

*The Fire Still Falls*  
**A Historical Novella**  
by  
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## *Abstract*

This novella traces the history of Pentecostalism – speaking in tongues, specifically – from the time of the Day of Pentecost in Jerusalem in AD 33 to the Azusa Street revivals in Los Angeles, California in AD 1906. The purpose is to prove that people have practiced speaking in tongues throughout the two thousands years since the Day of Pentecost. The story is told through the eyes of Blythe Lewis, a young reporter for the *Los Angeles Times* in 1906. Because of her belief that the Azusa Street revivals are a hoax, she is taken on a journey through time, under the guidance of Shiloh, an angel. After witnessing three time periods, Blythe returns to her own time with a different perspective.

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## *Prologue*

*June, 1906 -- Los Angeles, California*

Taking a deep breath, Blythe Lewis knocked on the office door in front of her. She had a bad feeling about this meeting with her boss, Spencer Montgomery, the editor of the *Los Angeles Times*.

*What could he want with me now?* She wondered, waiting for permission to enter. *A promotion, maybe? Doubtful. I've only been in this position since January. No, more than likely, he's got an opinion on that last Azusa article. Hmmph! Well...*

“Come in,” a sharp voice called, interrupting Blythe’s thoughts. Squaring her shoulders, she stepped into Montgomery’s office, barely glancing around. His office never changed. Though it was rather spacious, the mountains of papers stacked in every available corner made it look small. At first glance the room appeared to be chaotic, but Blythe knew everything was meticulously organized. Montgomery simply did not have enough filing cabinets. Included in the flotsam and jetsam were sample articles from ambitious reporters, hoping to be awarded a place on Montgomery’s staff; editions of competing newspapers; ads from local shops; and reports waiting to be approved for printing or trashed. Everything had its place. Only Montgomery knew the location of that place.

Montgomery sat at a large, oak desk, its surface barely visible beneath the mounds of papers. Though he was a short, thin man, he made up for his lack of height with an arrogant attitude and intimidating glare. Hearing Blythe enter his office, he glanced up, briefly tearing his eyes away from the article he was reading, and motioned

brusquely to a chair. Blythe sat down and waited for him to speak. Well aware that the silence was meant to make her nervous, she schooled her features to show a composure she did not feel. Finally, he stood up, took the latest edition of the *Times*, and thrust it at her, demanding, “This is your conclusion to the Azusa series?”

*I knew it*, Blythe thought, looking down at the paper turned to her most recent article covering the Pentecostal revivals sweeping Azusa Street. Usually the *Times* did not run news concerning religion, but the phenomena occurring at Azusa Street had merited extensive coverage. Unusual things had begun to happen after preacher William Seymour arrived at the old, barn-like church. People began acting oddly – speaking in unknown languages, shouting, weeping, prophesying, jumping up and down. Blythe had been sent to check it out, and, deeming the story too good to pass up, wrote a series of articles concerning the revivals. Her capstone piece had been published the previous week.

Looking up at Montgomery, her face emotionless, she said, “Yes. Is there a problem, sir?” *Besides the fact that this article is even more negative than the others.*

“Yes, there’s a problem!” he snapped, striding back and forth between his desk and the window, puffing on his ever-present cigar, and shoving a hand through his thinning brown hair. “There’s more to this story. It’s bigger now than when it first started! Why aren’t you down there?” Turning, he glared at her with sharp brown eyes. *Because I don’t want to face Braeden Llewellyn again.* “There’s nothing to report there, sir.” Blythe defended. “It’s not real! I believe I mentioned that in my story.”

“Don’t give me that, Blythe!” Montgomery barked, jabbing his cigar like a sword. “Even the society families are getting involved in this thing. If I tell you there’s still a story, there’s still a story. I don’t care if you think it’s real or not. Now get down there!”

Blythe balled her fists in her lap and clenched her jaw. *No! Not back to Azusa!* “I would rather not.”

Montgomery leaned back against his desk and crossed his arms, contemplating the young woman in front of him. He had a certain measure of respect for her because of her grit and gumption. Born into a high-class family, Blythe did not have to work, but she did, demonstrating a backbone of steel and an independent streak a mile wide. After graduating from Hollins Institute with a degree in journalism, she had started out as a receptionist and doggedly worked her way up to a journalist position in the three years since. She had become one of his best reporters and never backed down from the challenges he threw out. Until now. “Something happen that you want to tell me about?”

Blythe glanced away before answering. “No, sir.” *Nothing I’m going to tell you about, at least.*

Montgomery shrugged. “Suit yourself. Now…” he leaned forward and gave a tight smile, “…I’ll tell you nicely one more time. Get the Azusa story.”

“With all due respect, I would rather not go back. You don’t have to have me. Send Simmons or Marshall to finish the series,” Blythe said with forced politeness.

Montgomery slammed his hand on his desk in anger, causing an avalanche of papers. “You started these articles and you *shall* see them through, Miss Lewis. Your job is on the line.” He growled, “Got it?”

Blythe stood abruptly, glaring. “Yes, sir. I’ve got it. You’ll have your story by Monday.” She whirled out of his office, barely avoiding slamming the door.

Montgomery walked to the window and looked down. In a few moments he saw Blythe stalk from the building, long skirts swirling. With a nod, he lit a new cigar, and turned back to the chaos he called an office.

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*Insufferable man!* Blythe steamed as she flagged down a hansom cab. She briefly wondered if smoke was blowing from her ears, she was so angry.

“Bunker Hill, please,” she said, stepping up into the horse-drawn carriage. Settling into the seats, her thoughts immediately returned to the source of her irritation.

Montgomery had pulled a lot over the three years she had worked for him, but he had really outdone himself this time. Go back to Azusa Street! She didn’t even want to hear the name again. Oh, she had taken a great interest in the story at first. The articles had been her opportunity to prove to Montgomery that he had made the right choice when he promoted her to a news reporter back in January. No more covering those stiff society soirees for her! Though she had covered general news in the months between her promotion and the revivals, the Azusa articles were her first to headline.

The same day her first article was published, on April 18, 1906, a tremendous earthquake ripped through San Francisco, devastating the area. The earthquake immediately became the center of interest. In competition with the influx of horror stories from ravaged San Francisco, Blythe’s stories had become more sensation driven. Her

second article likened the LA revivals "... to the San Francisco earthquake, their epicenter being Azusa Street." The more thrilling her exposés, the better Montgomery liked them. Sensation sold papers, and that was all that mattered. At least, that's what she kept telling herself.

Arriving at her destination, Blythe paid the cabbie and entered her father's large two storey Victorian-style house. It was almost as old as she, having been built in the mid-1880s when her father, Hiram Lewis, came to Los Angeles with the railroad. The house was still luxurious in appearance, complete with whimsical turrets and gingerbread trim. A neatly manicured lawn and colorful, well-tended flowerbeds completed the picture of perfection.

Blythe quickly made her way to her room and slammed the door. Shrugging out of her fitted bolero, she turned to the mirror to remove her hat. Unbidden, Braeden Llewellyn's face rose in her mind, a mixture of hurt and anger frozen on his face. Groaning, Blythe jabbed her hatpin into the waiting cushion and dropped into a chair. She cradled her head in her hands, trying to force the memories away. Failure was the reward for her efforts, for once again the scene of her last encounter with Braeden played through her mind. He had been her primary source for her articles, and she had come to feel an attraction to the handsome young Welshman, though a courtship would be unthinkable. At one time, Blythe thought he had been on the verge of asking to visit her on a social basis. That changed, though, once he realized she would not change her view on religion. Feeling rejected and slighted in favor of Braeden's – in her opinion – heretical religion, Blythe retaliated by writing a particularly derogatory article – the article that, in fact, had been her capstone. *Emphasis on "had been,"* Blythe thought

bitterly. Now she had to face Braeden again. Their last moments together had not been pleasant, and she was sure any future meetings would be no better – especially after that last article. But Montgomery had ordered her back. And Spencer Montgomery’s word was law.

*Two days later...*

“All right, Montgomery, you’ve won. I’m here.” Blythe muttered to thin air as the hansom pulled up in front of the former Episcopalian church that was now housing the Pentecostal movement. Checking to make sure her notebook and spare pencils were still safe in her reticule, Blythe stepped onto the sidewalk and glared at the shabby old building as though it had personally offended her. Glancing at her lapel watch, she tried to calculate how long she would have to suffer under Montgomery’s orders in order to get the story he wanted, hoping it would not take long, and knowing that these services could last twelve hours. Realizing she was stalling, Blythe raised her chin defiantly and strode into the Azusa Street Mission.

Instantly, she was accosted by a cacophony of sound. She supposed the people participating would have called it “singing.”

“It’s real, it’s real, I know it’s real. It’s  
that Pentecostal blessing and I know, I  
know it’s real...”

*Well, they at least give it their best effort,* Blythe thought ruefully as she scanned the now-familiar congregation. Towards the very front of the room stood William Seymour,

the black preacher from Kansas, preaching overtop the boisterous singing. At the piano sat Jennie Moore, who had been suddenly “gifted” with the ability to play when she first “received the Holy Ghost.” At least, that was the account Braeden had given. Not that Blythe believed a word of it.

Finishing her preliminary observations, and feeling great relief that Braeden was nowhere to be seen, Blythe sat down and began writing. Making note of the general ruckus at the front of the building and the occasional shout of “He’s got it!” or “She’s got it!,” she then moved on to the goings-on of the back of the old building. Here gathered the curious, critics, thrill-seekers, and gawkers of Los Angeles. Being safely ensconced among fellow unbelievers still did not grant immunity, though. Occasionally someone would stop laughing and ridiculing, and start listening. Then the unfortunate soul might start shaking and crying. Finally – Blythe shuddered at the thought – he would seal his fate and walk down the narrow aisle to the altar, at which point the enthusiastic, tongue-talking Pentecostals, like vultures on fresh prey, would descend on the poor man, lay hands on him, and pray that he also would receive the Holy Ghost.

