

TREASURES 3 OF THE EARTH

A
HOPE
UNBURIED



KIMBERLEY
WOODHOUSE

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

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This book is lovingly dedicated to my friend
Renette Steele.

Thank you for traveling back to your old stomping grounds to help me research my dino series. You are a wealth of information, a huge help, and so much fun to spend time with.

I hope and pray that one day all those beautiful stories you have inside will blossom and bless the world around you.

Keep on keepin' on.



DEAR READER

Thank you so much for joining me for the conclusion of the TREASURES OF THE EARTH series. I have loved writing these books and highlighting women in paleontology, the Bone Wars, and what it took to work on a dig during the Great Dinosaur Rush.

In this story, we'll get to see Earl Douglass—the man whose quotes you've been seeing at the top of each chapter in the series—in his work at the Carnegie Quarry.

Even though I've studied his journals and writings and have spent time speaking with his granddaughter, please understand that what I don't know firsthand has been created in my mind. It's called artistic license in the fiction world. I don't wish to take away from the man that he was or the fantastic work that he did. He was—above all—a man staunch about honesty and truth.

In that same vein, I allowed myself to get creative with what went on at Dinosaur National Monument in those early years. We know there were a lot of visitors. We know there was a lot of digging at the quarry. Those are both facts. A good deal of the rest is from my imagination.

A Hope Unburied tackles several issues.

A big one—and one that I hope doesn't offend—is the fact that judgmental and legalistic attitudes have always been present within the body of believers (and in non-believers too). Now don't go getting mad at me, I'm sure we can all admit that at one point or another we've been judgmental. This just shows us that we are all human. We're sinners. And we've been struggling with the same issues since the beginning of time. There's nothing new under the sun, right?

Another issue is from the perspective of science without faith. I wanted to show how you can feel stuck between a rock and a hard place because you can't please anyone. No matter what you do.

During the era when this book takes place, after the main years of the Bone Wars, it was still very difficult for paleontologists. There were a number of reasons for this. First, it was a cutthroat field (there was still stealing and sabotage going on). Second, the field didn't have the greatest reputation because of Cope and Marsh. Third, women struggled to find their footing in paleontology—just like most women of that day in any kind of work outside the home. And fourth, there was still a huge divide between science and the church.

Ever since the publication of Darwin's book, there had been a split. Before his book, most of the prestigious scientists claimed to be believers. (Gregor Mendel, the father of genetics; Georges Cuvier, the father of paleontology; Isaac Newton; Galileo Galilei; Johannes Kepler; Louis Pasteur; Carl Linnaeus; James Clerk Maxwell; and Nicolaus Copernicus, to name but a few.) But after the book came out and the theory of evolution spread, a chasm opened up. Many in the church believed you couldn't have anything to do with science because you would be negating the Creator. Those in science believed you couldn't have anything to do with religion because believers were ignorant. And if you were a woman in science, well, many tried to make you give up. As soon as possible.

So you can imagine how difficult it was for a woman of faith trying to find her way in this scientific field.

It is a wonderful thing to be able to glimpse back into history and see the struggles of mankind. As we learn and grow, we find there is so much to gain in knowledge if we simply look to the past.

As Winston Churchill said, “Those that fail to learn from history are doomed to repeat it.”

Enjoy the journey,
Kimberley

“Go forth into nature and see what she has to show thee. Enter the silent wood and lose thyself in thoughts unthought before. Let fancy construct worlds unknown—fairy worlds of the mind. All this is wonderful, but the wonder is of thyself the mystery of the mind and that matter can arrange itself, know to perceive, to perceive other forms, other arrangements of matter and then to think beyond, to construct a new world of its own yet of fragments of the old.”

~Earl Douglass—Saturday, January 28, 1888

PROLOGUE

“I was full of courage and the highest hopes.”

~Earl Douglass

| SATURDAY, JULY 23, 1904 • PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA

Life would be so much easier if there weren't so many rules.

Eliza Mills trudged through the tall grass. At fifteen, she was almost grown up. And the past couple years had been filled with not only her studies but with Grandmama insisting on more and more rules.

“It’s not polite for you to insert yourself into adult conversations, dear.”

“Ladies do not wear pants out in public, no matter the job to be done.”

“Must you insist on digging in the dirt right before a society party?”

She mimicked her grandmother under her breath, made faces, and took even longer strides—yes, in her pants—to the surprise that awaited.

“Where are you taking me *this* time?” Devin Schmitt—her best friend, confidante, and classmate—dragged the heavy bag

of tools, foodstuffs, and assorted paraphernalia along the dirt path as he followed her.

