

Chapter XV

Finding It

August 27, 1947 – August 30, 1947

Craig, Norma, and Janet were aware of the reason they had come on the trip. After dinner, they and Gover kids had been playing games together at the dining room table. Curious about what had brought Sheffield and Ramona to tears, they joined them in the living room. They and the Gover kids sat on the floor and listened to what they were talking about. The peaceful, powerful feeling in the room was one that the Brason kids were unaccustomed to.

“Now as for the question, 'Does marriage continue beyond the grave?' It most certainly does.” Wayne said. “Your wife was right when she sensed that the temple links couples and families together in heaven. When Morris and Sheila are married on Friday, they will be sealed for time and all eternity by one who has the authority given him, that whatsoever he shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven.”

Intrigued by the comment, Sheffield asked, “Then when my niece was married in your church, why was it for this life only?”

“You see,” Morris explained, “that authority can only be exercised within the temple. To understand the authority of the priesthood, we’d need to have an entirely different discussion. I will tell you this much. The priesthood is the power and authority of God given to men to carry out his work and bless the lives of people. In fact, you, Admrial, have been blessed by it.”

“I have? When?”

“When you got blown through the hatch onto the bridge at Salerno. Not only did you bust your leg, but you were not breathing and had no pulse.”

“So I’ve been told. I don’t remember that part.”

“Commander Terry was busy taking charge and everyone was busy and didn’t notice. While we were waiting for the pharmacists mate to come, I sat on the deck holding your head in my lap. In that chaotic moment when no one was looking I placed my hands on your head and by the authority of the priesthood that I held, I commanded the life back into your body. By the time the pharmacists mate arrived, you had a faint pulse and were breathing shallow.”

“Really?” Sheffield said in amazement. “I did not know that. That’s truly incredible.”

His father interjected, “I see the question of authority is on your wife’s list. For the purpose of this discussion, let me just say, that the authority has been restored and is found in the priesthood of the Church. How that came to be will be explained another time. For one to be sealed in the temple, there are certain requirements and prerequisites. Only those who are mature, worthy, baptized members of the church and have met all of the requirements can enter the temple.”

“Just what are the requirements?”

Wayne explained, "There are certain commitments that we make in the temple and a person needs to first demonstrate a willingness to live up to those commitments."

"Such as?" Ramona quizzed.

"For starters, a belief in God the eternal Father, His son Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost. A conviction that the beliefs of the church are correct and that its leaders are duly authorized servants of God and actively participate in the church."

"So, you're saying that we won't be able to actually attend their wedding?" Ramona asked.

"I'm afraid not." Wayne responded. "But if it's any consolation, neither will our younger children. But you're certainly welcome to wait for them outside and join us for the wedding dinner and the reception."

"We'd be honored." Sheffield accepted. "Is that all one has to do to go into your temples?"

"No, their's more." Morris said. "A person must be chaste before marriage and have complete fidelity while married. We have a principle called tithing where a person must be a full tithe payer, which is ten percent of their income. We also have what we call the word of wisdom which means to abstain from coffee, tea, tobacco, and alcohol."

"We pretty much have all of that down already." Ramona said. "We believe in God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit. We're in the habit of attending our church regularly. We're accustomed to paying tithing to our church. We don't smoke or drink, but do occasionally drink coffee. I quite smoking years ago and I think I could quite the coffee without much effort. But if what you say is true, we'd have to join the Mormon Church to go into the temple."

"That's right." Morris said.

Sheffield leaned forward in his chair and asked, "So what does this have to do with Geannie and how does that help her?"

"That's a very good question." Gail said. "You see, all of the blessings afforded in the temple are available to those who have died as well as the living. Let's say that you are baptized and meet all of the requirements that Wayne mentioned, in a year you would be able to enter the temple and have her sealed to you as your wife for eternity. Someone would stand in as a proxy on her behalf. Not only that, but your children could then be sealed to the both of you in the same manner. But that's not all, you and Ramona could also be sealed together and your children sealed to the two of you."

