



TRACIE PETERSON

PICTURES OF THE HEART

2

Finding Us

PICTURES OF THE HEART

Remember Me

Finding Us

THE JEWELS OF KALISPELL*

The Heart's Choice

LOVE ON THE SANTA FE

Along the Rio Grande

Beyond the Desert Sands

Under the Starry Skies

LADIES OF THE LAKE

Destined for You

Forever My Own

Waiting on Love

WILLAMETTE BRIDES

Secrets of My Heart

The Way of Love

Forever by Your Side

THE TREASURES OF NOME*

Forever Hidden

Endless Mercy

Ever Constant

BROOKSTONE BRIDES

When You Are Near

Wherever You Go

What Comes My Way

GOLDEN GATE SECRETS

In Places Hidden

In Dreams Forgotten

In Times Gone By

HEART OF THE FRONTIER

Treasured Grace

Beloved Hope

Cherished Mercy

THE HEART OF ALASKA*

In the Shadow of Denali

Out of the Ashes

Under the Midnight Sun

SAPPHIRE BRIDES

A Treasure Concealed

A Beauty Refined

A Love Transformed

BRIDES OF SEATTLE

Steadfast Heart

Refining Fire

Love Everlasting

LONE STAR BRIDES

A Sensible Arrangement

A Moment in Time

A Matter of Heart

LAND OF SHINING WATER

The Icecutter's Daughter

The Quarryman's Bride

The Miner's Lady



*Beyond the Silence**

*Serving Up Love***

*with Kimberley Woodhouse **with Karen Witemeyer, Regina Jennings, and Jen Turano

For a complete list of Tracie's books, visit traciepeterson.com.

Finding Us • Tracie Peterson

Bethany House, a division of Baker Publishing Group © 2023 used by permission

Finding Us



TRACIE
PETERSON



BETHANYHOUSE

a division of Baker Publishing Group
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Finding Us • Tracie Peterson

Bethany House, a division of Baker Publishing Group © 2023 used by permission

© 2023 by Peterson Ink, Inc.

Published by Bethany House Publishers
Minneapolis, Minnesota
www.bethanyhouse.com

Bethany House Publishers is a division of
Baker Publishing Group, Grand Rapids, Michigan

Printed in the United States of America

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means—for example, electronic, photocopy, recording—without the prior written permission of the publisher. The only exception is brief quotations in printed reviews.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Peterson, Tracie, author.

Title: Finding us / Tracie Peterson.

Description: Minneapolis, Minnesota : Bethany House Publishers, a division of
Baker Publishing Group, [2023] | Series: Pictures of the Heart ; 2

Identifiers: LCCN 2022053713 | ISBN 9780764237416 (trade paper) | ISBN
9780764237423 (cloth) | ISBN 9780764237430 (large print) | ISBN 9781493442089
(ebook)

Classification: LCC PS3566.E7717 F56 2023 | DDC 813/.54—dc23

LC record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2022053713>

Scripture quotations are from the King James Version of the Bible.

This is a work of historical reconstruction; the appearances of certain historical figures are therefore inevitable. All other characters, however, are products of the author’s imagination, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, is coincidental.

Cover design by LOOK Design Studio

Cover model by Dmitry Mosuzenko / Trevillion Images

Baker Publishing Group publications use paper produced from sustainable forestry practices and post-consumer waste whenever possible.

23 24 25 26 27 28 29 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Prologue

SALISH SEA ON BOARD THE *CITY OF CANTON*

MAY 1909

William Reed, Bill to his friends and family, stood at the rail of the ship and watched the distant storm move in. He worried about his sister-in-law, Amelia, who was eight and a half months pregnant and sleeping soundly in her cabin below. She had struggled with nausea throughout her pregnancy, and the rocking motion made it all the worse. Thankfully, their trip was only another day, then they'd reach Seattle.

Bill's brother, Wallace, was somewhere on the ship, no doubt ministering to a lost soul. He had been beside himself as to how he might help Amelia. She had finally told him to do what he did best—go share the Gospel. Wallace hadn't hesitated.

