



I was absolutely thrilled to hear my friends in New Zealand were going to have their very own Woman of Courage Award. I get so many wonderful letters from readers in N.Z that I already feel really attached to you. I have one reader in Tokoroa who embroiders me cards and pictures! But this will make me feel you are all my extended family.

When I came over to New Zealand, which must have been ten years ago, it rained for the whole week, and I had flu! But I still had a great time and when I think back on it, aside from the fantastic scenery, and the enthusiasm for my books, what I remember most was the kindness shown to me, because I wasn't well. Because of this I have always wanted to come back and maybe even set a book there, and perhaps this award will be what spurs me on to do it.

I am quite sure that you'll get some amazing women nominated for the awards, and it will be interesting to see if they are similar in content to the stories here in England. I certainly shed a few emotional tears over our nominees. But I would imagine as you all come from pioneering stock, your ladies might be even braver and more incredible. I shall be really looking forward to reading them and picking the winner.

I wish you lots of luck with the competition and I shall be eagerly awaiting the shortlist.

Love and best wishes

Lesley X

[click here to nominate](#)