Morris went onto say, "That's what she meant when she said that you would have to find it first."

"So, that's how it works." Sheffield reasoned. "As strange as it sounds, I believe you. I could be sealed, as you call it, to both Geannie and Ramona. I can't think of anything I'd want more. That is if Ramona wants me forever?"

"Absolutely, Babe." Ramona added. "This is what I want too. Like Sheffield said, I believe you too."

"You kids have been pretty quiet. What do you think of all of this?" Sheffield asked.

"When I've been over to the Rowans, they have a picture of a temple on the wall in their living room with a plaque above it that says 'We're A Forever Family'. Read says that it means that they can be together after they die."

"I like it." Janet said. "I already lost one mom and dad. I don't want to lose you too."

"Do you want us forever?" Norma asked.

"More than anything." Ramona assured them. "When your mother died she said that God sent the three of you to them temporarily. She firmly believed that God wanted you to be in our family because we couldn't have one."

"Okay now," Sheffield asked, "how do we go about learning more about all of this?"

"Well," Morris said, the first of many steps is that you would need to read the Book of Mormon."

"The book that the name 'Mormon' comes from." Sheffield said. "That sounds like an easy place to start."

Wayne said, "I noticed that another of questions on her list asked if the Bible was all there was, or is there more. The answer is, God in his mercy has provided additional scriptures that contain his word. The Book of Mormon is the testament of the ancient inhabitants of this content and God's dealings with them. The most significant account in the Book of Mormon is the appearance of Jesus Christ to these people and what he taught them."

With great interest, Ramona asked, "And how did this book come to be?"

Morris continued, "It was written by the prophets that were among them and compiled onto gold plates by Mormon, one of their last prophets. His son Moroni finished the record and hid it in the ground for safe keeping until such a time when God saw fit to bring it forth."

Wayne went on, "In eighteen twenty three, this same Moroni appeared to a young man by the name of Joseph Smith, who had already had a previous encounter from heaven. Moroni directed him to where he had hid the plates fourteen hundred years earlier. After four years of preparation Joseph Smith was allowed to take the plates and was given the charge to translate them by the gift and power of God."

Ramona was in tears. After regaining her composure she said, "I don't believe it. Not that I don't believe what you just said, but what I meant to say is that what my great grandfather said is true. You see, I am a quarter Choctaw Indian, and my great grandfather was a tribal elder. He used to tell of a legend in which one day the Great Spirit would give his people a book from out of the ground that would teach them great truths. This is that book!"

"Yes, Ramona. It is." Morris said. "The reason that it is important that you first read the Book of Mormon is because once you come to know that it is the word of God, then you can be assured that the rest

of the answers to these questions are true. To know that the Book of Mormon is true is the key to all of the rest. It will take time and patients. There is no way we can cover it all in the time that you are here.”

“That’s right.” Wayne said. “Here is a copy that you can have. When you go home, contact the Rowan’s and they can take it from here. In the meantime, we have a wedding to celebrate.”

“That’s right. It’s getting late,” Morris said, “I need to take Shelia home.”

“Let me show you to your rooms.” Gail said.

“I think we’re on to something here Babe.” Ramona said as they got undressed and ready for bed. “It just rings true to me. What do you think?”

“I must admit that I am very intrigued by it, but I’m hesitant to just jump into it. Like Morris and Wayne said, it will take time and patience.” Sheffield reasoned. “But I am willing to look into it further.”

“Are you willing to give it some serious investigation?” Ramona asked as she slipped into her nightgown.

“There is too much going on here not to. After all, I can’t get over how Geannie came to us like that. There must be something to it for her to have done that. But I can’t base a decision like this on that alone.”

“You’re probably right.” Ramona said as she sat on the bed brushing her hair. “But I will tell you this, I really believe what they said.”

“Its not that I’m skeptical, I just need to know more about it first.”