In her notebook, Blythe described the process one underwent to “receive the Holy Ghost.” She wrote,

“...under the influence of extreme emotions, and encouraged by other believers, the hapless victim often begins shaking. Even when the shaking does not occur, the person will become so emotional that he can no longer speak the English language. This is what the Pentecostals refer to as ‘speaking in tongues,’ saying it dates back 2000 years ago to the Day of Pentecost. Thus they are called ‘Pentecostals.’”

This exact procedure had just happened to the affluent pastor of one of LA's highly respectable churches. Blythe finished depicting the service and closed her notebook with a snap. Standing, she looked around one last time. *I do hope it's the last time!* Seymour was still bellowing, Jennie was still pounding the piano, and Braeden... Blythe did a double take. *Braeden? Oh, dear.* At that moment, the object of her attention glanced toward the back of the building and saw her. Blythe had never seen anyone's expression change from extreme joy to utter disgust so drastically, so quickly. *Time to leave,* she quickly decided, and, with a curt nod toward the young Welshman, turned to go.

*Fifteen steps to the door...*

"Miss Lewis!"

*Ten steps... was that Braeden calling her?*

"Miss Lewis! Stop! I know ye can hear me."

*Yep, that was him. Almost there... made it! I'm safe!*

A hand caught Blythe's elbow and whirled her around just as she stepped outside to safety. *Or not.* Blythe quickly detached herself and glowered up at her six-foot-three assailant.

"How dare you!" She glared into blazing green eyes. In fact, his eyes looked exactly as they had at their last meeting, but even angrier.

"What are ye doing here, Miss Lewis? More false stories?" Braeden demanded

"Yes, in fact, I am here for a story. But I assure you, Mr. Llewellyn, that my stories tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth." Blythe replied with chilling politeness. *The less said, the better.*

“Aye, that a fact now, is it? And what do ye call this?” He held up last week’s newspaper.

Blythe sighed inwardly. How many more people were going to throw that story back at her? “I call that a fine piece of reporting, if I do say so myself.”

Braeden crumpled the paper in his hands and threw it down. “Why did ye write such an awful story? Do ye think ye’ll make people stay away from here? Your horror stories are causing even more lost souls to come! And when they get here, they find what they’re looking for.”

“There’s nothing here but a bunch of fanatics trying to get attention,” Blythe snapped.

“That’s *your* opinion. Think of what would happen if you wrote a favorable story! This city could be turned on its head!”

“I will never write a favorable story about these people or their beliefs.”

“For the love of God, Miss Lewis!” Braeden all but yelled, anger deepening his Welsh accent, “What’s it going to take to get through your thick skull and make ye understand that there is more to life than...this?” He waved at the wadded newspaper lying forlornly between them.

“Like what?” Blythe growled through clenched teeth.

“Like God! Like believing in something real, something worthwhile.”

“That’s exactly it! God! The all-powerful, all-knowing, loving Being who pulls the strings and runs the show. Some love, to let stuff like the ‘Frisco earthquake happen,” Blythe scoffed.

Braeden shook his head, sadness reflecting in his green eyes. “Would that your eyes were opened to the truth, Miss Lewis. To see so many details as a reporter, you are blinded to the basics of the spiritual realm.”

Blythe remained silent for a moment, glaring at Braeden. Finally, she spoke. “Since obviously neither of us is going to change the mind of the other, it is pointless to debate this issue any further. Good evening, Mr. Llewellyn,” she said coldly. Whipping around, she strode to the curb and stepped out into the street, not thinking of her destination, simply trying to get away.

Braeden was standing, watching her retreating figure sadly, when he caught a motion out of the corner of his eye. Turning his full attention to the object, he gasped, then took off running. “Blythe! No!”

Startled, Blythe stopped in the middle of the road and turned to look at him. She then looked up the road. Her mouth dropped open in a silent scream as her feet froze to the ground. Barreling toward her was a Model A Ford, out of control. Her brain screamed for her to move, her body would not respond. Random thoughts flew through her mind. *This is it. I'm going to die. I wish Braeden and I could have worked something out. I wonder who'll finish my story.*

Suddenly, something solid slammed against her and she was flying through the air. Then, Blythe's world went black.

## *The Preacher*

*AD 30 – Jerusalem*

A pounding headache was the first thing Blythe noticed as she began to regain consciousness. Following the pain in her head came a brightness that pierced the dark protection of her eyelids. Moaning softly, she slowly raised a hand to her forehead.

“Ah, you are awake,” said a voice through the darkness. “That was a nasty fall, young Blythe.”

Blythe pried her eyes open, ignoring the way the light made her head hurt worse. To her utter astonishment she saw not an American doctor, as she had expected, but an Arabic man, swathed in robes, looking down at her with a pleasant expression. “Who are you?” she asked, sitting up, her voice sharp with suspicion and distrust.

“Who I am is not important at this time,” the man replied calmly. “At this time, your mission is what is important.”

Blythe looked around the small room, and felt she was going to pass out. She had no idea where she was. The room looked nothing like any building she had ever seen in Los Angeles. The walls looked to be made of mud brick, not unlike the adobe homes of the Mexicans, yet not similar enough to be very reassuring. The door was made of wood, the floor of smoothed mud. Jars and pitchers of clay sat on wooden shelves nailed to the walls. Though not uncomfortable, the room was Spartan in appearance. “Where am I? Why am I here? And what mission?” she demanded, firing the questions rapidly, still clutching her aching head.

“Why, this is Jerusalem, Blythe,” the man answered, still perfectly calm. “You will soon discover your purpose here.”

Blythe raised an eyebrow at the man, her blue eyes hard. His expression never changed. “Jerusalem. You actually think I’m going to believe that?” To her growing agitation, he nodded as though the concept was completely logical.

“Take a look.”

Carefully standing to her feet, Blythe gave the man a look that said she was convinced that he was crazy, and made her way to the window. The view that met her was quite possibly the most shocking experience yet. Outside, people hurried by on sandy streets lined by buildings of stone. There were merchants on the way to their shops, eager to begin selling their wares of food, linen, and silver. Women walked by on their way to the market, thinking of the various items they needed to purchase, their long, earth-toned robes swaying. Young boys trotted on the way to school, led by men with long beards, flowing robes of fine linen, and solemn expressions. The scene almost passed for sections of Los Angeles, except for one fact: there were obviously no Americans present. Nor was any of Los Angeles’ sophisticated technology to be seen. No light posts. No telephone lines. The calls ringing out were not English, though somehow Blythe knew what they were saying. Here and there strode muscular men with swords slung at their sides, red capes blowing behind them, their helmets gleaming in the bright sunlight.

Blythe slowly turned around and faced the mysterious man watching her patiently. “Who are you? How did I get here?”

“Your journey here is not easy to explain. In fact,” he said, with an odd look in his dark eyes, “you could never grasp it even if I explained in terms you would understand. But that is not important – ”

“Not important? No, it is *very* important,” Blythe broke in rudely, “ If I don’t know how I got here, how am I supposed to get home? Sprout wings and fly?”

The man smiled and shook his head, his mysterious eyes twinkling, causing Blythe’s irritation to be fueled even more. “You humans have amazing humor. Just like the Great One. But you are more likely to ‘sprout wings and fly,’ as you say, than you are to return home in the same manner that you came. You, Blythe, must work your way home.”

Blythe simply stood gaping. “‘You humans’? Then what are you supposed to be? An angel?”

Her eyes widened even more when the man gave a small bow from his waist. “At your service. I am Shiloh, your guide.”

Falling into a nearby rough, wooden chair, Blythe started to laugh. “I know what this is! I’ve lost my mind, haven’t I? All the stress of work has finally caused me to snap.”

Shiloh shook his head. “No, you haven’t. You are completely sane, or as sane as a human can be, at least.”

Blythe stopped laughing abruptly and frowned. “You cannot expect me to believe that I am in Jerusalem or that you are an angel. It’s ridiculous! No, forget ridiculous. It’s impossible!”

Shiloh’s lips tugged upward in a small smile. “Nothing is impossible with God, Blythe. Whether you believe or reject your situation is your decision. However, I would suggest that you come to grips with reality, or your journey will be much more difficult than necessary.”

“What journey?” Blythe cried in exasperation, jumping up from her chair.

“The journey you will begin as soon as you walk out that door.”

“What if I refuse? I can stay right here in this house.”

“Then you will never get back home,” said Shiloh, a triumphant gleam in his eye.

“You’re blackmailing me!” Blythe exclaimed.

Shiloh raised a dark eyebrow, “Blackmail? No. I’m an angel, remember? I have to play by the rules. Though if it was allowed, and it made my job easier, I would gladly do so to have you cooperate. But I can’t.”

Blythe crossed her arms over her chest, her frown deepening. “Okay, we’re going to pretend that you really are an angel, that this really is Jerusalem, and I really do have some sort of ‘mission’ here. What now?”

Shiloh smiled. “I find that the marketplace is a fountain of information. Perhaps we should check it out.” He gestured towards the door.

“Fine. Whatever it takes to get out of this nightmare.” Blythe turned to the door and opened it. She paused before stepping outside. “Wait. I can’t go out there in this dress. I’ll stand out like a...” She drew in a sharp breath as she looked down at her clothes. Gone were the long skirt and fitted jacket befitting of early twentieth century America. In their place were long robes and sandals like those worn by the people hurrying by outside. Blythe’s hands flew to her hair. Instead of her carefully styled, fashionable pompadour, she found her hair hanging loosely down her back, past her waist, and covering it, a long veil the same color as her robes. In all the confusion of finding herself in Jerusalem and fighting with Shiloh, she had not noticed that her clothing and hair had altered along with her surroundings.

Shiloh grinned at her bewildered expression then, stepping around her into the street, began walking. “As you see, you blend perfectly with your surroundings. Such will be the case along each leg of your journey. You will fit in with your environment, even to the point of understanding and speaking the language.”

Blythe was forced to run to catch up with his long stride. She stepped in front of him and held out a hand, stopping him. “Now you listen. I want to know exactly what is going on, and I want to know *now*.”

