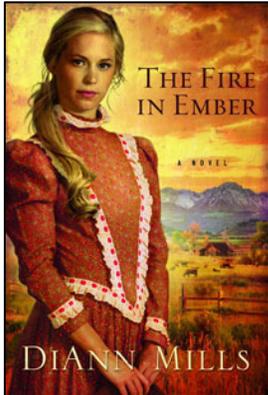


## Readin' & Writin' with Lauraine- March 2011

I have two wonderful books to tell you about this month.



Quite some time ago, I reviewed a great story, titled *A Woman Called Sage*, by DiAnn Mills. I loved that book and have just finished reading the sequel, *The Fire in Ember*. The funny thing is I didn't realize it was a sequel until some familiar characters popped up.

Some writers make a person want to read everything they write, and DiAnn is one of those, because she keeps getting better and better. You cannot help but continue reading when the opening line is, "A hanging is no place for a woman" and there isn't a woman in the scene, or at least it seems that way. Then the author refers to Bert, the character being hanged, as "her." Ah, there *is* a woman present! And she is accused of stealing the horse she is riding.

Bert, also known as Ember, is one closed-mouthed character, fighting to stay alive and stay on the run. Enter John Timmons, rancher and deputy, whose middle name is responsibility.

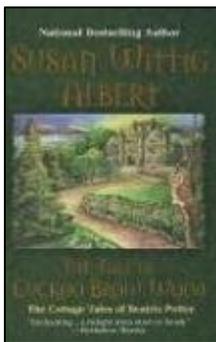
John doesn't care for vigilante justice. He'd rather be home running the family ranch and making sure his brothers grow up to be decent citizens than enforcing the law. His father died some years earlier and his mother, Leah, has her hands full with her house full of sons.

When John brings this young woman home to work off the money he paid to save her life, conflict grows between the brothers. More secrets to wonder about, like whom is Bert running from and why? Which one of the two men courting Ma is for real? And of course, will they catch the bad guy?

I loved the characters and rooted for them all the way through a story that I wasn't sure was going to end the way I hoped. *A Fire in Ember* is filled with intrigue, cattle rustling, dead and wounded characters and questions about who is the real villain, along with a fine romance. I highly recommend this novel. Like me, you won't want to put it down. Three cheers for DiAnn Mills.

I found my second book during a road trip through Arizona.

If you ever get to Benson, east on I 10 from Tucson, make sure you drive out to Singing Winds Ranch and visit its wonderfully unique bookstore. Min, a character in her own right, owns the store and will give you a tour. She has bookshelves packed with every kind of book imaginable, and she knows where they all are. She also knows Arizona writers and introduced me to more of them than I had planned on. Do yourself a favor and don't hurry this visit.



If you loved the Miss Potter movie and Beatrix Potter's delightful books, you will really enjoy Susan Wittig Albert's series, *The Cottage Tales of Beatrix Potter*. Set in the early 1900's, the main character is author Beatrix Potter now turned sleuth.

*The Tale of Cuckoo Brow Wood* is set in an English village with a host of whimsical and entertaining characters, including animals that talk amongst themselves but cannot converse with humans, although they do understand the language.

Susan's marvelous imagination brings in all the flavors of both the period and Miss Potter herself. She has written several mysteries, both alone and with her husband, so how come I've never heard of her?

You can bet I will find and read the other Miss Potter books and then delve into as many of her novels that I can find. I am so glad Min told me about her.

I am making my way through the rest of the books I brought home and looking forward to stopping at Min's bookstore again, perhaps to sign books that I have written.

Every once in a while I ask my readers on Facebook what they are reading. Sharing book titles and recommendations is a wonderful way to make new friends of both the living kind and the book kind. If you've read a good book lately, let me know [on Facebook](#). I'd love to hear about it.

Until next time,

*Happy readin' & writin' from Lauraine*