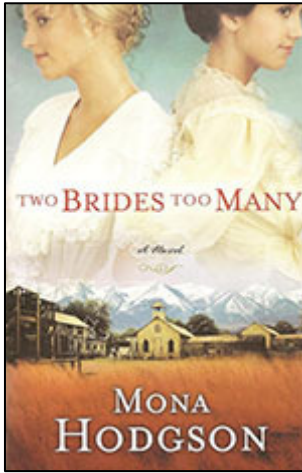


Readin' & Writin' with Lauraine- May 2010



Two Sisters. Two missing partners. These lines on the back cover of author Mona Hodgson's new novel snagged my attention immediately. Of course that's what back cover copy is supposed to do, and for *Two Brides Too Many*, it really worked. The title raised questions as well. Two sisters travel to a mining town in Colorado as mail order brides during my favorite time period, the late 1800s. What could possibly go wrong?

I'm more acquainted with Mona Hodgson as a children's writer, and I have many of her picture books on my shelves, but *Two Brides* is her first foray into adult novels.

I thoroughly enjoyed the two Sinclair sisters, Nell and Kat, who arrive in Cripple Creek Colorado only to not be met by their intended husbands. Nell, the romantic, and Kat, the pragmatist, set about to build themselves new lives far from their home in Boston and locate the men, who had written to them and paid for their train tickets.

These are plucky heroines, and I enjoyed the humor in this story. I also love romances, although the men in this novel made me wonder at first if they would ever become heroes. These characters needed lots of life changes to bring true love to the story!

So often I've mentioned that a writer must use their own experiences to bring life to the characters they write about. Mona is the eldest of four sisters, which gives her a wealth of information to draw on for this series titled *The Sinclair Sisters of Cripple Creek*. The interaction between the sisters is one of the delights of this novel.

I have used my farming background in the various “Blessing books” as the Red River series have been affectionately dubbed. Baking bread has always been a beloved chore for me, and people have to bake their own bread in the books set in the fictional town of Blessing, ND.

My love of horses helped me write my two series of books for young teens. If I'd never had dogs or cats, those animals most likely would not have appeared in my stories. All the parts of life go into creating novels. Jack London said writing a novel takes six months and a lifetime. How can one write about love if they have never loved or been loved?

Great stories can be made of ordinary people living extraordinary lives. As a writer, you create people and set them on their adventures using the question: *what if?* Such a marvelous question. I use it all the time to turn the lives of the characters in my current book every which way imaginable.

There are hummingbirds in the book I am rewriting right now. I love hummingbirds. And now that the orioles have arrived, I need to write about spring so I can include them.

Until then, join me on Facebook. Just type in my name in the Facebook search and I'll come right up. We'll talk about books and reading and eating chocolate bunnies and all kinds of interesting things. Maybe we can also talk about what books have you been reading lately? I hope you have a good long list.

Also, speaking of fun things to talk about the Bound For Blessing stage will be performed in Drayton, ND this July. You can find more information on my Schedule page.

Until next time,

Happy readin' & writin' from Lauraine