“Calm down,” Shiloh said, then took her arm and started walking again. “You’re going to draw undue attention to us. If I tell you what I can about your situation, will you cooperate?”

Blythe considered for a moment, weighing giving up her stubbornness against understanding what was happening to her. Finally she nodded, “Yes.”

“All right, then. As I said, this is Jerusalem. It is the year AD 30. You have been sent here for a purpose, and once you fulfill that purpose, you will be a step closer to home,” Shiloh explained as they walked deeper into the bustling city.

“You keep talking about my purpose. What *is* my purpose?” Blythe asked, dodging a Roman soldier.

“To learn some valuable lessons. Lessons your friend Braeden wishes you would learn.”

Blythe scowled. “Oh, I get it now. So, if I admit that God is in control and that the whole revival mumbo jumbo isn’t a hoax, can I go home?”

Shiloh smiled, his white teeth gleaming against his tanned face, “Come now, Blythe. That would be too easy. Would you have really learned anything? No. Would you actually believe? No. So for now, you must simply do as is required.”

“And what exactly is required?” Blythe yelled, ignoring the speculative glances being sent their way. “You keep dancing around the subject!”

“No, I’m not. I’m telling you as much as I can. I could tell you more if you would be quiet,” Shiloh looked down at her pointedly. Blythe instantly closed her mouth.

“That’s better. Now, Jerusalem is not your only test, there will be others along the way. In each location, you have to observe something. A certain situation. It is your task to find out what you are looking for and then be there to see it. The next step will become clear once you have found your purpose for each place.”

“Okay, so what’s my purpose for this place?” Blythe asked wearily.

“That’s what you’re here to find out,” Shiloh replied, motioning to the bustling marketplace with a sweep of his arm. “Oh, and Peter might be a good start. Good luck.”

“But, I…” she turned around to find herself alone. Whipping around, she scanned the marketplace in vain. Shiloh had vanished. Blythe closed her eyes for a moment, pushing down the scream of frustration that was clawing its way up her throat. *Peter? Who is Peter? And how on earth am I supposed to find him?* Opening them again, she slowly peered around, taking in her surroundings, allowing her reporter’s instincts to kick in. *Only one way to find out.*

With her first tentative step, Blythe realized that she was accepting her mission. She didn’t want to. She just wanted to wake up back in LA, but what choice did she

have? She could either follow Shiloh's instructions, or live out the rest of her life in Jerusalem. *I'll opt for the former*, she thought dryly.

The marketplace was bustling with activity. Vendors, male and female, sold items ranging from fresh vegetables to jewelry to handmade clay pots. The market was set up in a city square where several streets met in one large, open area. Some booths were permanent, equipped with brightly woven awnings to protect the vendor from the heat and rain. Others, farmers from the outlying country, sold their produce and livestock straight from their wagons.

A myriad of sounds and smells floated on the breeze. Animals bayed and clucked; children laughed and squealed, chasing one another through the crowd; men and women loudly bartered for the best prices; and the *clank* of a silversmith's hammer resonated off the mud brick walls of the surrounding buildings. Blythe identified the light, pleasant scents of fruit, vegetables, and flowers; the earthy smell of clay from the pots; the pungent odor of freshly caught fish; and the mouth-watering aroma of just-made bread.

Blythe reluctantly began to explore. If not for the strange language and clothing, she could almost believe she was at the open market in LA. *Wishful thinking*, she grumbled to herself. Wandering around aimlessly, she observed all she could, finding something different at every stall. Pausing in front of the cloth-maker's table, she examined some of the light, linen fabric, thinking how cool and comfortable it looked. The vendor, a large woman in her early forties, was gossiping loudly with another woman at the opposite end of the booth. Blythe tried to ignore them, in spite of their loud voices.

"Did you hear about the disciples of the dead teacher?" asked Rachel, the vendor.

"No! What have they done now?" her friend questioned eagerly.

“Well, they’ve closeted themselves in an upper room. I heard that they’re claiming that Jesus isn’t dead and is having them wait in Jerusalem. Can you imagine?”

Rachel *tsked*, planting a plump hand on her ample hip.

Her friend, Elizabeth, sighed loudly. “They took his death hard. I do wish they would let the rest of us live in peace, though. That Peter is going to cause trouble, Rachel, believe you me,” she predicted, wagging a finger at Rachel.

“True, true,” Rachel agreed, shaking her head.

*Peter!* Blythe’s breath caught in her throat. Inching closer, she spoke up. “Excuse me, I couldn’t help but overhear you. I’m new here in town and don’t know what’s going on. What’s this about disciples and an upper room?”

Rachel beamed at her, delighted to have fresh ears to bend. “Shalom, child! Well, these men followed Jesus of Nazareth around for about three years. Called themselves his disciples. He was killed about six weeks ago, but they say he came back to life after only three days. Ridiculous, I know, but they stand fast to what they believe. They say that he instructed them to tarry here in Jerusalem. According to them, he’s going to send them a sign.”

“Incredible,” Blythe mused, pretending rapt attention. Now if she could just get the right information, “Where are they staying?”

Rachel thought for a moment, “I know I heard someone say where they are...” She shook her head, “I’m sorry, dear. I can’t remember right now. It’ll come to me eventually, though.”

“I say, child, you look like you could use a bite to eat,” Elizabeth said, “Would you care to break the bread with Rachel and me? We can fill you in on the rest of the city news.”

Blythe considered for a moment. She really did not want to have anything else to do with these women and their free-running tongues, but Rachel might remember the location of the upper room. Besides, she *was* hungry. She pasted on a smile, “Why, thank you, ma’am. I would be honored.” *If I ever get my hands on you, Shiloh...*

Blythe followed Rachel and Elizabeth into the relative coolness of Rachel’s home, in front of which her fabrics were set up. The sudden shade was a welcome relief to Blythe. She paused, allowing her eyes to adjust to the dimmer light. Looking around, she found Rachel bustling about the kitchen area, setting loaves of barley bread and a few fish out on a large, stone plate, which she placed in the center of a rough, wooden table.

Producing a basin of water, Rachel and Elizabeth washed their hands. Blythe, unsure of cultural laws, carefully followed their example, and then sat down. Despite the beaming friendliness of her hosts, she felt tense and uncomfortable. Hearing her stomach complain about her neglect, Blythe received her portion of the meal with a polite *thank you*, and began to eat, listening to her companions prattle with only half an ear. The rest of her attention was focused on her predicament. Approaching the situation from every angle, her reporter’s mind attempted to find the solution she needed. The solution Shiloh so adamantly refused to give her. Blythe bit back a frustrated sigh. *Well, I’ve got news of Peter, and know that he’s in an upper room. But what of it? There could be thousands of upper rooms in this city! I don’t have time to search them one by one –*

“...Dear...I say, my girl, are you all right?”

Blythe's thoughts were abruptly interrupted by Rachel waving a hand in front of Blythe's face and snapping her fingers. "Wha...what? Oh, yes. I'm fine, thank you. Just thinking."

"Those must be some very deep thoughts. Pondering how to land a young man, were you?" Elizabeth asked, then continued on without waiting for an answer, "A woman thinks that hard only when concerned with her young man."

Blythe shook her head, exclaiming, "Oh, no! Not at all. I don't have a young man, and if I did he would be the least of my worries right now."

"Of course, dear. The foremost of your concerns should be on getting him first." Elizabeth nodded sagely, winking at Rachel. "Anyway, it's come to my attention that we don't know your name, child."

Taken aback at the sudden change in topic, Blythe blinked, then gave her name.

"Blythe," Elizabeth repeated, trying the name on her tongue, "A most unusual name. Most people in these parts are named after their ancestors, like Rachel and me. But you said you weren't from here, didn't you?"

"Yes."

"Where are you from, then?" Rachel asked, standing to clear the table.

"Where am I from?" Blythe repeated blankly. "Uh...well...I... Why don't you let me clean up, Rachel, since you were kind enough to feed me."

"I couldn't let you do that, child," Rachel protested, not noticing how Blythe avoided her question. "You're my guest!"

"Nonsense. I insist."

After saying the *birkat ha-mazon* – the traditional blessing over food said after the meal was complete – and much cajoling, Rachel finally consented to at least send Blythe to fetch a jug of water from the city well. *Whew!* she thought, heading toward the center of Jerusalem, *That was close! I can just picture telling them where I'm from. "Los Angeles?" they would say, "Where's that?" "Oh, in America. Don't worry that you've never heard of it. It won't be discovered for another fourteen hundred years." Sure, they'll believe that.* “Thanks a lot, Shiloh,” Blythe muttered, arriving at the well.

“You’re welcome.”

Gasping, Blythe whirled around. Behind her stood Shiloh, smiling down at her. Startled by his sudden appearance, she stared at him. *There's something...otherworldly about him,* she thought vaguely before remembering her irritation. “You!” she exclaimed, pointing her finger at him.

“Yes?” he continued smiling, his eyes fathomless. He stood relaxed, legs spread casually.

“You...you, you...” Blythe broke off with a growl, unable to put her exasperation into words. “Do you know the torture you’ve put me through today?”

“I’ve a vague idea of the situation, yes.”

“And I suppose you, being an ‘angel,’ know every step I’ve taken.”

“Mmm-hmmm.”

Blythe rolled her eyes, balancing her now-filled jug on her hip. “So can we go now?”

“Go? Go where?”

“Back to LA, of course!” she cried.

“Sorry, but no. You are but on the first step of a long journey,” Shiloh smiled, his eyes crinkling. “You had better get used to the situation.”

“Hmph.”

“Rachel and Elizabeth are good people. Stay with them tonight. The clock is ticking.”

With that cryptic statement, Shiloh once again disappeared. Shoulders slumped despondently, Blythe returned to the home of her new Jewish acquaintances. Upon arriving, Rachel thanked her for fetching the water, and, seeing how late it had become, invited her to stay the night. Blythe agreed, thanking her host.

