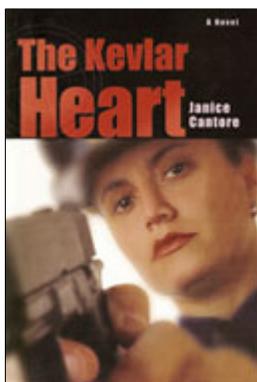


Readin' & Writin' with Lauraine- September 2007



Finding a new author is exciting, whether that new author be only new to me, or new to everybody. This month's novel, *The Kevlar Heart*, by Janice Cantore is a first book and promises others to come.

Janice's writing grabbed me from the first line and when I put the book down, I had to catch my breath---and applaud the surprises and twists along the way.

The character, Brinna Caruso, is a police woman with a canine partner. Their mission is to find abducted children and bring them home; alive preferably, or dead if that is all that is possible---but to find them and bring them home either way. When she's paired with an officer who might be at the end of his rope, Brinna can't let go of her mission, even if it costs her everything.

Janice Cantore is a retired police officer, so she knows of what she speaks and the story rings true because of her insights. She lives here in California and loves her own dogs and hiking the Sierras.

So what can we learn from her writing?

Contrary to the rumors we hear, publishers are still publishing first books, *The Kevlar Heart* is such a one and every author had a first book at one time. You could well be the next one.

"Never give up" is a phrase I use a lot when teaching and coaching writers. Too many people catch a piece of the dream but can't hang in there long enough or keep rewriting often enough to finally see a book they wrote in print. Some of my best students couldn't handle the rejections that preceded the victory.

Perseverance and out and out stubbornness are attributes needed to make it in this industry. I know keeping on can be hard. When you send your work out to an editor, you are also sending a piece of yourself. Learning that rejection of your work is not a rejection of you is a tough lesson. One that must be relearned with each submission. To continue writing without a contract takes monumental drive and determination.

Writers laugh about papering walls with rejection slips, I know I do and I could have papered a wall, but the dream is worth it. Holding your published book in your hands is a thrill worth all the slogging to get to that point. So, if you dream of having a book of yours published, dig in and keep putting your fingers on the keyboard and piling up the pages. Rewrite, find someone to read for you and rewrite again, as many times as needed. Let your stories grow in your head and flow out through your fingers. Stephen King says "a good writer writes for four hours a day and reads for six." The two go hand in hand.

My latest contemporary novel, *Breaking Free*, came out in August and I can guarantee you that the thrill of holding the first copy of your new book does not dim, no matter how many you have written. Perhaps I'll get to review your book one of these days.

Until next time,

Happy Readin' and Writin' from Lauraine