Bill had to smile at the thought of his brother preaching to the customers of the *City of Canton*. They might very well have a full-on revival meeting before reaching Seattle.

When his brother had determined that God was calling him to minister to the people in Alaska, Bill had eagerly

gone along. As a botanist, Bill knew Alaska would provide an entirely new classroom for him to explore. That had been nine years ago, and the experience had been marvelous. Bill had even managed to secure a contract to furnish a New York publisher with a book on Alaskan vegetation. That was the biggest reason Bill was returning to Seattle. He wanted to send his completed manuscript to the publisher and be able to more easily communicate with them regarding a new project he had in mind.

Wallace and Amelia were heading to Seattle to ensure Amelia had the best medical care possible for the delivery of her baby. The pregnancy had been difficult for her. After nine years of longing for a child, Amelia's pregnancy had been fraught with worries. The final straw that convinced them to go to Seattle was the worries of the midwife. The baby had still not turned. A breech delivery would be dangerous, and given Amelia's petite frame, the older woman wasn't even sure Amelia could pass a child safely. It had been a grave concern to all.

"I thought that was you," Wallace said, joining Bill at the rail.

"I was just watching the storm move in. I keep hoping it might shift to the far north and leave us and this part of the ocean undisturbed."

Wallace glanced in the direction of the dark, heavy line of clouds. "The waters are already picking up the effects. The waves are building higher."

"Victoria isn't that far off," Bill said. "I wonder if we might reroute to dock there for safety."

"I have no idea. I'm sure the captain must know what he's

doing,” Wallace said, his face taking on a look of concern. “I don’t suppose he would willingly risk our lives.”

“No, I’m sure he wouldn’t.”

The ship lurched, and the waves seemed to grow almost instantly. Bill grabbed hold of the rail, as did Wallace. The storm front seemed to pick up speed and race toward them.

“I suppose I should get below and see how Amelia is doing,” Wallace said. “I know the storm will scare her. She’s been such a good sport about everything, but this will be a bit too much.”

“She’s a good woman, Wallace. You’re blessed that God gave you such a wife. I wish He’d see fit to provide one for me.”

“He will in time.” Wallace reached out and touched Bill’s shoulder. “I know He has someone special for you. Someone who will love the things you love and be a good helpmate for you.”

“I pray you’re right. This loneliness is starting to eat me alive. I can only bury myself in my studies for so long before the longing threatens to suffocate me.”

A new voice interrupted their conversation. “Well, well. If it isn’t the man who killed my brother.”

Bill and Wallace turned to find Grady Masterson standing a few feet away. They’d been on this ship for days, but Bill hadn’t known that Grady was on board too. This was a most unpleasant surprise.

Wallace released his hold on Bill and crossed his arms. “You know full well that your brother was responsible for his own hanging. Had he not killed that man, he would never have had to face his own demise.”

“And had you not spoken up and told the court you wit-

nessed him committing murder, he would have walked away unscathed,” Masterson replied. He stepped closer to get right in Wallace’s face.

Bill could smell the liquor on the man’s breath and put his hand out to separate the two. “Come off it, Masterson. What’s done is done, and as sorry as I am that you’ve lost someone dear to you, I won’t stand here and let you pick a fight with my brother.”

“He deserves to suffer like I have. Like my brother did. You both deserve to die.”

The wind picked up, and a light rain began to fall. Bill noted that the storm was nearly upon them. “We should get inside. The seas are growing rougher, and the storm is only going to get worse.”

“That’s nothing to me. I’d just as soon the sea swallow you whole.” Grady’s eyes narrowed. “Somehow I’m going to make you suffer the same kind of pain I suffered as I watched poor Avery hang.”

“Grady,” Wallace began, “you need to turn your life over to God and trust that He will show you a better way. You and your brother too long relied upon anger and violence to resolve your problems. Threatening me isn’t going to bring you any satisfaction. Revenge seldom ever serves a satisfying purpose, but putting your faith in God will make you whole. You’ll know the peace that passeth understanding.”

The rain came in a deluge, and Bill grabbed Wallace’s arm. “Let’s get inside. Amelia will need you.”

