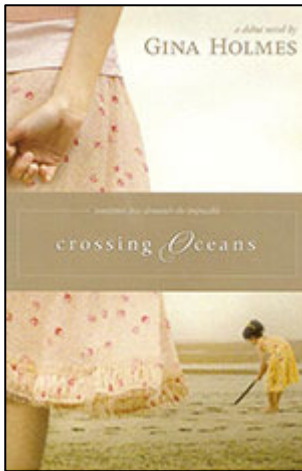


Readin' & Writin' with Lauraine- June 2010



Where oh where has our spring weather gone? Oh where oh where can it be? Snow last Sunday, and then rain on Memorial Day weekend. I've heard the oldsters say it once snowed here on July 4, but I have to tell you, this weather is really strange. Even so, my peony buds are getting fatter, the roses are starting to perfume the breeze, and my irises are living up to their name of flags. I do love spring.

While all the outside work doesn't allow me a lot of time for reading, I want to tell you about a new author Gina Holmes and her novel, *Crossing Oceans*. I read it for an endorsement some time ago, but I wanted it to be available in bookstores before I told you about it.

This is a superb story. I love the characters, especially five-year-old Isabella who calls all grandparents, Cowpa. Her mother, Jenny Lucas, is the lead character who has dug herself a hole by not telling the man she once loved that he has a daughter. She had all kinds of valid reasons then, but now this single mom has terminal cancer and has returned to her childhood home to make sure her daughter will be loved and cared for.

Laughter and tears are strong components of a great story and the reader will find both in this novel. At the core, this is a love story; a mother's love, a father's love, grandparents also. The story calls all the characters to grow into the kind of people needed to love this little girl.

I'm looking forward to Gina's next book. She has a big job ahead to equal *Crossing Oceans*.

Writers need to read books like this one to study how to evoke emotions in their readers. How to build the intensity without becoming redundant. The only way to learn this is to either experience the emotions yourself or to read how other authors accomplish this important task.

Which brings up the writing concept of *show not tell*. Telling, in this case, would say Jenny was sad, afraid, angry or relieved. Those are all good words, but the best words create a picture by showing what sad or afraid look like.

When Jenny takes to her bed from the pain and yet tries to maintain the status quo for her daughter, we see her tough core and her great love for Isabella. Love conquers all. In this story we see that in action.

To learn how to show emotions, writers need to look at their own body and what it does when caught in that emotion. Watch other people. Watch movies in slow motion to see what is happening. What does the body do when one is angry? Or sad? Or happy? Show this in your writing, and you will have a better chance with editors and develop faithful readers who'll keep coming back for more.

The more you study people, practice feeling the emotions yourself and then write what you feel, the better a writer you will become.

If any of you feel like a trip to the Midwest, the play *Bound for Blessing*, based on my *Red River of the North* series will be performed in Drayton ND, the second and third weekends in July. Check my [Schedule](#) page for details.

Until next time,

Happy readin' & writin' from Lauraine