Devin's grumbling broke through her own negative thoughts, and a chuckle escaped her lips. His presence made everything better. Grandmama couldn't insist upon more rules out here. They were out in the glorious, not-a-cloud-in-the-blue-sky weather to enjoy the day. *And* her surprise. She lifted her face to the warm sunshine. "You'll see." Her voice floated on the breeze as she tossed the words over her shoulder. Oh, how she loved to tease him.

For six years, he'd traipsed along with her and helped her with whatever grand idea she had. Once his dad said they were old enough to venture out on their own, of course. As her private tutor, Mr. Schmitt was in charge. Grandmama and Grandfather paid him a handsome sum to not only educate Eliza but to ensure she was kept out from underfoot.

When she and Devin were younger, that meant exploring the world together through books and studies, tucked away in the east wing of Mills Manor. Mr. Schmitt often took them outside for their lessons as they studied bugs, birds, trees, and vegetation.

But as they grew older, dear Mr. Schmitt understood they needed to stretch their legs and enjoy the fresh air on their own, especially since he'd hurt his knee and couldn't keep up with them.

It was her only escape from all the ridiculous lady training her grandmother insisted upon these days.

"You do love to torture me, Eliza." Devin's voice carried to her on the breeze.

She turned and glanced back at him, wiggling her eyebrows then venturing forward once again.

His groan floated up to her along with the birds chirping and the swishing of the grass against his summer coat. "How much farther?"

She stopped in her tracks and swung her long, red braid over her shoulder as she swirled to face him. Narrowing her eyes, she placed her hands on her hips. “You should know better than to ask that question.”

“As the one toting all your stuff, *again*, I think it’s perfectly within my rights to ask just such a question.” He set the bag down and mimicked her posture. “That bag gets heavier every time we go anywhere. I’m beginning to think you do it on purpose.”

“A gentleman always carries a lady’s things.” Her chin lifted with the taunt.

“Which I have done and will continue to do, but what did you put in there? An anvil?”

Her lips parted ever-so-slightly as she did her best to suppress her grin. His annoyance wasn’t real. “I have no need for an anvil, Devin Schmitt, so why would I do such a thing?” She clasped her hands in front of her and put on her most innocent look.

His eyebrows raised and he stared her down. The challenge in his eyes was as plain as the grassy knoll underneath her feet.

“Fine.” She broke eye contact, lifted her hands upward, and let out an unladylike grunt. Good thing Grandmama wasn’t present to hear that. “You just have to spoil the surprise, don’t you? We’re almost there.” With that, she turned on her heel, knowing full well that he would pick up the bag and follow.

He always did.

Their path took an incline up a rocky hill, and she focused on her steps so she wouldn’t trip and fall back into Devin. Making him take a tumble backward with her bag of goodies wouldn’t be a nice thing to do, and he might refuse to come with her next time.

Huffing and puffing at the top of the hill, she waited for him to join her and then grabbed his hand. “You’re going to love this. Just wait.” Thrills zipped up and down her spine as

she imagined his face when they accomplished their task. This was what made her feel alive. Even if she was about to have them knee-deep in muck.

As she dragged him toward her surprise, she swallowed back the sorrow that threatened to overwhelm her every time her thoughts went to the future. He'd be off to university before too long, and these days of dashing off together to explore would come to an end.

She blinked several times and forced the reminder to the back of her mind. "Look!" She pointed toward the drying creek bed.

He squinted. Leaning forward, his eyes narrowed even more. It was almost comical how hard he tried.

She watched and bit her lip. Over the years he'd gotten better at seeing what she saw, but most of the time, his guesses were incorrect.

"Is it . . . a fossil?"

"Look who has gotten so smart." She let the sarcastic words drip from her mouth and then smacked his arm with a playful swat. "Of course it's a fossil, silly. Don't you see the shape?"

He studied it for a moment longer. "You're the expert when it comes to this, I'm afraid I don't see anything specific jumping out at me."

"It's *clearly* a baby alligator, Devin. Come on." She raced toward the small fossil peeking out of its hiding place.

"An alligator. *Clearly*. In *Pennsylvania*. Where we have alligators around every corner."

She just laughed and led him down to the trench.

The afternoon passed with them digging through all the mud and dirt that surrounded the rock and fossilized layer. The time was filled with their shared excitement for subjects his father had promised to cover this term, laughter over how much mud covered them both, and the discovery that her "fossil" was exactly what she thought. It wasn't the full

skeleton, but the skull was enough to keep her smiling. She'd have several months of contentment working on retrieving the fossilized bones.

"An alligator in Pennsylvania. Who knew?" Devin sat down on the dry grass above the trench, wiping his hands on a towel.

"Deposited here by a great flood, no doubt." She plopped down in the grass next to him, wiping her hands on another towel. Tossing it aside, she pulled her knees up to her chest and wrapped her arms around them. The pants she wore were filthy, but she would cover them with a skirt before she returned home. The real reason she'd brought him out here today wasn't just another of their explorations, or Devin following her and helping her dig up fossils. Eliza hadn't been certain when the right time would present itself, but at this moment, she couldn't contain the request any longer. "Will you promise me something?"