The ship rose sharply as the wind blew stronger. The shoreline of tiny islands appeared dangerously close. Bill feared the ship might be tossed onto the land at any moment. He looked at Masterson. “Surely you must see the danger.”

“I was born for danger,” Grady yelled above the roar of the wind.

The ship was tossed back and forth as waves crashed over the railing. Bill pulled at Wallace’s arm but lost his grip. Then Bill felt the ship hit something firm. He imagined rocks tearing at the hull and the ship filling with water.

Without warning the ship’s whistle blew loud and steady, and everything seemed to happen at once. Several crew members appeared and yelled instructions. “Find your life vests. The ship is taking on water, and we must get everyone to the lifeboats.”

Wallace and Bill pushed past Grady and headed below to their cabins. Bill grabbed his life vest and boxed manuscript and headed to Wallace and Amelia’s cabin next door. Amelia was already trussed up in her vest, and Wallace was tying the straps over her expanded abdomen.

“Bill, get Amelia to the lifeboats and see that she’s safe. I’m going to see if there are others who need help.”

“No, Wallace, stay with me. I’m so scared,” Amelia begged.

He took hold of her face and pressed a quick kiss on her lips. “Bill will see that you’re safe. Now be brave. You have to do this for the protection of our unborn child. I’ll join you as soon as possible.”

She nodded, but Bill could see the fear in her eyes. “Come with me, Amelia.” Bill put his arm around her. “Wait, where’s your coat? It’s quite cold outside, and the rain will only serve to make it colder.”

Amelia pointed to where her coat lay atop the bed. Bill grabbed it. “We’ll see you at the boats, Wallace.”

“I’ll be there.” Wallace exited the cabin first.

Bill shifted the manuscript and then took hold of Amelia's arm. This way he'd have a solid grip. "Let's go."

They headed out of the cabin and into the chaos. People were yelling, some screaming. Many of the women were sobbing and clinging to whomever was closest. Bill knew it wasn't going to be easy to navigate through the mob, but he kept pushing forward with Amelia affixed to his side.

The ship was listing by the time they got on deck. It was easy to see that it was sinking fast. Bill directed Amelia to the nearest lifeboat and saw her safely seated despite the massive waves moving everything like toys.

A crewman took hold of Bill's arm. "It's women and children first. We'll board the men in a moment."

Bill nodded and fought against the wind. "Amelia, take this. It's my manuscript. Keep it safe for me."

"Where are you going?" she cried, her eyes wide in fear. "Come with me."

"I can't just yet. It's women and children first. Besides, I must try to help the others. There's a lot of confusion, and some of the people might not make it if someone doesn't intercede for them."

"But Wallace is already out there. Can't you stay and let him manage? I don't want to be alone."

Bill shook his head. "You're never alone, Amelia. God is with you, even now. You know that." He noted the number of the lifeboat. Number five.

She nodded and lowered her face. Bill wrapped her coat around her shoulders as the wind slammed icy rain against them. "Keep this on. I'll be back as soon as possible."

He didn't look back. He knew he'd never be able to leave

her if he did. She had become such a precious sister to him. It took everything he had to walk away.

Up ahead an elderly woman was knocked to the ground as the ship shifted again. Several people ran right over her as they hurried for the lifeboats. Bill reached her and helped her to her feet. “Let me help get you to the lifeboats.”

She nodded, but the dazed look on her face left no doubt that she was more than a little confused. Bill helped her reach the boats, then handed her over to a crewmember who helped her from there.

“Women and children first,” he told Bill.

“I understand. I’m just trying to help get them here.”

He took off and hurried down the deck to find the next person who needed assistance.

The entire situation took less than twenty minutes. Bill was surprised at how quickly the ship lost buoyancy and how fierce the storm remained. The crew called for men to board the lifeboats just as Bill spotted Wallace. He grabbed his brother by the arm.

“Come on. The ship has only seconds left, and we need to get the lifeboats away from the ship.”

Wallace nodded and joined Bill as they climbed into the nearest lifeboat. “Where’s Amelia? Why didn’t you stay with her?”