“Oh, and Blythe, I remembered where Peter and the others are staying, if you’re still interested in visiting.”

*Yes!* Blythe cheered. “I would love to, Rachel. How far is it?”

“Quite close, but don’t worry about it. Elizabeth and I will go with you. We’ll leave after breakfast.”

*Things are looking up...*

~ ~ ~

Over the creak of the stairs, Blythe could hear the murmur of voices drifting down to her. Slowly, she followed Elizabeth and Rachel, pausing at the top of the landing. Though her companions marched right into the room and took seats, Blythe hesitated, feeling inexplicably apprehensive. The air seemed to be charged with an electrical current, crashing through and around everyone. Anticipation had been building for the

past ten days, and now hung heavily over the room, wrapping around each person like a mantle. From her post at the door, Blythe estimated over one hundred people were crammed like sardines into the tiny upper room.

Standing in a loose line at the front of the room were eleven men from a variety of social classes. Most were darkly tanned, burly and muscular, obviously hard workers. One or two seemed to be from a higher class, their robes finer and skin lighter. However, all had the same look about them, a reflection of spirits joined together for one cause. *Those must be Jesus' disciples*, Blythe thought. Her eye was caught by one of the eleven. A tall, powerfully built man with a rugged face and curling, brown hair. Setting him apart from the other ten, a passionate fire smoldered in his eyes.

“Peter,” Blythe murmured.

As one, the crowd began praying earnestly, led by the disciples. Blythe leaned against the door, skeptically observing them, crossing her arms over her stomach defiantly. *What good does praying do, anyway?* Blythe wondered. *If God is the One who pulls the strings, the puny mortals can't do anything to change His mind anyway. Why am I even here?*

“Patience, young Blythe,” a voice whispered near her ear.

Blythe jumped. “Must you do that?” she growled at Shiloh who had suddenly appeared.

“Just watch,” he replied, scanning the room. Then he began speaking quietly, *“And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all in one accord in one place.”*

Blythe looked at him for a moment, recognizing the words as those preached by William Seymour at Azusa Street. Then she turned back, watching. The prayers had become more intense. She became aware of a tension building in the room, increasing in power with each passing second, causing the air to feel thick. Suddenly, without warning, an incredible crash sounded throughout the room, coming from no one place. Then it hit, cutting through the room like a sword, an awesome wind, blowing with the power of a hurricane, snapping the tension .

Blythe gasped, clinging to the door in fear. A gentle hand touched her shoulder, calming her. Shiloh still stood beside her, but it was not the Shiloh she had seen before. His garments glowed a brilliant white, and a light shone around his head. He stood regally, looking straight ahead. He continued speaking, his voice carrying easily over the roar of the wind, though he did not raise it.

*“And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.”*

The praying did not cease, nor even falter. If possible, it strengthened and grew in power. Blythe watched, eyes wide and darting wildly about the room. Her attention was drawn to tiny sparks of light glowing over the heads of the disciples. Her mouth dropping open, she watched more lights appear, sweeping back over the people, growing larger and larger until they formed individual tongues of fire over each individual. Though the wind continued howling, the fires never flickered, but burned brightly, dancing over every man, woman, and child.

*“And there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.”*

Then, one by one, the prayers changed. Like the fire, the change began at the front with the disciples and spread back through the crowd, cresting like a spiritual wave, surging around Blythe. No longer understandable, the words shifted from the common Aramaic of the Jews until the room was filled with the sounds of people speaking in a myriad of languages from all over the world, their arms raised, tears streaming from their eyes.

*“And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”*

Blythe stood in complete shock, enveloped in the sights and sounds of Pentecost. Looking for Rachel and Elizabeth, she hoped they had not given in to the madness. Finding them, her hopes were dashed. They, too, stood with hands uplifted, tongues of fire dancing around their heads, speaking in other languages. Blythe sank to the ground and covered her head, trying to block it all out, to no avail. The screams of the wind still penetrated her ears, and the fires still glowed. There was no escape.

Abruptly, Blythe was hauled to her feet by Shiloh, who was once again clothed in his common robes. Forced to open her eyes, she saw the once open area of the stairs was now filled with people, fires flickering over their heads, speaking in tongues. From below, Blythe could hear the sounds of yet more people surrendering to the power that pulsed from the room. Feeling as though she would suffocate, she managed to shoulder her way down the stairs, Shiloh following. Stumbling into the street, she was amazed to see the mass of people gathered around the inn, gawking and talking excitedly among themselves.

“Would you listen to that?”

“What are they saying?”

“That’s Persian they’re speaking,” stated one wealthy aristocrat.

“No! That’s Egyptian.”

“I say it’s Cretan.”

Then one voice rose over all the rest, “Well, I say they’re just drunk!” a beefy merchant exclaimed, glaring around, daring anyone to oppose him. “They’ve found a stash of new wine, is what it is!”

“Friends!” a calm voice called from the doorway. Blythe turned to see Peter standing with the other disciples. “Listen to me! We are not drunk, as you imagine us to be, for this is but the third hour of the day. Rather, these happenings are the prophecies of Joel coming to pass.”

“What prophecy?” the merchant demanded, not convinced.

Raising his hands for quiet, Peter spoke, quoting the words of the prophet Joel, ““And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: And on my servants and on my handmaidens will I pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophecy.””

Not a sound was heard as he finished. The merchant blinked a few times, processing. Finally, he spoke, his demeanor humbled, “Brothers, what shall we do to be saved?”

Peter smiled, his face glowing, his eyes blazing with unrestrained fervor, “Repent and be baptized, all of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins, and

you will receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. This is promised to you, and to your children, and to those afar off, even as many as the Lord will call.”

“Baptize me!” the man cried, tears forming in his eyes. Others in the crowd echoed his plea.

Standing dumbfounded, Blythe stared at Peter, who had looked directly at her as he said “to those afar off.” Feeling the power mounting again, she turned and ran toward the nearby city gates, unwilling to witness another outbreak. She slowed as she reached them, and glanced back over her shoulder. Shiloh had disappeared. Massaging her temples, trying to assuage a pounding headache, she walked through the gates. Instantly, everything shifted, morphing into a blur, then rearranged itself. Gaping, Blythe looked around, then behind her. The gates to Jerusalem were gone.

## *The Nun*

*AD 1148 – Germany*

Replacing the strongly blazing sun and dry winds of Jerusalem were cool, dew-dampened grass and a cloudless, sapphire sky. A valley rolled before Blythe, a clear, oblong lake creating the focal point in the center, reflecting the splendor of majestic snow-capped mountains stretching into the distance. From the near end, a river flowed out, winding its way along the countryside. Scattered about in clumps of fir trees, birds sang happily, serenading the morning. A rough, dirt road wound lazily across the countryside. The land was void of people, a vast change from the chaotic hustle and bustle of Jerusalem. The murmuring of a cool wind was drowned out by the frantic pounding of Blythe's heart. *No! Not again! I'm supposed to be home!* Frustration rose within her, releasing itself in the form of an angry cry.

*"Shiloh!"* she yelled. No response. "Typical. He's around all the time when I *don't* want him," Blythe grumbled irritably. Seizing a nearby rock, she hurled it as hard as possible toward the lake.

"Feel better?" a gratingly calm voice asked.

Blythe stiffened. Turning slowly, she fastened Shiloh with a scornful glare. "This is not Los Angeles," she growled, jaw clenched.

"That's right."

Blythe stared at him, incredulous, "Don't you get it? I'm supposed to be home now! Why am I here? And, while you're at it, where is here? Take me home. Now."

Shiloh shook his head, “Blythe, Blythe. We’ve been over this. You’re on a mission. You cannot return home until it is complete.”

“It is complete! I saw Peter. I saw the whole Day of Pentecost thing. What is left to see?”

“You saw but a part. You saw the beginning. Now you will see another part. Hildegard has much to teach you. Now, if you will stop pouting, you can get started.”

Blythe sniffed disdainfully, “I’m not pouting.”

Shiloh raised an eyebrow, “Right.”

Blythe scowled, “I’m not! You simply insist on treating me like a child.”

“When you stop acting like a child, I’ll stop treating you like one.”

Huffing, Blythe turned on her heel and started walking, “Let’s go already.”

Shiloh stopped himself from laughing out loud, “You might want to try the right direction.”

Turning again, Blythe started back the way she had come, muttering under her breath, “Just my luck to get an angel with a sense of humor.”

“Well, you wouldn’t want a grouchy one, now would you?” Shiloh asked, falling into step beside her. Blythe’s only response was another huff.

~ ~ ~

As they walked, Shiloh would occasionally point out some animal or comment on the beauty of the scenery, to no avail. After having walked for several hours, Blythe did

not even have the energy to huff at him, much less reply. Finally, with a groan, she stopped walking, collapsing against a tree.

“Where *are* we going, Shiloh?” she asked. “We’ve been walking all day with no signs of life.”

“I’m here,” Shiloh replied.

“*Human* life,” Blythe amended, glaring. “Answer the question. I’m tired, hungry, and ready for bed.”

“Patience, Blythe. Bingen is just ahead. Not much farther.”

“Enlighten me. Bingen would be where?”

“Germany,” answered Shiloh. “Bingen, Germany, the home of Hildegard.”

“And Hildegard would be...?”

“Uh-uh. That would be telling,” Shiloh smiled.

“Exactly,” grumbled Blythe, pushing away from her tree, grimacing at the soreness of her feet. “Surely you could have provided better shoes.”

“Of course I could. But you wouldn’t fit in with everyone else if you had them. When in Germany, do as the Germans do,” Shiloh watched Blythe pull her shoes off, gently massaging her feet. “This is the year 1148. For this time, those shoes are pretty good. Be happy you have them.”

Shoving her feet into the hated shoes, Blythe rolled her eyes and started walking.

“Let’s go. My stomach is gnawing on my backbone.”

Chuckling, Shiloh followed. “We cannot have a spineless reporter, for sure.”

