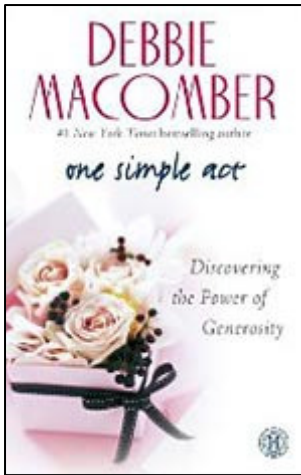


Readin' & Writin' with Lauraine- May 2011



Can you believe this: rain in mid-May, sleet last Sunday, and even a few snow flurries on Wednesday? I so loved those sunny days and then had to turn the furnace back on.

My roses are still recovering from the last frost. But one of the good things about all this winter-like weather is the deep watering it is providing for all of the trees, not just the ones on our sprinkler/drip systems but on the hills around us. Tehachapi is staying green longer.

I was planning on talking about another novel this month but I have a good habit, (not all of mine are good, so I rejoice in those ones I have), of reading a chapter in a learning book every night before I go to sleep.

Now a learning book can be either fiction or nonfiction that stimulates one's personal development, inspirational growth, business success or something else. The good thing about a nonfiction book is that I don't usually come to the end of the chapter and want to know what happens next and then fall victim to the keep-on-reading bug.

I do work hard on the novels I write to make sure that bug bites every one of my readers. Hmmm, sounds a bit like a double standard, doesn't it?

So, the nonfiction learning book I've been reading is by Debbie Macomber, whose novels I also read and enjoy, and is called *One Simple Act*, subtitled: *Discovering the Power of Generosity*.

Ah, the wisdom she crams into this slim book. She has long been a friend, but has also become one of my heroes.

This book is full of stories and advice taken from her own life. Debbie is a prodigious journal writer—keeping several at a time—including a prayer and devotional journal, gratitude lists, and a regular life journal. Oh and goals. She is a living example of the value of writing down your goals.

I loved the chapter titles, too, like the one called *Fleas, Footsteps and Checkout Lanes*, with the subtitle of: *The Springboard of Gratitude*. Or how about *Loaves, Fishes, and Miracle Math: The Mystery of Sharing?* Makes you want to read just to see what she's writing about.

Every night as I read and pondered the next chapter, I thought of ways that I too could become more generous. Debbie cites basic things like sharing your time, giving compliments, doing good deeds and listening. Now I've thought of feeding the homeless and sharing possessions, but her ideas go so much farther and can be implemented with your family, with your friends, with those around you, and those people just passing by.

Probably the most easy and possible one of all, is smiling. I know some days even a smile is hard to come by. But so many simple things, like a smile, will be passed on by the recipient and bless others you don't even know.

One Simple Act helps us remember the good deeds people have done for us throughout the years, too. Not only people who love us, but others whom God has prompted and those who did good deeds anonymously.

The amazing thing is that God does indeed multiply what we have to give as we give it away. For example, the Bible story of the little boy and his lunch of bread and fishes that fed 5,000 men. Mind you, that number didn't include the women and children, and they ate too and helped gather up the baskets of leftovers.

If you want a life enriching book that is both easy and delightful to read, get *One Simple Act* by Debbie Macomber. Follow her suggestions and see what happens with your life.

And if you've not yet picked up *On Hummingbird Wings*, my latest novel, give it a try. My hope is as always, that you will laugh and cry and hopefully want more when the book is done.

Until next time,

Happy readin' & writin' from Lauraine