“I couldn’t. It was just women and children at that point. Besides, I had to help—just as you were doing.”

“Yes, but you left her alone? What boat is she in? Where are they?”

“She is in boat five. I’m not sure where they are, but they are likely already in the water.”

Wallace nodded as they moved away from the *City of*

Canton. The moonless night offered no comfort as the lights went out on the ship and she slipped beneath the black roiling water.

It was the next morning before they were picked up by other ships. An American ship picked up some of the survivors, including Bill and Wallace. A Canadian ship picked up some of the remaining lifeboats.

Bill and Wallace searched among the survivors for Amelia, but she was nowhere to be found.

“What boat was she on?” a crew member asked, checking a clipboard of names.

“Boat five,” Bill replied before his brother could speak.

The crewman looked up. His expression was grim. “I’m sorry. I hate to be the one to tell you this, but that boat and two others rolled over, and the people were lost.”

Wallace grabbed the man. “What did you say?”

“I said that boat five and its passengers were lost in the storm. We might never recover the bodies, but if your wife was on that boat . . . I’m afraid she’s dead.”



SEATTLE, WASHINGTON

JULY 1909

I don't know why you think being a Camera Girl is such a great job," Rosemary Connors told Eleanor. "You have to walk miles and miles every day—rain or shine, not to mention be in the middle of that deafening expo."

Outside, the morning traffic was starting to get noisy. Given their little apartment was in one of the busiest areas, it sometimes seemed as if the entire city was suddenly in their front room.

Eleanor Bennett laughed and closed the living room's single window. "But I love the expo. The Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition has so many great exhibits. I doubt I'll ever get through all of them, but it's a wonderful place to be. And I love being outside and meeting new people. But best of all, they have the most extraordinary flower arrangements. They've planted hundreds of thousands of plants, and it's beautiful. I've taken so many pictures of them for myself that I have to be careful not to spend more than I earn."

Her roommate shook her head. "I still think you'd be happier working in an office like I do. You already know how to type, and I could get you a job where you could sit instead of walk."

"But I love walking. I'm not like you, Rosemary. I love being outside and walking. I'm not happy cooped up inside. And don't worry. I wasn't serious about spending more than I earn. I get a huge discount for the film I use. You know I'm saving everything I can for my fall classes at the University of Washington."

"That's another thing. Why are you bothering to go to college? Why not just go to work for a nursery or botanist if you want to study flowers and such? I'm sure someone would hire you to work with them, especially since you can type." Rosemary studied the stocking she'd been working to mend, then resumed her stitching.

"I know I can't afford to go to college full-time, but if I just take a few classes, then I would be even more valuable to someone hiring me on. Besides, attending the university sounds like fun. Maybe I'll even meet a botanist there."

"I suppose it's possible." Rosemary finished her sewing and rose. "I need to hurry, or I'll be late to work."

"Me too," Eleanor said, shoving the last bits of toast into her mouth. "I'll see you tonight." She grabbed up her satchel and headed for the door. "Have a great time typing."

"Have fun walking," Rosemary giggled and called back.

Eleanor chuckled and headed down the flight of stairs to the building's outside door. She really liked Rosemary. From the moment Eleanor had answered her ad in the newspaper for a roommate, Eleanor had enjoyed Rosemary's nonsense attitude. All her life Eleanor had enjoyed a sort of

discernment about people who let her know up front if they were friend or foe, and Rosemary was definitely a friend.

Outside, the sunshine brought an immediate smile to Eleanor's face. It might rain this afternoon, as it often did, but for now everything was beautiful and bright. She prayed it would remain that way. It was hard to explore around the lake when it was pouring rain.

Making her way to the trolley, Eleanor hummed her favorite hymn, "What a Friend We Have in Jesus." It always made her smile to think of Jesus not only as her savior but also her friend. She boarded the trolley and continued humming softly as they made their way to the expo.

How blessed I am. I have this wonderful opportunity to work at an international fair and meet new people, plus get paid for it. Eleanor giggled, and the man sitting next to her looked over and smiled. She returned his smile. "It's a beautiful day, isn't it?"