“I understand where you’re coming from. After all, you are life a long Methodist and it is deeply ingrained in you. A change like this would be a big step for you. Me on the other hand, the whole religion thing is still pretty new to me. It wouldn’t be that difficult for me to join another church.” Ramona said as she turned down the bed.

“If it all fits together, I would do it in heartbeat.” Sheffield said as he climbed into bed. “I have got guidance from answers to prayer before. I think I will know the answer when I get it. But first. . . .”

“I know.” Ramona finished his sentence for him, “You need to study it out. Thats what they said it will take. I think we both have a lot to think about Babe.”

“We sure do. I’m so glade that we came here.

“Lets take look at this book.” Sheffield suggested. Propped up in bed, they read the introduction together.

When they were finished Ramona concluded. “I’m anxious to begin reading it.”

“Yeah, me to. But its late and its been a long day.” Sheffield added as her reached over to turn off the lamp. After a goodnight kiss he said “Goodnight Sweetheart.”

“Goodnight Babe.”

They both laid there in bed next to each other deep in their own thoughts as they drifted off to sleep.

The next morning, Ramona helped Gail fix breakfast. It was big ranch style breakfast with lamb chops, scrambled eggs, and fried potatoes. By the time Wayne and Morris came in from doing the chores, it was ready. After sitting down at the two tables, Wayne called on Joyce to offer a blessing on the food.

Over breakfast, Sheffield invited Wayne and Gail to go with him when he took the plane over to Logan to refuel for the trip home. Neither of them had ever flown before and jumped at the chance.

Later in the morning, they were ready to go. Ramona let Wayne have the front seat so he could get a better look and she rode in the backseat with Gail. Once in the air, Sheffield circled around the house so they could get a good look at the homestead with the barn, lambing sheds, grain bins, haystacks, and corrals. The farm machinery looked like toys from that vantage point. Wayne pointed out the rest of their land. The dry farm on the hills was patch of gold, only the stubble from that year's crop remained.

"Where's your summer range?" Sheffield asked.

"It's just below the peak to west." Wayne pointed out.

Sheffield took the plane up and over the foot hills along the mountain range.

"Do you see that knoll up ahead?" Wayne asked. "The camp is just on the other side."

As they crested the knoll, they could see the camp wagon parked next to a stand of juniper trees. As they flew on, hundreds of sheep were spread out on the hills and in the gullies as they grazed. The Basque shepherd was on horseback with a pair of border collies tagging along behind.

"We'll leave them up here for about another month." Wayne said. "By then they'll all be bred and we'll bring them down and pasture them in the stubble and hay until the weather turns bad. Then we'll keep them in the corrals until they lamb in February and March."

Gail added, "Lambing season is so busy, but it is my favorite time. I just love all of the baby lambs."

After passing over the heard, Wayne said, "The range ends right about here. Another couple of miles up ahead is Idaho."

Sheffield banked the plane around and headed toward Logan in the distance. As they came closer, Wayne said, "Do you see that castle like building on the hill? That's the temple where Morris will be married tomorrow."

A few minutes later, they were on the ground at the airport. Once the plane was refueled, they took off again for the short flight back to Clarkston. This time, Gail rode in the front seat so she could have a better look. Back in the corral, they waited for the dust to settle before getting out of the plane.

Gail, Cynthia, and Ramona put together a picnic lunch that the two families enjoyed together in a stand of trees along the creek. The bond that Sheffield and Ramona had shared with Morris over the years,

now extended to his family. Craig, Norma, and Janet had become good friends with Joyce, Holly, and Jerry each in the short time that they had known them.

After lunch, the kids played on the tire swing over the creek while the adults visited. Sheffield told Morris and his folks about their little ranch, coaching and teaching government and Ramona told about her new career as a real estate investor. Morris, Wayne and Gail listened with great interest.

