use very potent metaphors to address the human fear of death. Because vampires are immortal, they're fascinating archetypes and people are drawn to that forbidden side," she said.

"Plus, these kinds of stories are giving us new fairy tales. We're taking these fantastical elements and super powerful beings and putting them in our modern-day world. If you like stories about personal growth, if you like a love interest, if you like a thriller plot, that's all there. That's why I like writing urban fantasy. There's no formula to it. I let my imagination run wild."

For more information on Jaye Wells, visit jayejwells.com. She will be a panelist at ConDFW, a literary science fiction and fantasy convention February 12-14 at the Crowne Plaza Suites Hotel in Dallas. —

BRIT MOTT

excerpt

From *The Mage in Black*

I was turning toward the front of the store when three redheads came around the back of Adam's car. My heart sputtered and then kicked into overdrive. How'd they find me so fast?

...After a few days on the road with no sign of trouble, I'd grown complacent, and now I was about to fight three assassins armed with nothing but the pair of apple wood chopsticks that held my hair back. Awesome.

The mortal man behind the counter wore a red smock with a name tag that read "Darrell." ...I flashed my fangs and pulled him bodily across the counter. "Get the hell out of here!"

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