The man nodded. "It is that. Are you heading out to see the exposition?"

"I work there as a Camera Girl," Eleanor replied. "We take photographs of the people attending the fair, and if they like them, they buy them as a souvenir. Are you going to the fair as well?"

"After a fashion. I'm one of the doctors who works there. We handle those who get sick or injured at the fair."

"Oh, that's wonderful. God bless you in your work. You are a very important part of the exposition. People should be very grateful for you."

"Fortunately, most do not even know I exist unless they have problems. It's probably best that way." He smiled. "I'll have to consider having my picture taken."

“Or buying a camera. The new Brownie cameras are quite a good deal. They take wonderful pictures and are very easy to operate. We’re selling them at Fisher Photography. You should stop in. Just tell them Eleanor sent you. We get a commission on each camera we sell.”

He chuckled. “Very well, Miss Eleanor. If I manage to make it over, I’ll be sure they know you sent me.”

Eleanor smiled and nodded enthusiastically before she turned her attention to the passing scenery. It was going to be a wonderful day. She just knew it.

At the gate, large crowds were already gathered to gain entrance as soon as the expo opened at eight o’clock. Eleanor presented her badge and was admitted without difficulty, although a few people called out protests.

“It’s the same every morning, eh?” she mentioned to one of the gate guards.

Most of the gate people recognized her long red curls flowing out from under her Camera Girl straw boater. She wore the regular uniform of a black skirt and long-sleeved white blouse with the high neckline. It definitely identified her as being a Camera Girl, even without her camera.

Fisher Photography was her first stop. She stepped inside to find several of her coworkers already preparing for the day.

“Hello all,” she said, smiling. “It’s a beautiful day for taking pictures.”

“That’s certainly true,” Pearl Fisher commented. “How are you today, Eleanor?”

“Very good. It’s just so pretty. As we made our way here on the trolley, I couldn’t help but thank God for my bless-

ings. Flowers are blooming, and the berries are ripening. It's all just about perfect."

"I thought so too," Mary Appleton replied. "I love the summer here."

Bertha Michaels agreed. "It's the best of times. Great for getting on the water. We were invited to go boating with some friends last night. It was such a grand time."

"How are you feeling, Mrs. Fisher?" Mary asked the expectant mother.

"I'm doing very well, thank you. The baby should join us toward the end of September and can't come soon enough for me. We've long anticipated being parents, and here I am at forty-five, and finally it's coming true."

"You'll make a great mother," Bertha said, picking up one of the cameras. "You mother all of us perfectly."

The girls laughed and grabbed the Fisher Photography cards to give to potential customers. On one side was the official seal of the expo—three women representing Alaska, the Yukon, and the Pacific—which made a nice souvenir. The other side advertised the Fishers' at the expo, as well as their downtown shop address. Eleanor tucked a bunch of these in her satchel and grabbed a camera that had been loaded with new film. She couldn't help but think about the way the flowers would look in the sunshine. Hopefully she'd get some time to snap a few pictures of them.

A couple of other girls arrived, and Pearl went around the room speaking to each one until she was finally back at Eleanor.

"I trust you're set for the day?"

"Oh yes." Eleanor gave an enthusiastic nod, sending her curls bouncing. "I'm quite excited to get out there."

“Just don’t make the vegetation your only subject matter,” Pearl said, smiling. “Although you have taken some amazing photos of the flowers. If they were in color, I think we could sell them for quite a bit.”

“Maybe we should try having May Parker paint a few.” The young lady in question had been brought on to highlight personal postcards with color should the customer want to pay the extra fee. It was becoming quite the popular thing to do.

“We could at that. Do you have some particular photographs that you would like her to paint?”

“I’ll take a few new ones and note the colors, then let her know the details.”

“Sounds good.”

Eleanor smiled and headed for the door. “Oh, Mrs. Fisher, I rode the trolley with one of the doctors who works here at the expo. He was very kind. I think if you should need medical help, he will be quite a blessing to you.”

“Well, thank you for letting me know. I hadn’t really even thought about needing help here at the exposition. I plan to quit before I get so far along that the baby might come, so hopefully I won’t have any need of him.”

