

How did you come up with the heroine for *Out of the Dark*?

- The heroine for the novel comes from personal experience. In the 1980's, I worked with a blind woman who ran the department for disabled students at a local community college. I admired how much she could accomplish in a day. While my heroine is not totally blind, she has limited sight. I wanted to challenge of writing about that experience.

How do you write so realistically? Your descriptions are so great, I feel I can reach out and touch objects as I read.

- Personal experiences bring realism. I write vividly of medieval times because of growing up with wash boards, home-made lye soap, canning, growing own food, feeding chickens, plucking feathers, reading and embroidering by candlelight. Growing up with an out house, a great aunt who had a root cellar, hand-pump for water and cooked on a wood-burning stove, an ice box and Saturday night baths in a metal tub with water heated on the kitchen stove with wash basins for sponge baths during the week provided me with a sense of everyday life in a 12th century home.

I find your writing style poetic, yet informative. How did you develop this style?

- I use the language I grew up with of the 1940's to give the formal, poetic style to my writing. I impart information clearly because of business and public relations writing experience. I want my writing to appeal to the reader who wants to savor the word, as well as scan the text. Those with nostalgia for things from the 40's through 80's will feel at home with my writing style.

How did you choose the setting for *Out of the Dark*?

- Ainsworth is an Anglo-Saxon name originating in the 900's, having its own coat of arms with the motto "Courage Without Fear". That is why I made the dominant culture Anglo-Saxon for my heroine. For conflict, the hero is Norman.