~ ~ ~

They soon arrived at the port town of Bingen, just as Shiloh said they would. Blythe looked around in fascination at the medieval settlement. The outskirts were made up of small, thatch-roofed houses. Bits of gardens sat close to the mud-and-wattle houses, traces of green poking through the dirt here and there. Women and children paused in the middle of their chores to stare curiously at the newcomers.

“Why are they staring?” Blythe whispered, “I thought we were supposed to blend in. No one noticed us in Jerusalem.”

Shiloh smiled at the gawkers, waving a friendly hand. “You’re a stranger. Bingen is a much smaller, less populated town than Jerusalem, so you’re going to stand out more. They mean no harm.”

“If you say so,” Blythe forced a tight smile and nodded at the staring women, noting their rough, homespun skirts and tunics in earthy colors. *At least, I hope they’re earth toned and not just that dirty.*

Moving farther into the town, the buildings stood closer together. People milling around conducted their business, selling livestock to the butcher, trading fresh produce for needed items. *There aren’t many young people*, Blythe noticed. Looking around, she examined the faces of the people surrounding her. They were drawn and weathered, tanned and leathery from exposure to the elements. *Their eyes, though...* In spite of wrinkled faces, many people had youth still sparkling in their eyes.

“The average lifespan of these people is about thirty-five to forty years,” Shiloh said quietly. “They live a hard life, and it shows in their faces and bodies, but they are still young at heart.”

Blythe nodded. *I can't imagine being considered old at thirty-five. My father is well into his sixties, and in perfect health. Then again, I guess they couldn't imagine living that long...*

Shiloh stopped in the center of town. From here, Blythe could see another river up ahead, larger than the one they had followed to town.

"That's the Rhine, and the smaller river is the Nahe," Shiloh said.

Blythe frowned, "Will you stop reading my mind!"

Shiloh grinned, "Maybe. Remember, you need to find Hildegard. The sound of a bell will help you locate her."

"The sound of a... what are you talking about?"

No reply.

"Not again!" Blythe groaned, turning to find that Shiloh had once again vanished. Sighing, she began slowly wandering toward the river. *I've been left alone in a foreign city. Again. It wouldn't be so bad, but he knows that I know that the only way to get out of here is to do as he says. Urgh!*

Spotting a log lying forlornly near the riverbank, Blythe sat down, absently scratching her arm. The rough German clothes were beginning to chafe. Watching the river flow by, she thought back over the events of the past few days. *Hmph, the river is making better progress than I am, she thought bitterly. It'll continue moving until it reaches the sea, and there it will still move with the tides. I, on the other hand, am lost in time. Can't move forward, can't move back. Not without fulfilling my "mission" at least. I just want to go home...*

**Gong!**

...*Shiloh could at least be more specific in his directions...*

***Gong!***

...*Wait, what's that?* Blythe snapped out of her reverie.

***Gong!***

“A bell?” she murmured to herself. What had Shiloh said about a bell? *Of course!*  
*The sound of a bell will help me locate this Brunhilda or Hildabroom or whatever her name is.* Jumping up, Blythe ran toward the town, following the deep peal of the bell.  
*Please don't stop ringing!*

***Gong!***

Too quickly, the tolling faded, echoing down the lazy river. Blythe skidded to a stop in front of the blacksmith's shop. Scanning up and down the street, she tried to determine from where the bell had sounded. It hadn't sounded far away while ringing in the hour, but now that all was silent, the location was impossible to tell.

***Tink, tap. Tink, tap.***

The rhythm of the blacksmith's hammer caught Blythe's attention. Looking toward the shop, she eyed the burly blacksmith. Wielding the hammer as though it was an extension of his arm, the smithy focused intently on his work, paying no attention to Blythe. Studying him, she considered her options. *I could wander around for an hour until the bell rings again, or I could talk to this fellow. He probably won't understand a word I say. I don't know, though, the people in Jerusalem understood. It's worth a shot, I suppose. He might be helpful, and if he is, I could get home that much faster. Decisions, decisions...*

“*Guten Tag!*” rumbled a deep voice from the blacksmith’s shop, interrupting Blythe’s internal debate.

*Decision made*, Blythe thought. Forcing a smile, she returned the greeting, “*Guten Tag.*”

“What can I do for you, *fräulein*? You need a pot or spit? A door hinge, perhaps?” the smithy smiled, showing his few blackened teeth. Standing well over six feet, the giant was topped off by a mass of sooty hair, tied back with a string. Broad shoulders and muscular arms tapered down to large, calloused hands, worn from years of work. His clothing was rough and patched many times. Covering his tunic, a large leather apron was tied around his waist, also covered in soot. In spite of his size and rough appearance, though, his blue eyes were kind, and around his neck dangled a simple, wooden cross.

Reassured by his smile and the cross, Blythe stepped closer to be heard over the bellows a couple of young boys were working. “Actually, I need some help.”

“Karl von Bingen at your service. How can I help?”

“I was wondering about the bells. Where did they ring from?”

Throwing his head back, Karl laughed. “That’s easy enough, *fräulein*. They came from the abbey. Didn’t you know that?”

Blythe shrugged, laughing along, “My husband and I are traveling through town and I heard them. They ring beautifully. Could you tell me how to get to the abbey? My husband and I would like to visit.” *Can’t even stand Shiloh and now I’m claiming him as my husband. Great. Well, it would look suspicious if I were traveling by myself...*

“Of course, of course.” Karl stepped out of the shop and pointed down the adjacent road. “Go that way. ‘Tis naught but a hop and a skip. You’ll be there in no time.”

“Thank you, sir. You’ve been a great help.” Blythe said. “*Guten Tag.*”

“*Guten Tag, frau. Guten Tag.*”

Without looking back, Blythe started on her way. *Finally, someone who gives clear directions without being forced.*

“Lying is a sin, Blythe.”

Blythe turned to glare at Shiloh, “Don’t start, Shiloh. I got the information I needed.”

“Not yet, you haven’t.”

Blythe kept walking. She knew Shiloh had disappeared again. “Good riddance,” she muttered.

Just as the blacksmith said, the abbey was not far away. Within ten minutes Blythe stood in front of the small, stone structure. Stepping up to the door, she knocked, only then realizing that she wasn’t even sure why she was here. *What was the name Shiloh told me?*

Slowly, the wooden door creaked open, and a middle-aged man appeared. His tonsured head was fringed by dark hair flecked with silver. Muddy brown eyes peered at Blythe from a somber face. Brown robes covered him, reaching to the ground, cinched with a cord at his waist. On the cord was fastened a beaded, wooden rosary, swaying as the monk moved.

“Yes, my child?”

Unnerved by the monk's unblinking stare, Blythe stammered, "Um, *Guten Tag*, I'm looking for someone, and was told I might find her here."

"Whom do you seek?" the monk's voice remained low and unchanging.

"Her name is Brunhilda, I think."

"I know of no one by that name. Perhaps she is somewhere else." Turning, the monk started back inside.

"No! Wait! I'm sure she's here. Maybe the name's wrong..." Blythe thought hard, trying to remember. "I know it's similar...what about Hildegard?"

The monk blinked, the only sign that he recognized the name. "I'm sorry, my child. I cannot help you. Hildegard cannot receive visitors." Once again, the monk tried to go inside.

*Urgh! New tactic!* "Please, sir," Blythe said with a small sob, allowing tears to gather in her eyes, "I'm desperate. I'm lost, and Hildegard is the only one who knows how I can get home. Please, let me speak to her."

Thinking for a moment, the monk nodded, a small spark of sympathy in his eyes. "Hildegard is not here at the abbey. That is not allowed. She is at the nunnery across the hill. You cannot go inside, but there is a window in her cell through which the villagers speak with her. It's on the far side of the nunnery."

"Thank you, sir! What direction?"

Unfolding his hands from the sleeves of his robes, the monk silently pointed. Wordlessly, he returned to the confines of the abbey, away from the tears of lost women.

"Yes!" Blythe murmured, walking in the direction the monk indicated. *The crocodile tears still work. Haven't used that since I was five.*

Quickly crossing the hill, Blythe saw a building very similar to the abbey. *The nunnery. Hildegard, I have you now.* Skirting the front of the building, she proceeded to the opposite side. Finding Hildegard's window was easy after that, for the constant tread of villagers had created a path leading right to it. Approaching the window, Blythe suddenly felt nervous. Until this point, she had been so busy trying to find the woman that she had failed to realize Hildegard was a nun. Shaking herself, Blythe frowned. *What does it matter that she's a nun? I've talked to much more important people than that without batting an eye. Onward now!*

Peering into the room, Blythe saw a figure at the far corner hunched over a rough desk, scribbling on a piece of paper. Beside her, under the dim glow of an candle, was a stack of papers. *She must be a writer,* Blythe thought. Not wanting to startle the nun, Blythe cleared her throat. Hildegard looked up from her manuscript and smiled.

Hildegard was not a young woman, appearing to be in her late forties or early fifties. Her face was smooth, showing few wrinkles, her eyes clear and intelligent. Though enfolded in black robes, she appeared to be slender. A habit covered her hair, leaving Blythe to guess at its color. Standing, Hildegard came to the window, moving gracefully. Blythe was struck by the peace that radiated from the older woman.

*"Guten Tag,"* Hildegard said softly.

*"Guten Tag,"* Blythe replied. Before she could say anything else, Hildegard spoke again.

*"You must be Blythe."*

Gaping, Blythe nodded, too shocked to speak. Regaining her voice, she stammered, “How do you know that?”

“Oh, Shiloh told me that you were coming quite some time ago. I’ve simply been waiting for you to arrive.”

“Shiloh!”

“Yes. He’s a good friend of mine. ‘Tis not often I see him put away his wings.” Hildegard laughed at the dumbfounded expression on Blythe’s face.

Blythe frowned, “He didn’t have the courtesy to tell me about you. Just your name, and that the bells would help me find you. Typical.”

