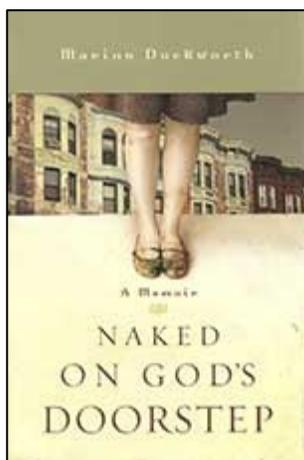


Readin' & Writin' with Lauraine- September 2008



Memoirs, memoirs everywhere, some great reading and helpful, others made up and passed off as real. I'm beginning to think that the more flamboyant and outrageous the story, the bigger the chance the author took extreme literary license, or, in other words, made it up.

Not so with *Naked on God's Doorstep* by Marion Duckworth. She lived every minute of her story and re-lived it to put it on paper. I know this to be true for I know the delightful and amazing woman herself. From the tales of when she was a small girl in a cockroach infested tenement, the daughter of "Crazy Izzy", Marion knew what it meant to be abandoned and get by with nothing. Hers is the story of longing to be safe someday.

But Marion wove other peoples' stories in with her own, taking this book beyond the memoir genre so she could share practical helps with those on similar journeys. Her life, along with her husband John, has been lived in the service of others, because she learned that God is her very own father, and would never leave her.

With heart breaking honesty she shares her hurts and the redemption that came to save her, but she is never maudlin, overly sentimental, nor preachy. Readers get to go along with Marion as she marries, has children and finally throws a party in honor of her mentally ill father and others with similar disorders.

I love the book and I love the story and I love the encouragement I received from reading it. And now I get to share it with all of you.

That's one of the beauties of being a writer, both in books and columns. I get to bring my friends together and we can learn from and laugh with each other. Writers are somewhat peculiar people—ask the spouses or families of anyone who writes, especially for publication—we might look present sometimes, but our minds are off elsewhere. My

mind is often with my characters, or trying to figure something out, or making sure that I get whatever I heard or saw that intrigued me down on paper or film before I forget it.

I know I've mentioned journaling before. I didn't journal at first. I actually refused to consider such a thing for a long time, because I started diaries as a kid and never kept at it long enough to use up very many pages. Why pick up one more thing to fail at? Procrastinators are like that.

But when life got too rough to handle after our daughter died of cancer, journaling became a source of comfort, a place to vent without damaging someone else, prayers and tears and writing over and over again at times what I heard God saying. "I love you, I love you, I love you." Sometimes pages of those three words. Now my journaling covers all kinds of things: new ideas, dreams, memories, lists, prayers, devotions, jokes, dialogue I heard my characters saying, descriptions of things in my yard, the beauty I find all around me. The other day I wrote about rain. It rained here, a rarity in August in the desert, everything got wet and the trees with clean leaves, clapped for joy. The fragrance was like no other.

Journals can be invaluable for anyone and everyone but especially for writers. Even more so for those who might decide someday to write a memoir. Like Marion did.

Blessings on your autumn, and until next time,

Happy readin' and writin' from Lauraine.