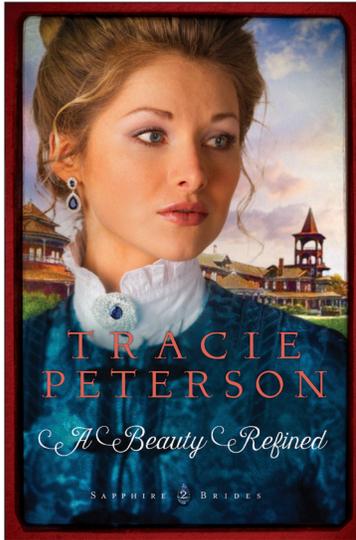




QUESTIONS & ANSWERS WITH TRACIE PETERSON



A Beauty Refined

SAPPHIRE BRIDES #2
by Tracie Peterson

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1. How did you come up with the idea for this story?

A Beauty Refined is an idea that came to me after reading about the Broadwater Hotel and Natatorium in Helena, Montana. The place isn't there anymore, but it was designed to be this wonderful spa getaway that they hoped would entice the royal heads of Europe. Sadly, no one really thought about how hard it was to get to Helena, Montana, in the late 1800s and early 1900s. So this setting coupled with the development and growing popularity of Yogo sapphires in the early 1900s gave me so many ideas that the story just seemed to grow naturally out of that.

2. What else can you tell us about the book?

A Beauty Refined is set in the early 1900s in Helena, Montana. The heroine is a beautiful German woman who grew up without her mother. Her father is a harsh man but generally generous toward the heroine. However, he has a bevy of secrets he's keeping, and as these begin to unravel, the heroine finds her life threatened, and only the hero and her heavenly Father can see her through. The hero is a lapidary who cuts and refines the Yogo sapphires. He has his own secrets and finds giving his heart and trust to be very difficult.

3. So what is the spiritual theme of the story?

Basically I wanted to show how lies destroy. Several of the characters are victims of deceit and others are the perpetrators. I wanted to show how deception can deeply wound—sometimes irrevocably—the people who are deceived. So many people are motivated by deception and inevitably it catches up with them, taking others down with them. I wanted to reveal also how most people think that just a little selfish lie here or there isn't a problem. All lies, no matter how small or big, separate us from God and destroy trust. This story deals with that over and over. I also made the hero of the story a lapidary and used his work to cut, refine, and polish the Yogo sapphires to allow the light to be reflected through them and reveal their highest beauty as a symbolic tool. God refines and cuts us to be able to reveal the light of Christ, which makes us more beautiful. If we don't reflect the Light, we fail to reach our highest potential.

4. Did you do anything special to research for this book?

Yes. I went to Helena, Montana. The Broadwater Hotel and Natatorium is no longer there, but the land where it stood is, and there were a great many people who knew about it. There were also a lot of pictures, and as I researched, I found it all so amazing. The hotel was quite remarkable, built in a hunting-lodge fashion in the 1890s. However, the Natatorium was the real gem. It contained a swimming pool 100' x 300' with a 40-foot waterfall at one end. The entire pool was hot springs fed, and the architecture was Moorish. Considering this was in the middle of western-styled Montana, it was quite unusual.

5. Anything else you'd like the readers to know?

This is book 2 in the SAPPHIRE BRIDES series; however, each book is unrelated to the other except for the Yogo sapphires unique to Montana. I had such fun researching the Yogos and the Broadwater Hotel and hope the readers enjoy this little slice of Montana history.