Hildegard nodded, still smiling, “Shiloh loves to talk in riddles. Don’t be upset, my dear. He didn’t tell me much. Only your name, that you were lost, and that I could help you find your way home. He did tell me that he was leading you in a special mission, but he would not tell me what. I would love to hear your story. Shiloh said you are not from Bingen, and I love to hear of other places. ”

“I doubt you would believe my story,” Blythe said, still feeling irritated with Shiloh. Of course, there were few times she was not irritated with him.

“There are few things that shock me,” Hildegard said, “and if Shiloh is involved, I daresay I will believe you.”

Blythe gave her a dubious look, but decided to share her experiences of the past few days anyway. Taking a deep breath, she plunged in, “Well, first off, I’m from the year 1906...”

For a long time she talked, telling Hildegard where and when she was from, and the revivals in Los Angeles, then about Jerusalem and meeting Shiloh. Relating her time

in Bingen, she ended, "...and then I found you." Shaking her head, she added, "It's so far fetched and impossible, I don't think that even *I* believe it."

"Oh, no, Blythe, nothing is impossible with God. I think that might be part of the lesson you are to learn."

"You mean you believe me?"

"Yes, I do. I agree with Shiloh that you have much to learn. Your heart is hard, Blythe, and that is not good. You're missing out on so much because of your cynicism." Hildegard looked at her sadly. "God really is in control. You just have to learn to allow Him that control. The more you fight, the harder life is."

Blythe shook her head, "No. I'm sorry, but I just can't believe that the stuff happening at Azusa Street and what I saw at Jerusalem could have an impact on life. I still don't think that it's even real. Anyone could have a fit like that by getting too emotional. I doubt that it ever happened between times, either."

Hildegard smiled, "Once again, Blythe, you are wrong. The Holy Spirit is very real, my friend. Very real. It can be a very large part of your life, if you let it. As I said, God is in control, and through His Spirit, He works with your life. Someday you'll understand.

"You're also wrong about people receiving the Holy Ghost and speaking in tongues since Jerusalem. I cannot say about between now and your time, but I can tell you a lot about between Jerusalem and this time."

"You can? You mean, it actually happened after Jerusalem?"

“Yes, yes, it did.” Hildegard retreated into her room for a moment, then returned with a small book. “I have received the Holy Spirit and often speak in tongues, and in my studies of church history, I have recorded others who did the same.”

Opening the book, Hildegard began giving Blythe examples of other people who had spoken in tongues between the time of Pentecost and her own time. “Montanus, in AD 172 was one such person, and was accused of being demon possessed. In the fourth century, though he originally wrote that the events of Pentecost had passed their time, the church father Augustine later supported speaking in tongues, and practiced jubilation, or singing in the Spirit.” Hildegard paused for a moment, noting that Blythe had moved closer to the window and was listening intently. “It’s interesting, actually, because at one time if peasants spoke in tongues, they were considered demon possessed, but if a member of monastery did, it was evidence for sainthood.

“Ironically,” Hildegard said, smiling, “I have been accused of being demon possessed, even though I’m a nun. I think it’s simply because they don’t understand.” Giving Blythe a thoughtful look, she added, “Nor will they until they experience it themselves. Anyway, there are several other examples that I could give you, including my friend, Bernard of Clairvaux, but I think you’ve received enough.”

“Thank you for sharing with me, Hildegard,” Blythe said in a more subdued tone, “I will not promise you anything. I prefer to be in control of my own life, and I think I’m doing quite well on my own.”

“Ah,” Hildegard nodded sagely, “Which is why you’re almost a thousand years and many thousand miles from your home, under the guidance of an angel who is leading you through time.”

Flushing, Blythe said nothing.

Hildegard smiled, patting Blythe's hand through the bars of the window. "You'll find your path, my dear. Just allow Shiloh to guide you, keep an open mind and heart, and be observant. I have faith, and I will be praying for you. Now, I must go, for it is time for prayers. Journey safely, Blythe. I'm glad to have met you."

With that, Hildegard turned away, leaving Blythe to ponder all that she had heard. With a sigh, she headed back towards town. Stepping through the gate to the nunnery, her eyes were on the ground. Catching a movement in her peripheral vision, she looked up. Gasping, she whirled around. The nunnery was no longer behind her, nor was she surrounded by German forests. Once again, she had entered another time.

## *The Martyr*

*AD 1660 – Boston, Massachusetts*

“A warning before jumping a few hundred years really would be nice,” Blythe muttered to herself as the world finished shifting and returned to focus. The change in surroundings was almost as drastic as when she arrived in Germany. Gone were the thick forests, the gentle gurgle of the creek. Replacing rustic nature was a busy cacophony of sights and sounds. Standing on a dirt street, crowded with people and animals, Blythe saw buildings stretching in all directions, standing two or three stories. *That height is nothing compared to Los Angeles*, Blythe thought, *but I bet they’re still a novelty here.* “Where is *here* anyway?” she said aloud.

“Boston, Massachusetts. The year of our Lord, 1660,” said an all too familiar voice. “Did you enjoy talking to Hildegard?”

“Why am I not surprised that you’re here?” Blythe asked, a resigned expression on her face as she turned to face the source of the voice.

“Because I’m your guide. I wouldn’t be a good one if I weren’t here,” Shiloh smiled.

“You’re not a good one anyway, so what’s the difference?” Blythe retorted.

Shiloh placed a hand over his heart, feigning a hurt expression, “Come now, Blythe, that stings. Not a good guide? I’ve been with you every step of the way.”

“‘Every step of the way’? You’re joking, right? Most of the time I look around and never see you. You talk in riddles. You refuse to give clear directions. Better yet, forget directions, you could just send me home!”

“Where’s the fun in that?” Shiloh asked innocently. “That’s the purpose of a guide, Blythe. To guide, not do your job. You have to do it on your own.”

Blythe threw up her hands, “You know what? Forget it. Just give me your usual vague riddle and let me get on with this. Oh! Before that, what am I dressed as this time? A Pilgrim?” she questioned, indicating her long, dark blue dress. The fitted sleeves reached to her wrists, and a wide, white collar circled her neck. Her hair was pulled back and covered with a cap, the strings tied snugly beneath her chin.

“Not quite, though the idea is basically the same. You’re dressed as a Quaker. Quite a good one, too. Mary Dyer will approve.”

“A Quaker,” Blythe repeated dubiously.

“Right. You have heard of them, correct?”

“Uh, I suppose so, but I don’t know anything about them,” Blythe replied with a shrug.

“Perfect! You’ll do very well,” Shiloh beamed.

“Very well for what?”

“Just the usual.”

Gritting her teeth, Blythe glared at Shiloh.

Shiloh smiled, “Walk with me.”

Sighing, Blythe allowed him to escort her up the street. Shiloh chatted as they walked, telling her about the founding of Boston by John Winthrop, the history of the Puritans, and the upheaval caused by the arrival of the Quakers four years earlier.

“Though the Puritans came here for religious freedom, the only religion allowed is their own. Those who believe differently suffer great persecution, and are usually banished. A

law was passed sentencing death to anyone who returned after being banished.”

Blythe raised her eyebrows, interested in spite of herself, “Did they act on it?”

“Unfortunately, yes,” Shiloh said grimly. “Four Quakers were hanged when they came back after being banished. Mary Dyer is a returned Quaker, but she has not been caught yet.” He glancing at Blythe he repeated cryptically, “Yet.”

Following thoughtfully for a few minutes, Blythe recovered herself, frowning, “Shiloh, what is the point in this information? I want to go home. I don’t need a lesson in colonial history.”

“All information has a purpose, Blythe. This time, you need to understand the background of the city so you better understand the people you’ll be meeting.” Shiloh turned a sharp eye on Blythe, with the most stern expression she had seen on him, “Your time is short this time, Blythe. You must talk to Mary. Soon. Otherwise, your quest will be much more difficult.”

“Whatever you say,” Blythe said, trying not to let Shiloh’s words bother her, “Let’s just get it over with, okay? Point me in the direction of this Mary person. I’ve time traveled and globe trotted until I’m dizzy. First Jerusalem, then Germany, now Boston? Surely we’re almost through.”

“Almost,” Shiloh agreed.

“So how much more is left?”

“Enough.”

Whirling around, Blythe raised a hand to physically take out her frustration on Shiloh, only to find that he had vanished. “As usual,” she grumbled, dropping her hand.

*So I'm supposed to find some Quakers this time. Great. How much more of this can there be? I think I responded quite well to Hildegard. Why could I not have gone home...*

“By the way,” Shiloh said, suddenly reappearing. “Mary Dyer is right over there.”

Following the point of his finger, Blythe's eyes settled on a middle aged woman just across the street, dressed almost exactly the same as Blythe. Weaving her way through people and wagons, Blythe approached the lady, knowing that Shiloh had once again disappeared. *Sure, he gives me vague clues, then lets me figure out what's going on*, she thought bitterly as she walked. Mary continued at a quick pace down the street, unknowingly leaving Blythe to follow. *What am I supposed to do with the Quakers? I mean, just giving me a basic goal would be nice...oh*, Blythe stopped mid-thought as she realized that Shiloh *had* in fact given her a goal. He had given her a mission to be exact, at the very beginning of her journey. *That's different*, she argued with herself, *He gave me a broad, overarching goal. He never gives me any idea what I'm supposed to do at each point. He just points me in a general direction and then disappears.*

Blythe was forced to end her mental argument as Mary stepped into a small shop. She debated on whether to follow her inside or wait for her to come back out. *Following her inside might draw too much attention to me. I'll wait a few minutes and see.*

The decision to wait was a good one, for within five minutes Mary reappeared, continuing on her way. *It's now or never*, Blythe sighed. Drawing from the gumption that had made her a reporter, she caught up with the older woman.

“Excuse me, are you Mary Dyer?”

Mary turned around, eyeing Blythe suspiciously, “Yes. Who are thee?”

Blythe paused for a moment, thrown off balance by hearing ‘thee.’ “. I...um...I want to know about being Quaker.”

Mary’s eyebrows raised slightly, “Do ye now?” Glancing around quickly, she linked her arm through Blythe’s and started walking.