“I hope not, but it’s nice to know just in case.” Eleanor all but danced out the door. She was always a more positive than negative person, but today it just seemed so easy to be happy.

“Thank You, God, for all of this.” She gazed at the exposition buildings and the crowds of people pushing past her in a swell of bodies. “Well, You know what I mean.” She laughed and put her camera around her neck. “I’m quite blessed to be here.”



Bill put the coffee on and then sat down to read through the newspaper. It had been two months since the sinking of their ship and Amelia's death.

And the loss of his manuscript.

After three years of intense and sometimes life-threatening work, to have lost his manuscript in the sinking of the *City of Canton* was almost more than Bill could bear. Of course, the loss of human life was much worse, and he mourned his pregnant sister-in-law more than his book, but it was still a loss that went deep. Nothing seemed right anymore.

A noise to his left momentarily caught Bill's attention. He lowered the paper and watched as Wallace moved around the room in an absent-minded manner. Since losing Amelia, Wallace had lost all sense of purpose. His anger at God had driven him from the pulpit and even his church attendance was forsaken. Bill hadn't known a time in their lives when they hadn't both attended church. They'd practically been born on the pew, given their mother was the organist and their father a trustee and elder. Now Mother was gone. Their father was living in the family house in Chicago. And Bill was attending church alone.

"You know, we ought to write to Father and let him know we're in Seattle."

"Why?" Wallace asked. "We didn't send letters that often from Alaska. For all he knows, we're still there, and he's not anticipating any news."

Bill didn't want to fight, so he said nothing but made a mental note to drop a letter off to their father. Though Bill had no plans to remain in Seattle much longer. He was just waiting long enough to hear back from the publisher. If they would grant him an extension to return to Alaska and

remake his manuscript, then Bill would leave immediately. If not, he wasn't sure what he'd do. Alaska was the only place that felt like home.

Seattle was definitely not where he wanted to remain. The big city was far too noisy and busy. Of course, the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition didn't help matters. That was bringing people in from all over the world, and the population of Seattle seemed to swell every day to new exaggerated numbers.

When they'd first arrived, finding a place to live had been almost impossible. Many of the regular apartments were now being rented out by the day for those coming to attend the expo. Bill had found a little church to attend, and while being introduced around, he mentioned their need of a place to stay. Thankfully, one of the elders had a place and agreed to rent it to them cheaply until they could figure out what they were going to do.

Of course, money had been something of an issue. Bill had been given an advance on the book, and although he'd been frugal with it over the years, it was nearly gone. They'd used the last of it for the ship tickets south.

Wallace had some money, but with that too dwindling, both men had sought jobs. Bill had approached the expo exhibit authorities, particularly those managing the Alaska exhibits. He got part-time work there leading tours and explaining the nature of Alaska's weather, vegetation, and native people. Wallace had surprised them both by taking a job at one of the local fish canneries. It was nothing that Bill would have ever expected his seminary-educated brother to do, but at least it got him out of the house and kept him from moping around and pacing in an endless fashion.

Bill gazed back at the newspaper. He spied the advertisement for passenger liners. There was one ship headed to Seward in two days. That was too soon, but just seeing the advertisement gave him a feeling of hope.

“As soon as I hear back from the publisher, I’d like to arrange to head back to Alaska. We need to save up enough to pay for the passage and some things we’ll need. Our friends up there will have kept our things in good order, so we won’t need much.”

Wallace gave him a hard look. “I’m never going back. Alaska killed Amelia.”

“You know that isn’t true. Alaska wasn’t to blame—it was a storm. Alaska is the one place she loved and the one place you are sure to feel her presence. Our friends there will make certain of that.”

“I already feel her presence, and it drives me mad. I’m consumed with guilt. I can still hear her begging me not to leave her.” Wallace put his hands to his ears. “I just want to forget everything.”

“No, you don’t.” Bill got up to pour himself a cup of coffee. “We’re brothers, and I know you better than you think. You’re afraid you will forget. You can’t bear the idea that you might lose the details of what you had with Amelia.”