"It won't get me in trouble, will it?" He elbowed her side and sent her the lopsided grin she loved so much.

"I'm serious, Devin." She stared into his blue eyes, hoping he'd take the hint.

"I'm sorry. I won't tease." He gazed back at her, and his face softened from mischievous to earnest attention.

As she held his gaze, the blue of his eyes intensified. Deepened. Maybe it was simply her imagination, but no matter. She adored his eyes and the way he looked at her. "Promise me we'll always be best friends. That we won't ever let anything come between us." She drew her bottom lip in between her teeth as tears pooled in her eyes. Blinking as fast as she dared, she still couldn't keep them from forming. This wasn't how it was supposed to go. She hadn't wanted to get all emotional and talk about him leaving.

For several seconds he studied her. He didn't tease her or get annoyed that she was tearing up, but he also wasn't saying anything. At all. Finally, he broke their connection and looked

out toward the horizon. “You’re my best friend. Never doubt that. But promising forever? I don’t think your future husband would appreciate you being best friends with a man. Especially not the son of your childhood tutor.”

He always knew how to rile her up and steer the attention off himself. How she hated it when he brought up class! “Oh, posh. I can’t lose you, Devin. I can’t. You’re the only person in the whole wide world who has ever understood me. You’ll be leaving for university after only three more terms. Three! My future husband—whoever it is, *if* I even marry—will just have to deal with the fact that I won’t be *me* without . . . you.” The begging in her voice made her cringe, but he had to know how important his friendship was to her.

Holding her breath, she watched him. But he wouldn’t even look at her.

“Why aren’t you saying anything?”

The moments that passed felt like an eternity. But then he turned and met her gaze once again.

A single tear slipped down her cheek.

Reaching his hand forward, he wiped the tear off her face and then pulled his hand back. “I promise”—his voice cracked, and his Adam’s apple bobbed as he swallowed—“I will always be your best friend.”

She surged toward him and wrapped her arms around his neck. She could handle whatever life dealt her as long as he was by her side.

Eliza pulled back, kissed his cheek, and then sat in the grass again. “I promise I will always be *your* best friend. *Nothing* will come between us.”



Back at the manor, Devin waved good-bye and shoved his hands into his pockets. As he walked home along the familiar lane, his eyes slid closed for a moment, and he relished the

memory of Eliza's warmth as she'd thrown her arms around him. The feel of her so close made his skin tingle.

Her thick, red hair crowned her like a halo. Every time he saw her—which was every day—she grew prettier and prettier. Why did she have to tug and yank at his heart like this? It was difficult enough to keep his feelings to himself.

When he'd wiped the tear off her cheek, his heart had flipped. It was the most intimate gesture he'd ever allowed, and all it did was make him want more.

His feet tripped over something, and he snapped his eyes open.

What had he just done? He'd made a promise to her that he doubted he could honorably keep. A man's word was his bond. What would she think of him when he let her down?

Their lives would surely take them down different paths. He wanted to be a teacher like his father. She wanted to travel the world and dig up bones.

Still, her words had reached deep inside him and woven their way into his heart. He'd carry that moment with him for the rest of his life.

At sixteen years old, Devin's heart was already completely and utterly committed to Eliza Mills. Not that she would ever guess that her chum from all these years wanted more from their relationship. And not that he would ever say that aloud to anyone.

Even still, he would follow her to the moon. Of course he'd made the promise! He was a fool to even question it.

"Master Schmitt, if I might have a word." The booming voice brought him back down to earth, and his feet stuttered to a stop.

Devin glanced around. Mr. Mills—Eliza's grandfather—was in one of his many horseless carriages. Good heavens. The man had driven up without Devin even noticing! Heat flooded his face. This was what happened when he thought of her.

He cleared his throat. “Good afternoon, sir.” With a stiff turn, he placed his hands behind his back and bowed toward the man. At least he still had some manners while his mind had been off lallygagging.

The man didn’t exit his vehicle, just stared at him. Then he spoke to his driver. “Meet me at the gate. I wish to have a private conversation with the young man.”

The door whooshed open, and Mr. Mills’s imposing figure soon stood before him.

Devin straightened and gulped back his nervousness. Mr. Mills had never taken the time to speak to him privately. *Never.*

The driver drove the noisy machine down the lane. Silence surrounded them like a heavy cloak.

Devin swallowed, tugged at his collar, which felt all too tight, and blinked. What was the correct protocol? Speak only when spoken to? Talk of the weather? Ask after his family?

“Let’s walk, shall we?” Mr. Mills didn’t wait for a response, just took long strides. The cane in his hand was clearly for decoration. The man was spry and quick.