*How many more walks am I going to have to take today?* Blythe wondered.

“ ‘Tis not safe to speak of the Friends openly,” Mary said softly as they walked. “I fear not for myself, but thou should not be endangered solely for inquiry. We shall go to a safe place to talk. The home of one of the Friends. Until then, tell me of thyself.”

*Here we go again,* Blythe thought, wondering how to simplify her story into something believable. “Well, my name is Blythe. I’m simply passing through, and heard of the laws passed against the Qua...your people. I wondered what the fuss was about.”

“Blythe...meaning joyous. A lovely name,” Mary commented. “What are thine religious beliefs, Blythe?”

Blythe blinked, taken aback. “Uh, well, I don’t have any, actually.”

“No beliefs?” It was Mary’s turn to be shocked. “So thou are not Puritan or Anglican?”

“No, ma’am.”

“I see. Well...ah, here we are,” Mary stopped in front of a small house. “Come in, friend.”

Stepping inside, Blythe peered around her curiously. The house was sparsely furnished, the trappings therein unassuming.

“My friends are away for a few days, and have kindly allowed me to use their home. I would not stay while they were here. As I said, I mind not the danger for myself,

but I will not endanger those around me,” Mary said, moving quickly about the house, stoking the fire, placing a tea kettle of water over the revived flames.

“What kind of danger are you in?” Blythe asked, taking a seat at the simple wooden table.

Mary gave a sad smile, “The kind that comes to those who will not alter their beliefs. These Puritans will not accept the Friends, or what we stand for. You asked about being a Quaker, did you not?” she asked, ‘Quaker’ falling from her tongue as though leaden.

Blythe nodded, fascinated with the woman. The lines of her face spoke of hardships endured, yet there was an almost tangible energy about her. Mary was calm as Hildegard had been, but hers was a deadly calm. The tea water now boiling, she poured the liquid into a plain teapot, setting it on the table to steep. Sitting, she looked at Blythe.

“First off, we do not call ourselves Quakers,” Mary began. “That name was given to us in derision for the passion with which we worship our Lord. We call ourselves the Society of Friends.”

Blythe’s ears pricked, “Would you explain that passion to me?”

Mary thought for a moment, pouring the tea into worn but clean cups. “Well, we worship with all that is within us, as the Good Book commands. Sometimes, we become so absorbed in worship and praise that we lose all thought of controlling our bodies or our tongues. We move and speak as the Holy Spirit would have us to. Some of us seem to quake under this power, and so we are called Quakers by those who scorn us.”

“So you speak in tongues?”

“Yes, we do,” Mary answered, considering Blythe thoughtfully. “Thou are familiar with this show of the Spirit?”

“Yes,” Blythe said, glancing away. *Oops...when will I learn to keep my mouth shut?*

“I thought thou have no religious beliefs,” Mary challenged.

Blythe shook her head, “I don’t. I’ve simply...heard of such things.”

“I see. I think thou are running from what thou know to be true, Blythe. Thy name means joyous, but until thou stop running, thou would be better named Naomi, for thou are bitter. Thou are as one who knows what is in front of her, but refuses to see it.”

Mouth dropping open, Blythe gaped at Mary. In an attempt to regain her composure, she said hoarsely, “Please, tell me about yourself.”

Mary mercifully obliged. “I am originally from England. I sailed here with my husband and children thirty years ago, when the colony was first founded. William and I settled happily, free from the confines of the Anglican Church. We were quite happy here, but I became more and more dissatisfied with the Puritan church. I saw few differences from the Church of England.

“I went back to England for a visit, and there I heard of a man, George Fox, who was teaching what I had been searching for. He founded the Society of Friends.” A sad look passed over her face as she continued, “They were not well received, and many fled to the New World, seeking the freedom to worship as they desired. I became a Friend while I was there. When I returned home, I found that the Friends were not accepted here, either, and two of our Society were imprisoned. I ended up in prison myself.”

Blythe was intrigued, “What did you do?”

Mary smiled, for a second looking like a much younger woman, “I told the government exactly what I thought of them. They did not care for that. In fact, they sentenced me to hang, along with the other two Friends.”

“What happened?”

“I was ready to die for my faith, as were my friends. They were hung, but I was granted a reprieve at the last minute, due to a letter from my son.” Tears welled up in Mary’s eyes, “I was not allowed to die as an example.”

Frowning, Blythe studied Mary. Never before had she seen anyone like her, someone who was willing to die for what she believed in. She then realized something. “You were banished instead,” Blythe said slowly.

“Yes.”

“So you’re in danger by being here in Boston.”

“Yes.”

“Why are you here?”

“Because my work isn’t finished. Somehow this church government must be made to see that their hierarchical system is wrong.”

“But you could be executed!” Blythe exclaimed. In the short time the two women had been together, Blythe felt as though she had found a friend in Mary.

“I do not fear death. My Lord died for me; it is nothing if I die for Him and what He has taught me. My life is the ultimate sacrifice I can make.”

Blythe stared, amazed at the calm poise with which Mary stated her doom. *The Quakers speak in tongues, like the Pentecostals. She’s willing to be a martyr for what Braeden preaches.*

Silence fell between the two women as they drank their tea. Blythe knew she could not protect Mary. She knew nothing of the time period or the government system, besides the fact that Mary was determined to die for her faith should that be her task.

Suddenly, breaking the silence, a loud knock sounded at the door. Mary glanced at Blythe, and motioned for her to step out of sight. Slipping out of her chair, Blythe quickly stepped behind the door, the only hiding place. Mary smoothed her dress and opened the door.

“Mary Dyer?” a voice boomed coldly.

“Yes?”

“You are hereby summoned to appear before the General Court on the charges of returning to the city of Boston after having been banished. Come with me.”

Behind the door, Blythe slapped a hand over her mouth to stifle her gasp as Mary was led away.

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A little later, sitting at the back of a courtroom, Blythe observed the men at the front of the room. Mary had not yet been led in for her trial, for that’s what it was. *Mary knew it was just a matter of time*, Blythe thought sadly. *That’s why Shiloh told me to hurry. Why can’t they just accept what she believes and leave her alone? She’s harming no one!* A flush crept up Blythe’s neck as she realized that those words could have been spoken to her in regard to the Pentecostals on Azusa Street. *They did nothing to me, yet I*

*insisted on trying to degrade and humiliate them – just as these Puritans are doing to the Quakers. Lord, what have I done...*

At that moment, Mary was brought in, interrupting Blythe's unconscious prayer. Governor Endicott, as Blythe had heard him called, spoke first, "Are you the same Mary Dyer that was here before?"

"I am," Mary replied steadily. Blythe was amazed at how calm she appeared.

"You are a Quaker, are you not?"

Mary tensed at the derogatory term. "I have been so called."

"Mary Dyer you are found guilty of being a returned Quaker. You are hereby sentenced to death. You will return to prison and remain there until nine o'clock tomorrow morning, at which time you will be taken to the gallows and hanged until dead."

Blythe's heart sank as she heard the verdict. Mary, however, remained steadfast, "This is the same sentence as before."

Endicott glowered at the woman, "This time it shall come to pass, though."

"Before, I came here only to appeal your unrighteous laws of banishment on pain of death. So is my quest this time. The Lord will send other servants following me."

Raising an eyebrow, Endicott questioned, "Are you a prophetess?"

"I speak what the Lord tells me to, and now what He has said has come to pass."

Standing in anger, Endicott yelled, "Away! Take her away! Now!"

In a moment, Mary was gone.

Blythe sat dumbfounded. Mary really was to die. Somehow, she had connected with the older woman in the short time they had been together, and her heart broke to

think of her unjust death. Slowly, she rose and left the now empty courthouse, making her way back to Mary's small house. She was sure Mary would want her to stay there.

Arriving, she sank onto the straw-stuffed bed, pulled a worn quilt over her shoulders, and drifted off to sleep, silent tears running down her cheeks.

~ ~ ~

*The next morning...*

Blythe awoke early after a fitful sleep, not feeling a bit rested. Hurriedly, she stuffed her hair under her cap, rinsed her face with cold water, and left for the prison. A crowd of people had already gathered outside, trying to talk with Mary. The window to her cell had been blocked, though, preventing any communication. Soon, the window was a useless means anyway, for Mary appeared at the door of the prison, surrounded by soldiers to escort her the one-mile walk to the Commons. All communication was prevented between Mary and the crowd. Blythe refused to give up saving Mary's life, though. Her restlessness the previous night had been the result of trying to formulate an escape plan.

Walking alongside the group, Blythe got as close to Mary as possible. Trying desperately to get her attention, she yelled over the *rat-a-tat-tat* of accompanying drummers, "Mary! Don't do this! You can still live! Just give it up!"

Mary heard Blythe, and looking over, yelled back, "I came in obedience to God, and I will remain faithful even unto death!"

*It's no use*, Blythe thought, falling behind as she hopelessly watched Mary march to her doom. *Her beliefs are stronger than any fear of death she might have. Of course, she needn't fear death, if she's going to Heaven like they all say.* Feet now leaden, Blythe reluctantly followed the execution parade the rest of the way to the Commons. Once the execution party reached the large elm tree that would serve as the gallows, John Wilson, the Puritan pastor, cried for Mary to repent instead of being deceived by Satan. Mary replied firmly, "Nay, I will not now repent."

Blythe watched in horror as Mary refused the prayers of any Puritan elders, then climbed the ladder to the noose. Within moments, the noose had been slipped around Mary's slender neck. An arm circled Blythe's shoulders, drawing her close. She immediately knew it was Shiloh. As Mary's face was covered with a handkerchief and her body dropped from the gallows, Blythe turned, hiding her face in Shiloh's chest. However, she could not block the gruesome *snap* of Mary's neck from resounding in her ears.

Shiloh gently turned Blythe, now sobbing, and led her away from the scene before she could see Mary's body dangling from the rope, skirts fluttering in the wind.

"Why?" Blythe cried. "Why did she have to die? She was innocent!"

