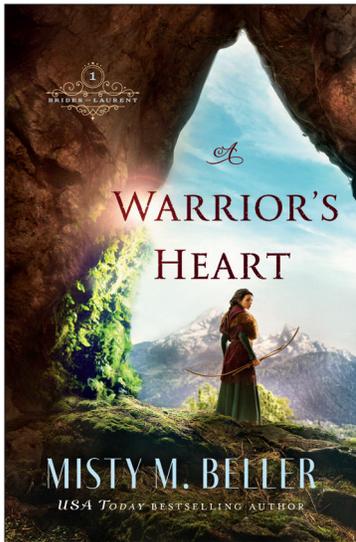




QUESTIONS & ANSWERS WITH MISTY BELLER



A Warrior's Heart

by Misty M. Beller
BRIDES OF LAURENT #1

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1. A village hidden in caves for over a century? How did you come up with the idea for Laurent?

I was listening to a historical podcast a few years ago that talked about the Vikings and the female warriors among them who would sometimes gain fame. As the hosts talked about the first Viking raids to North America, I started thinking, “What if one of those groups went farther west than any of us thought? What if they found the Canadian Rockies and lived there in a hidden community for centuries?” The thought took hold, and little by little, the idea for the BRIDES OF LAURENT series came to life. I eventually changed the village to be a French settlement named Laurent.

2. Which character in *A Warrior's Heart* is most like you?

Laurent’s primary warrior is a woman named Brielle Durand, who has worked hard to win her place as Le Commandant, leader of the Guards and Hunters. I’m definitely not an expert hunter or warrior, and I couldn’t hit anything with a bow and arrow to save my life, but I love Brielle’s strength and wit and also how real her personal struggles became as I wrote her character. No matter how strong she seemed to those around her, she still struggled just like I do. She second-guessed herself and had to “fake it until she made it,” as we say today. She was wrong sometimes and struggled to own up to her weaknesses. Those scenes definitely hit home as I was writing them! I could also relate to how much Brielle cared about her people, how important family and community were to her, and how much she was willing to give up for their protection.

3. In *A Warrior's Heart*, the hero Evan MacManus has been sent by the US government to find a mineral that would help create a massive explosion likely to help end the War of 1812. Is that a real historic event?

Well . . . yes and no. The explosion I refer to in the book is similar to an atomic bomb, though probably not that large. Even before the War of 1812, scientists were learning the unusual radioactive capabilities of the mineral they called pitchblende, which we know today as uraninite. While they didn’t have the official names for what the mineral could do, the way the radioactive crystals would glow in the dark made it fascinating, even for the elite who wore pitchblende crystals as jewels. I can imagine that some of those scientists studying the mineral made discoveries about how rich in uranium certain forms of pitchblende could be and how when those uranium atoms were split under certain conditions, they would create a giant explosion.

During wartime, when so much happens behind the scenes, discoveries weren’t always shared with the world until much later. So, while I can’t say for sure that US scientists sent a spy to the Canadian Rockies to search for pockets of pitchblende, I can tell you the historic pieces were in place for that to be a possibility at the time, which allows us to use our imagination to journey with Evan on his mission that became so much more than any of them planned!

4. Will the other two books in the BRIDES OF LAURENT series take place in the village of caves or out in the wilderness?

Both! But there definitely will be more time spent in the snowy mountains. These wouldn’t be Misty M. Beller books without plenty of time spent journeying through the Rockies on a quest that God uses to draw the hero and heroine closer to Him—and to each other!

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