Realizing he still hadn’t moved, Devin croaked out a response. “Yes, sir.” He forced one foot in front of the other and focused on breathing.

“I wish to speak to you about my granddaughter.”

More heat rushed up Devin’s neck. A million different thoughts and questions sparked for attention.

“Let me speak plain and simple.” The man stopped his steps, gripped Devin’s shoulder, and speared him with an intense gaze. “My granddaughter spends a great deal of time with you and speaks of you with great admiration.” He narrowed his eyes.

“Yes, sir.” It seemed the only response. The hand on his shoulder was almost as heavy as the bags Eliza made him carry on their adventures.

The grip tightened. “Your father has informed me that you

will be off to university soon. Well done, young man. I will see to it that you have the very best education.”

Devin narrowed his gaze a bit. What was the man offering? To put in a good word for him? Regardless, it was something that deserved his gratitude. “Thank you, sir.”

“Mrs. Mills and I have enjoyed seeing you grow into an honorable young man. You have indeed been a loyal friend to Eliza.” The man released his hold and took up his walk toward the gate again.

Devin joined him, feeling one hundred pounds lighter. If that’s what they thought of him—

“But there comes a time when every man needs to understand his place. Eliza is from a family of great wealth. Generations of my family built this empire. It’s in our blood. You, son, are not from old money. You’re not even from new money. You are from no money at all. Your father is a simple tutor. You, frankly, are a different class.”

All sense of lightness evaporated. Devin’s stomach threatened to tie itself into knots. Mr. Mills wasn’t saying anything he didn’t already know. But *why* was he saying it?

“I need your word, son, that you will never pursue my granddaughter for courtship or marriage. It’s clear she cares for you as a friend, but that friendship can *never* be encouraged to grow beyond what it is now. Am I clear on this point?”

He swallowed against the large lump in his throat. “Yes, sir.”

“And I have your word on that account?” Mr. Mills’s green eyes were the same color as Eliza’s, but the ice within them threatened to stab Devin.

He swallowed again and lifted his chin, doing his best to convince his legs to hold him upright. How could he go against her grandfather? No matter how he felt toward Eliza. He couldn’t. And being her friend was better than nothing. “Yes, sir. You have my word.”

Mr. Mills held out his hand. “Gentlemen always shake on such an important bond.”

Devin reached forward and shook the man’s hand. The iron grip made his hand ache.

“You have a bright future ahead of you, Master Schmitt. I’m thankful to be a part of that.” And with a brief nod, Mr. Mills surged forward and took long, fast strides toward his waiting vehicle.

Devin could only stare after the man. His legs felt weak and wobbly.

For the second time that afternoon, he’d made a promise. And for the second time . . . his heart couldn’t take it. What had he done?

one

“They went out into Nature
With firm and joyous tread
To read in Truth’s great volume
Whatever there was said.”

~Earl Douglass, from his poem
Nature’s Noblemen

| MONDAY, MAY 8, 1916 • CARNEGIE INSTITUTE, PITTSBURGH

Eliza rushed to the director’s office, her long, slim skirt keeping her from going as fast as she wished. What was so important that he’d interrupted her latest tour and put someone else in charge?

A million different thoughts rushed through her mind. What if they fired her? Was that possible?

She was responsible for bringing in scads of donors and new exhibits. Which brought in customers. They wouldn’t get rid of her . . . would they?

On top of that, her grandfather and Mr. Carnegie had been friends for many years. Not that she had gotten this job because of that. She didn’t need the job. Didn’t need the money.

She wanted it.

She'd *earned* her way here.

Stopping outside the door, she put a hand to her stomach, inhaled slow and deep through her nose, and straightened her long, embroidered jacket that matched her skirt.

She rapped on the door.

Mr. Childers opened the door and dipped his chin at her. "Miss Mills." He stepped aside and held out an arm. "Please. Join us."

Us? She swallowed the lump down and entered the room. Her eyes widened. "Mr. Carnegie!" Stepping toward him, she smiled and then hugged the man she'd known since she was a child. Who cared about society's rules when they were in private?

"My dear, you are looking lovelier with each passing year." He released her and offered her a seat.

"Thank you." Smoothing her skirt, she took the proffered chair. If Mr. Carnegie himself was here, what on earth could this meeting be about? She sucked her bottom lip in between her teeth and then resisted the urge to chew on it. What was it with her and all this nervous energy?

"I've asked you here because Mr. Carnegie has a proposition for you." The director sat behind his desk.

"Oh?" She gazed back at her grandfather's longtime friend.

Carnegie took the seat beside her. "You remember Mr. Douglass who works for me and found the first bones out in Utah?"

Butterflies took over her insides. She put a hand to her throat. "My goodness, yes, I've long wanted to meet the man behind Dinosaur National Monument. When it opened up last year, I wanted to be on a train west immediately. I've been so eager to see it with my own eyes."