Wallace lowered his hands and met Bill’s gaze as he returned to the table. “I can’t bear that she’s gone. Every morning when I wake up, I lie there with my eyes closed and pretend she’s beside me. I pray for it all to be a bad dream, but God has truly forsaken me and no longer listens to my prayers.”

“You know that isn’t true. God is still with us. We have

no way of understanding why things have happened this way. I'm as grieved and guilt-ridden as you are, but I know that God's purposes will be known in time. We must trust Him."

"I won't," Wallace said, pounding his fist into his hand. "I want nothing to do with Him."

"And what is the alternative? To put faith in yourself? In the devil? Instead of blaming God, we ought to recognize that the devil is the one to blame for interfering in our plans."

"But God could have stopped him." Wallace's words were matter-of-fact.

"Yes, He could have, but He didn't. Now what do we do with that?"

Wallace's eyes narrowed. "I'll tell you what I'm going to do. I'm going to forsake Him, just as He's forsaken me."

Bill shook his head. "I'm confident that will get you nowhere. Wallace, I remember you counseling people who went through bad things like this. You encouraged them not to try to figure out the hows and whys but to just rest in the Lord. You assured them that in time God would reveal to them what He wanted them to know. You must now trust that He will do the same for you."

"Enough. I don't want to hear any more. I'm going to work."

Bill shook his head. His own sorrow over losing Amelia and the baby was great, but at least they were in a better place. Wallace, however, was a whole different kind of loss, and he was definitely not in a better place.



That afternoon as Bill led a group of visitors around the Alaska building, he couldn't help but feel an increased longing to return to what had become his home

"Alaska is quite diverse. You have islands and mountains, vast forests, volcanic activity, shorelines that seem endless, and miles and miles of land where you could walk for weeks, months even, and never meet another human being."

He pointed to one of Frank Nowell's photographs of Nome. Bill had met Frank in Nome, where the man had a photography shop. He was now the official photographer for the expo.

"As you can see here in this photograph, the Nome harbor freezes over every winter. Ships can only come in or go out from about late May to early October. In this photograph, which was taken May fifteenth, the first ship of the year has arrived, but the ice is still in place. So they will sled the goods and people from the ship into Nome. It's not an easy situation to be sure because ocean ice is uneven, and a path had to be created to bring folks through safely."

A well-dressed woman in the front raised her hand, and Bill gave her a nod. "How thick is the ice?"

"On average four to six feet is normal with hummocks—raised areas—that can be as high as one hundred feet." The crowd gasped as he knew they would.

Bill continued to the next photo, smiling. Alaska was a place of wonder, and the people were right to be impressed. "Here we have a photograph from another part of the district."

"Why isn't it yet a territory?" a man asked.

"That's a good question. The District of Alaska would very much like to become a territory. I suppose it's just a

matter of time before it will be, but for now they remain a district, with limited rights.”

The rest of the tour went on in a similar fashion with Bill pointing out interesting facts about the artifacts and photographs. He was quite happy to share what he knew about the place he’d like to call his permanent home. The place he and Wallace had once said they’d like to grow old.

If only he could get Wallace to snap out of his mourning. It wasn’t that Amelia didn’t deserve their mourning. Bill was still very saddened at her loss, and the guilt he bore for having left her alone was acute. He doubted he would ever stop feeling guilt and sorrow for her loss. However, Alaska was the only place they really belonged. Their friends were there, as well as their work, and there was nowhere as beautiful.

When his tours were over, Bill headed to the lake. He walked along the shoreline and tried to figure out what, if anything, he could do to lift his brother’s spirits. He’d never expected this dynamic man of God to lose his faith so easily. Bill was certain it was still there, just buried deep beneath the anger and pain. Perhaps they should take a trip home to Chicago. Seeing their father might be of help to Wallace. After all, he knew what it was to lose the love of his life in death.

“I don’t know how to help him, Lord, but I know You do.” Bill murmured the prayer as he studied the vegetation. “Please show me what to do. If we should go to Chicago, make that clear. If we should stay put for a time, then help me to see the value of it. I want to go home, and I want Wallace to come too. Alaska is where we belong.”