"The world is not always fair, Blythe, especially to Christians," Shiloh answered quietly. "You have already realized this, while in the courtroom."

Blythe gave up wiping away the streaming tears, "Yes. I understood then. I get it, Shiloh. Okay? I give up! I get it. I was wrong. I was wrong about everything. Braeden, the people at Azusa Street, speaking in tongues. It's not a hoax is it?"

Shiloh smiled, "No, it's not. I think you've known that for a long time."

“Shiloh?”

“Yes?”

“Was it my own stubbornness and stupidity that caused Mary’s death? Did she die to teach me a lesson?”

For once, Shiloh was surprised, “No! No, Blythe. These places you’ve been, the people you’ve met, the events you’ve observed, they all took place because they had a role to play in the grand scheme of the world. They also served to teach you what you needed to know. Your involvement had no effect on anything.”

“Okay, good,” Blythe said, shutting her eyes. “I can’t get that sound out of my head...”

With her eyes closed, Blythe failed to notice that Shiloh was leading her toward the gate of the Commons. Passing through, she fell into darkness.

## *Epilogue*

The darkness pressed around her, smothering her. Blythe fought to break free, to find the light. Why hadn't the dark cleared? Struggling, she made her way forward. At least, she thought it was forward. Panic gripped her as confusion set in. *This hasn't happened before. The shift never takes this long. Why hasn't everything cleared up? What's going on?* Blythe's thoughts wildly ricocheted around her mind. Onward she toiled, her arms and legs moving sluggishly, as in her childhood nightmares where she could never run fast enough or scream loud enough. *I've got to keep moving!*

*"Blythe..."*

The voice came as though from far away, distorted by fog and distance. *There! That direction!*

*"Come on, Blythe, come on. Thatta girl."*

With a gasp, Blythe finally broke through the dark barrier into bright, streaming sunlight.

"Welcome back, my dear. We've been very worried about you."

*June, 1906 – Los Angeles, California*

Blinking in the sudden light, Blythe looked to the source of the voice that had called her out of the darkness. "Daddy?" she whispered.

"Good girl! You're finally awake," Hiram Lewis smiled down at Blythe, clearly relieved. One standing close could easily see the resemblance between father and daughter. Blythe's chestnut hair and crackling blue eyes had obviously come from him.

“Where am I?” Blythe asked, brow furrowed in confusion. “How did I get back?”

“You were brought back from Azusa Street in a carriage after the accident,” Hiram explained. “You’ve spent the past three days safe at home in your bed.”

“No! I couldn’t have been! I’ve been gone for ages, all over the world. I can’t have been in bed for three days,” Blythe exclaimed.

“My, you did hit your head hard,” Hiram smiled.

“You must believe me! I’ve been to Jerusalem, Germany, and Massachusetts. I...” Blythe looked around the room in agitation. All was as it should be, every item in place, just as the last time she was there. There was no sign of Shiloh “Was it just a dream? It couldn’t have...it was so real...but time travel is impossible...” Blythe trailed off, lost in her thoughts, trying to put the pieces together.

Hiram looked at Blythe concernedly, “I think we had best let the doctor take a look at you now that you’re awake.”

“Doctor? Why do I need a doctor? I feel fine just fine,” roused from her reverie, Blythe raised herself up on her elbows, only suddenly to discover a spinning room and pounding headache. “Oh...” she groaned, closing her eyes.

“That feeling might be fleeting,” a new voice said from the doorway. A voice that was all too familiar to Blythe. By the time she had opened her eyes again, the man had crossed the room and was standing by Blythe’s bed, peering down at her. Blythe’s mouth dropped open.

“Shiloh!” she gasped.

The dark haired man smiled, his dark eyes crinkling, “Yes, I am Dr. Shiloh. Nathan Shiloh. I specialize in head trauma cases such as yours. How did you know my name?”

Blythe stared at Dr. Shiloh. *Could it have just been a dream? Did I see him at some point, hear his name, and then dream he was an angel? How could a dream be so real?* Confused as she was, Blythe brought her attention to the matter at hand. “Head trauma? Would someone please explain what’s been going on!”

Quickly, while Dr. Shiloh examined Blythe’s head, which she now noticed was bandaged, her father filled her in on what had happened. “As far as we understand, you were almost hit by a runaway automobile, but a Welsh preacher knocked you out of the way just in time. You hit your head on the curb, receiving a concussion. That was three days ago. That young man has been here every day to check on you.” Hiram’s eyes twinkled, “He seems to be very concerned for just a bystander.”

“Braeden,” Blythe breathed. “He saved my life. Oh! I’ve got to tell him the news!”

Puzzled, her father looked at her, “What news, dear?”

“That I finally believe...” Blythe checked herself, “That I’m all right now.” *It was just a dream...*

“Oh, well, if you wish to speak to him yourself, I’ll send him up when he stops by. He should be here in a few hours.”

Dr. Shiloh spoke up, “I think a bit of company is just the medicine Miss Lewis needs. I’ve heard of this Welshman. He’s a good man.” Reaching out, he took Blythe’s hand, “I do believe you’ll mend well, my dear. Simply rest for a while.” Leaning closer,

on the pretense of straightening her bandage, he whispered, “Do not forget what you have learned, Blythe.” Winking, he stepped back, gave a short bow, and was gone, leaving a very flabbergasted Blythe in his wake.

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“A Mr. Llewellyn to see you, ma’am,” a maid informed Blythe a few hours later.

“Send him in, Caroline,” Blythe said, taking a deep breath. She had been mulling over her dream and “Dr.” Shiloh for the past few hours. Ready to believe her adventures to be merely a dream, her theory had been shaken to dust after Shiloh revealed himself to her. Her headache subsiding after a nap, she had mentally reviewed each step of her journey, from Peter’s preaching in Jerusalem, to the martyrdom of Mary Dyer in Boston. After witnessing Mary’s death, everything had changed. Her entire life was different now, and would continue to change. *How can I live up to Mary’s legacy?*

*Knock, knock.*

“Come in,” Blythe called from her settee. The door creaked open, and Braeden Llewellyn stepped inside. Moving forward, he gave a small bow.

“I hear ye are feeling better,” he said quietly, looking her over carefully, taking in the bandage on her head.

“Yes, I am, thank you,” she replied, equally subdued. “You saved my life.”

“Aye, ‘twas a life worth saving, too.”

Smiling, Blythe noted how his Welsh lilt had thickened, indicating his discomfort. *I know how to ease that discomfort, though.* “I hope it will be eventually. Please, have a seat.”

Wondering, Braeden watched her face as he sat down on the opposite side of the settee. This was a new side of Blythe Lewis. Her appearance was the same, save for the bandage, but there was a different air about her. A calmness he had never seen there before. “What do ye mean?”

He was floored by her answer.

“I want to know how to repent.”

“Repent? You?” For a moment he was suspicious. *Is this another ploy to degrade the Pentecostal faith?*

Seeing the doubt in his eyes, Blythe shook her head, “I’m serious, Mr. Llewellyn. A friend recently told me I should be Naomi instead of Blythe because I’m bitter instead of joyful. I’m tired of being cynical.”

“What has brought about this sudden change?” Braeden asked.

Blythe considered for a moment, “Let’s just say that I got some sense knocked into me, and I’ve had the time to think about my life.” Pausing for a moment, she continued slowly, “I realized that I have treated your beliefs and fellow Pentecostals...and you...horribly. I want to apologize for that. I’ve reminded myself of how the Puritans persecuted the Quakers in the seventeenth century.” Flushing slightly, as though she was afraid of betraying her journey through time, Blythe stopped.

Braeden studied the young reporter for a while. His earlier impression remained strong. She had changed, though he had no idea what had caused it. Perhaps a close call with death? He mentally shrugged. No matter. The important thing here was that she sincerely wanted to repent. *Lord, you have answered my prayers above and beyond. I had*

*hoped she would simply soften her heart toward the Pentecostal faith, but You seem to be bringing her right into the fold.*

“Well, then, Miss Lewis, ye want to repent, aye?”

“Yes, I do. I have much to ask forgiveness for.”

Braeden smiled and began leading Blythe through the repentance process.

~ ~ ~

*The next night...*

Blythe approached the Azusa Street Mission with a different attitude. Tonight, she was going with an open mind, and an open heart. Her notebook and pencil had been left at home. Tonight, she was simply going to church. To listen, to absorb. And with Braeden, no less. The Welshman opened the door for her, and the two slipped inside.

All was as Blythe remembered. William Seymour was just as loud, and the music just as boisterous. Tonight, though, she saw and heard with new eyes and ears. Ignoring the seats in the back, her old haunts, Blythe allowed Braeden to lead her down mid-way to the front. Sitting down, she began listening, with her heart as well as her ears. From William Seymour she heard the same message that had resounded throughout her journeys. Peter preached it, Hildegard lived it, and Mary Dyer died for it. This was a message she was now finally ready to accept. Listening, she could feel the walls around her heart collapse, walls that had been chinked and damaged in her time with Shiloh, and even more after repenting the night before. A longing stirred within her, the desire to have what Elizabeth and Rachel had received at Pentecost.

Standing, Blythe slipped into the aisle, and walked slowly down to the altar of the church. The building was packed full, but she felt as though she were the only one there. Bowing her head, she began to pray. Within minutes, church folk had gathered around her, helping her, praying with her. Braeden was one of them. Pouring her heart out to God, Blythe raised her hands. A hand touched her forehead, and she could hear the voice of William Seymour praying over her. A thickness began in her tongue, growing until she had no control over it. Tears streamed down her face as she surrendered before God. Finally, relinquishing all control, Blythe Lewis, the stoic reporter, began to speak in tongues as she received the Holy Ghost.

~ ~ ~

*One week later...*

Braeden Llewellyn smiled as he picked up the latest edition of the *Los Angeles Times*. Across the front page, in bold print the headline read **Pentecostal Fire Envelopes Los Angeles!** The name under the byline – Blythe Lewis.

***The End***

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