The grin beneath his white beard and mustache made his eyes sparkle. "Well, if you are amenable, I'd like to have you go out to Dinosaur National Monument for the summer as a

representative of the Hall of Dinosaurs here at Carnegie Institute. Since—at this time—the monument is nothing more than our quarry with nothing official for visitors, I believe your help making it more accessible for the guests is just the thing.”

Her throat squeaked as she gasped, and it was useless to try to contain her giddiness. Her lips lifted, and she tapped her foot as if a lively tune was playing on the Victrola.

Mr. Carnegie’s amusement was clear as his grin widened. “I’ve always admired your enthusiasm, Miss Mills. At first, your expertise would be required to help the sightseers understand what it is we are doing out there. It’s taking valuable time away from the dig for the workers there to have to stop and explain their process. And if Mr. Douglass needs your assistance in the actual quarry, I told him you would be up to the task.”

She gasped. “Truly?”

“Yes.” He leaned back in the chair, appearing content with himself. The smile that lifted his rounded cheeks always made her think of St. Nicholas and Christmas. This wasn’t his reserved smile for his colleagues or business associates. No. This was the giant smile that she’d loved seeing as a child. The one that showed the man was utterly happy.

“That is a huge honor, sir. I would be thrilled to go. And even more ecstatic to dig with Mr. Douglass!” Keeping her seat was more difficult than she imagined, but she forced herself to think of calm and sedate things. And pressed her palms to her knees to keep them from bouncing along with her tapping boot. After all, Mr. Childers was also in the room. She had to appear professional.

Mr. Carnegie rubbed his beard. “I’d even be willing to lend your expertise to the monument permanently, if you so desire. At least, as long as we are digging in the Carnegie Quarry for my Hall of Dinosaurs. You would still be an employee of the institute, and we could offer your services there. I’m inclined to agree with Earl’s vision that the future generations

need to see the bones and fossils in their resting places after we have produced an adequate amount of displays for the museum. Many have been excavated from the quarries, which is tremendous, but allowing people to see the great beasts' resting places—essentially trapped in time in the stone walls—will be a marvelous advancement for science and knowledge.”

Her expertise. That's what he said. This amazing man didn't offer compliments up to make people feel better about themselves. If *he* believed in her and saw her experience and knowledge, there was hope that one day . . . the rest of the world would as well. To be recognized in the field of paleontology like this was more than a thrill. “That is very generous of you for the national monument, and I appreciate your confidence in me, Mr. Carnegie. More than you know.”

“My dear, I know how long you've loved the field. And you've proven yourself through not only your studies and degree, but your passion and vision for the future of paleontology.”

She put a hand to her chest. “That is high praise indeed, sir. Thank you.”

“As much as I believe in Mr. Douglass, I believe in you. To inspire future generations, especially young people, to explore and learn. There is great potential out there in Utah.” He stood. “If you are agreeable, I really must be on my way. But I wanted to ask for your assistance myself. I do believe this will be wonderful not only for the future of paleontology, but for the Hall of Dinosaurs, and for your own future as well.”

She came to her feet and nodded to him. “I'm more than honored that you would think of me for this position.”

“You're the *only* one I thought of.”

She couldn't contain her smile. “While my first inclination is to agree immediately to your offer, I would appreciate a day or two to speak to my grandparents and to think and pray about it.”

“Of course. That would be most wise.” He placed his hat on his head and winked at her. “Just let Mr. Childers know your answer and we will make all the arrangements.” And with that, the man whose name was on the building left the room.

Eliza blinked several times and took a steadying breath as she turned back to the museum’s director. In all the time she’d worked here, he’d earned nothing but respect from her. He’d never questioned her ideas because she was a woman—and young at that—and he’d never treated her different from any other employee. Honest and steady. That’s how she’d describe the man in front of her. “I’m a bit overwhelmed.”

“It’s a substantial offer, Miss Mills.” His somber expression was difficult to decipher.

“It is.”

“It will be a loss for the Hall of Dinosaurs if you leave, but rest assured, we will continue with the programs you have instituted.” He nodded toward her.

“Thank you, sir.”

He steepled his fingers together. His gray eyes were serious. “I must admit that I was resistant to the board hiring you at first.”

His admission was no surprise. One, a woman as a paleontologist was not widely accepted. Two, she was young. Three, many people thought she got the job because of her family’s relationship with Mr. Carnegie rather than her knowledge or experience. They just saw the little rich girl who knew nothing of dinosaurs.

For two years, she’d gone above and beyond to demonstrate her knowledge and worth.

The director continued, “You have proven yourself time and again, and I haven’t once doubted you. You are an asset to the scientific community, Miss Mills.”

Another compliment in the same realm as Mr. Carnegie’s. Could this day get any better? “Thank you, sir.” Making her

way to the door, she allowed herself to revel in the excitement. “I had better get back to work, but I greatly appreciate your support and encouragement. It has been a privilege to learn from you.”

He nodded again, a slight smile on his lips.

As she left the office and pulled the door closed behind her, she resisted the urge to squeal like a little girl. But once she was several paces away and was certain no one was watching, she twirled around, then released her joy in a long sigh.

Wait until she told Devin!



MONDAY, MAY 8, 1916 • PITTSBURGH

The newspaper crinkled as he shook it open. They’d done it. It had been official for eight months now. The sightseers were all visiting in droves. Not that they hadn’t been fascinated ever since Earl Douglass found the bones there. Just thinking about it made his skin crawl.

The President had set aside eighty acres and called it a national monument.

He pushed his anger down.

He should have been the one to find the bones. It should be his name on everything. Carnegie should be singing *his* praises for his contributions to the world of paleontology, rather than relegating him to the insignificant work he did here.

Taking a swig of his coffee, he took a steady breath. Plans changed. That was the way of life. And death. But his greatest strength was patience. He could be flexible. As long as the end result was the same, he could allow for some tweaks in his plans. He wasn’t so arrogant to believe that everything would always go exactly as he wanted it.

The timing had to be perfect. Once he had Mr. Andrew Carnegie behind him, the world would see.

Whenever he mentioned paleontology, the upper class

would no longer share jokes behind their hands and newspapers as they recalled the lack of integrity shown by Cope and Marsh.

He would be the new face of paleontology. As he rose to the top, the accolades and respect would come pouring in. The field of science would have prestige once again.

When his men in Wyoming finished excavating his finest specimen yet, it would have the largest display next to Carnegie's beloved Dippy.

Yes, this could all be in his favor.

"Bring the crowds and hordes to view the dinosaur bones, Earl. Enjoy the ride while you can." He spat the words at the paper and set it aside. Shuffling through his correspondence, he tossed several letters aside, then spied the one he had been waiting for.

There was news from Wyoming. Ripping the letter open, he scanned its contents. With a frustrated growl, he balled the paper up and threw it across the room.

Nothing was going his way.

He took a deep breath and stood, crossing the plush carpet of his office, and snatched the crinkled letter off the floor. Settling back down at his desk, he smoothed the missive and read it again.

Not good news, boss. The skeleton that was promising in the beginning has yielded no more bones from the quarry. We need more funds to expand the digging area—maybe we just haven't looked far enough to the north yet. Awaiting your instructions. Please send telegram. —C

He plucked his glasses from the bridge of his nose and rubbed them with a cloth. Anger coursed through his veins. More money? He'd invested far too much already.

He glanced up at the clock. Ten minutes until he had to

meet with the junior paleontologists to begin a new display. Inhaling deeply, he worked to release his aggravation and then let out the air in his lungs with slow, pulsing breaths. Then he slid his glasses on, tucked the letter in his vest pocket, and stood. Work awaited. He grabbed his lab coat off the hook and slipped it on, making sure each lapel laid flat.

His ire had cooled. For now.

A few hours later, the late-spring wind tugged at his hat as he bounded down the steps of the Carnegie Institute toward home.

Finally, this wretched day was over. It would have been enough to learn about the impending disaster in Wyoming. But no. His junior paleontologists—the very men he had selected to help reach levels of brilliance under his tutelage—attempted to correct him about the placement of a spiked plate of the *Stegosaurus unglatus* just unboxed from the monument in Utah.

The nerve.

Still, his time with those two imbeciles hadn't been a complete waste. The skeleton Douglass sent would need a few plaster casts done for the back left leg. A common practice among museums when skeletons were almost completely intact. No one wanted to see a dinosaur with three legs or a missing tail—

His eyes widened.

That was it!

So what if they didn't have a *whole* skeleton. They could create what was missing out of plaster. And perhaps if they found a few other random bones where they were digging, they could be used to complete his new find. Maybe this was the best solution until he had more funds to expand the dig.

A voice shouted down to him. "Mr. Nelson!"

He cringed. Eliza Mills.

For months he'd had to endure the high-and-mighty lec-

tures of that woman. Why on earth Mr. Carnegie allowed her to stay on was beyond any sensible man's comprehension.

He frowned, feigned he hadn't heard a thing, and turned the collar of his coat up, tucking his chin down between the tweed fabric. The delicate work that they did required precision. Intense study.

Just because her grandfather was Carnegie's friend should not have been enough to grant her a job. Much less keep it for this long. This was a man's field. And that was plain fact.

Paleontology's reputation needed to be restored, not ruined again. Adding a woman into the mix spelled disaster.

She called again, but it was cut off.

His foul mood today had started with her when he arrived and ended with her. Frankly, he was tired of putting on a nice face. He dared a glance back. She was heading back inside with the institute director.

Staring back at the museum, a new idea formed. It was a bit risky. He squinted in the chilly spring air. But in the long run, if he wanted her gone, it would be worth it.



MONDAY, MAY 8, 1916 • UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH

Another school term was about to come to a close. Devin smiled out the window with the thought. It had been a good year at the university. His students had grown and, if their tests were any indication, learned a great deal.

But the summer break couldn't come soon enough. His mind and body were exhausted.

What had being a professor of English shown him?

It was draining, that's what.

It had been one thing to teach a class or two while he'd worked on his advanced degrees. Another thing entirely to take over the English department after the sudden departure of the head. A man who'd been there for years.

At least Devin had plenty of time to recover, rejuvenate, and plan for the next year. The Dean had promised him that.

He turned back to his desk and the stack of essays waiting for his red markings. Might as well tackle what he could for the next hour. It would be quiet here for a while and then he could head back home and check on Dad.

He pooled his energy, stretched, and rubbed his eyes before diving back into the grading.

Watching his father over the years and studying under him had only made Devin's love of learning and teaching grow. Before he could even read, the excitement of discovery and education had filled their small home.

It made him smile. There were many days he missed not ever really knowing his mother, but Dad had filled that void as much as he could. Devin really shouldn't complain. His upbringing had been wonderful. With plenty of opportunities thanks to the Mills family.

Thoughts of the family that had been his benefactor for so long kept him distracted from the essay he'd been trying to read—and brought Eliza to the forefront of his mind. Her grandfather had paid for every cent of Devin's education, not allowing a word of argument from him nor any from his father. And the man had been at every major event and graduation to shake Devin's hand and say how proud he was.

Mr. Mills never again mentioned the talk they'd had on that day in the lane, but Devin thought of it often—especially when his affection for Eliza would swell.

He shook his head and focused on the paper. Every day he had to push thoughts of her aside. And every day he struggled.

Knock, knock!

His head jerked up to see who it was.

The door opened a little, and an enormous green hat with some sort of feathers protruding out of the top preceded its wearer.

He'd know a hat like that anywhere. Eliza.

The object of his mind's wandering peeked around the door, eyed the room, and grinned. "Oh good, you're alone." She scurried to his desk and grabbed hold of his hand. "You simply won't believe it!" Tugging him from his seat, she began to spin around the room with him in tow.

It must be some pretty great news. "Whoa, give me a minute to put my pen away." Without letting go of her hand, he rushed back to his desk and laid it down, right as it dropped a fat blob of red ink. "See? We wouldn't have wanted that on your clothes."

"*Pshaw.*" She grabbed hold of his other hand and around she twirled until she was breathless and almost lost her hat. Putting one hand up to balance the monstrosity, she giggled and released his other hand. "What is an ink spot when there is such exciting news to share? I had to tell you first."

"Tell me what?" Gone was his exhausted state. Seeing her made everything within him come alive.

She perched ever so daintily on the windowsill and covered her mouth with one hand. Her long green jacket and skirt matched her hat to perfection.

Eliza would never have it any other way.

Following her lead, he sat on the corner of his desk facing her and willed his heart to slow down. He crossed his arms over his chest. They were no longer children. Better prepare himself. Any day now, she'd tell him that she'd given her heart to someone. And his world would change.

Forever.

She released an almost imperceptible squeal and lifted her eyebrows. "Mr. Carnegie asked *me* to go to Dinosaur National Monument to the Carnegie Quarry as a representative of the institute and work there—lending my expertise, as he put it—for the whole summer! Permanently if I wish."

He hadn't seen such unadulterated joy on her face since

they were children. But his heart broke just the same. She was leaving?

Almost immediately, her smile drooped. “What is it? You’re frowning.”

“Not a thing.” He forced an enthusiastic smile. “I’m ecstatic for you. Sounds like a wonderful opportunity.”

“Don’t try and fool me, Mr. Schmitt. What was that frown about?” Like a dog with a bone, she’d never let go if he didn’t appease her with a legitimate answer.

“I’m sorry. It’s been a long day, and it was probably from exhaustion.”

“And?” She stood and stepped closer, analyzing him. One buttoned-up boot tapped the floor.

“The term is almost over. Lots to do. It’s only my first year in this position—”

“And?”

Good grief, she loved to push. Fine. “I didn’t like the thought of you leaving.”

“Is that all?” She released a light laugh. “That’s easily fixable. Since you’re about to enter your summer break, why don’t you come along? At least for a week or two?”

It was easy for her to say that. She always had an answer for everything. Eliza Mills had never let anything stand in her way. He, on the other hand, was not so fortunate. “I have a great deal to do this summer. It’s not like I can just take off. There’s planning and meetings and—”

“Oh, you’ll have plenty of time to attend to all that. You have time owed to you. I know you do.” Her green eyes flashed at him.

“While that is true, I have other responsibilities. Besides, didn’t you tell me that Dinosaur National Monument isn’t exactly close to any city? I don’t think you will last very long out there.” Maybe she would take the bait and get the focus off of him. He’d love nothing more than to spend his sum-

mer break with Eliza, but two nights ago—when he couldn't sleep for thoughts of her—he'd pledged to release her from his heart. This one-sided love affair wasn't doing him any good. Eventually she'd marry some rich fellow, and where would he be then?

Hands on her hips, she stepped even closer. "You don't think I will enjoy being away from the city?"

With a laugh, he dipped his chin at her. "I know you won't. You love digging and bone quarries and all that—but you *really* love the city. I give you three weeks tops."

She swatted at his arm. "I'll make it longer than that. Just you wait and see."

"Without Rufaloe's?"

The mention of her favorite bakery produced a twinkle in her eyes, and she licked her lips.

Yep. He knew her. "Or that milliner"—he pointed to the massive thing atop her head—"the one that makes these . . . gigantic creations you love to wear?"

A hand to the tip of it, she sent him a lopsided grin. "What? You don't like my hats?"

He gave her a little eye roll. "They're huge, and I'm always wondering when you will topple over."

"I think they're lovely. I will not be toppling over, thank you very much, and I happen to like how I look in them."

The slight defiant lift of her chin was adorable.

"Don't you?"

But he caught the hesitancy in her eyes. No matter what she said, she always sought his approval. "Eliza Mills, you will always be lovely, even when you're dressed in men's pants and covered in mud." It was as close as he could come to sharing his heart with her without breaking his promise to her grandfather.

"Spoken like a true friend." She removed her gloves, patted his hand, and leaned on the desk next to him. "Thank you."

And I'll have you know that I won't have any trouble out at Dinosaur National Monument. I might miss the city—yes, I'll give you that—but I'm excited to do what I love to do. It's an incredible opportunity. Especially for a woman.”

“Yes, it is. And I'm thrilled for you.” He bumped her with his shoulder. Sitting side by side was easier than looking her in the eye, but much more difficult because she was so near. He could smell her perfume—the soft scent of roses—and feel her warmth.

For once, he was thankful for the monstrous hats she wore because it gave them a buffer. Maybe her going out West would be good for him. To not see her every day and have the constant reminders of what could never be. Perhaps he could actually follow through with his pledge to release her. Once and for all.

“But what if I need you there?”

Her voice cut through.

“What?”

“You weren't listening, were you?” She released a little huff, stood up, and paced in front of him. “I *said*, you never answered my question about coming out to the quarry for a while. What if I need you there?”

“Why on earth would you need *me* there?” He tried to cover the question with sarcasm, but his heart still longed for her to say that she couldn't live without hi—

No. Stop it. This was exactly why he'd made the pledge.

Glancing around the room, she stepped closer. So close, her hat almost touched his forehead. “All those years I wrote the papers under a man's name . . . you promised you would stand in if I needed you.”

This again? *Not* what he wanted to hear. “Ugh, Eliza. That was years ago. You've never once needed me to stand in, and you won't ever need me to. You're on your own two feet, you have a degree, and you are publishing all those scientific

papers under your own name now.” He waved off the comment. “You’ve done digs with your own name. Besides, no one has ever come looking for the author of those papers. That charade is long past.”

“But you promised.”

If she started to pout, he’d throttle her. “Eliza, no. I will not be your stand-in. You don’t need me to be. Aren’t they pretty obscure anyway?”

Her cheeks tinged pink, and her eyes narrowed to slits. “Obscure?”

Now he’d done it. “That’s not what I meant.” He held up his hands. “I’m tired. I already told you that. What I meant . . . well, didn’t you say that most of the scientific papers got buried after a while? I mean . . . since no one is talking about them right now, don’t you think you’re safe from having to answer for them?”

“You might have a point, Mr. Schmitt”—whenever she used his surname, he was in trouble—“but I think you’re simply making excuses.” Once again, she perched beside him. Close. “You don’t want to go, do you?” She leaned to the side and eyed him straight on. “Or is it that you’ve had enough of me?”

He slumped his shoulders and shook his head. Was she really that clueless? “I’ve not had enough of you. But paleontology has always been *your* thing. If you’ll remember, I teach English. I’m excited for you for the opportunity and to see you excel and spread your wings. Very few women have the chance to make a mark like you do.”

With squinted eyes, she studied him. Apparently satisfied with his answer, she broke the connection and stared forward. “It still wouldn’t hurt you to come visit.”

There was no winning this argument. He crossed his arms over his chest again and nodded at his outstretched legs. “You are correct.”