Changing the subject, Sheffield said, "We read the introduction to the Book of Mormon last night. I found Joseph Smith's account as to how he came across the gold plates reasonable. If he were just making up the story, he would have skipped the four years between finding them and actually getting them."

"Two things struck me in particular." Ramona added.

"What was that?" Morris asked.

"For one, the book is about the ancestors of the American Indians, my ancestors. It sounds very much like the book my grandfather used to talk about."

"What's the other?"

"The other thing is the fact that three witnesses not only saw and handled the plates, but also saw the angel."

"Come with us." Wayne said. "We've got something to show you."

Wayne, Gail and some of the kids got into one car and Morris, Sheffield, Ramona and the rest of the kids got into the other and drove up to the cemetery on the hill and stopped in front of a tall granite monument. They all got out of their respective cars and Wayne took them to the monument.

"This," he explained, "is where Martin Harris, one of the three witnesses, is buried. In his later years he moved to Clarkston. Prior to his death, during his last illness, many of the men in Clarkston took turns sitting with him. My Grandfather Gover was one of them. Many times he had heard Martin Harris bear witness to the truthfulness and genuineness of the Book of Mormon, both when he was enjoying good health and when he was on his deathbed. His testimony never varied. His testimony has left no trace of doubt in my grandfather's mind that he actually conversed with an angel who bore testimony to him of the truthfulness of the records contained in the Book of Mormon. A few hours before his death and when he was so weak that he was unable to recognize to whom he was speaking, he said that the Book of Mormon was no fake. 'I know what I know. I have seen what I have seen and I have heard what I have heard. I have seen the gold plates from which the Book of Mormon was written. An angel appeared to me and others and testified to the truthfulness of the records.' Had he denied that, he could have been a rich man, but he remained true to what he saw and heard to his dying breath.

“That experience as related by my grandfather left an indelible impression upon heart and mind. One that I never have nor ever will forget. That among many other things has convinced me that it is all true.”

As Sheffield and his family listened, they felt something stir within each of them, as they had the evening before. “Could it be true?” Sheffield wondered. “Is this really what Geannie was looking for?”

Ramona turned her attention from the monument before them, to cemetery and its surroundings. “What a beautiful place.” Ramona commented.

“Right over there is where the Gover’s are buried.” Wayne said as he lead the way. Stopping a headstone with the name “GOVER” engraved on it, he continued, “Here is where my father and mother are buried. And over here,” he said pointing to an empty plot, “is where Gail and I will be buried. I can’t think of a better place to be come the morning of the resurrection.”

“Me either.” Gail added. “All of my family is buried over on the other side of the cemetery, along the road where we came in.”

“That’s an interesting mountain.” Sheffield said pointing at the peak a little ways to the west.

“It’s called Gunsight,” Morris said. “Notice how the top is flat with a notch in the center. From this angle it looks like a gun sight.”

“I hate to break things up.” Gail said. “But I’ve got some things to do for the wedding tomorrow.”

They all got back in the cars that they had all rode up in and went back to the Gover’s. Ramona offered to lend Gail a hand in her preparations. Sheffield rode with Wayne up in the hills to check on things at the sheep camp. The kids involved themselves with Gover kids. It was obvious that Joyce was attracted to Craig, but he hadn’t noticed. His heart belonged to Edith Austin.

On the morning of wedding, Wayne and Gail left early to be at the temple. Melanie and Wallace had stopped by and picked them up so the Brason's could use their car. With what seemed like plenty of time, the two families got ready. Ramona prodded her kids along while Cynthia made sure her younger sisters and brother were ready. It was bit of a juggling act, but they got out the door in time.

Cynthia drove their second car, while the Brasons followed in the Gover's family car. When they arrived at the temple grounds, many from both families were gathered on the temple grounds, awaiting the emergence of the bride and groom. The Brasons felt an overpowering sense of reverence as they strolled the beautiful grounds. It was the feeling that he experienced on the grounds of the temple in Hawaii with Geannie and the kids.

“Do you feel what I feel?” he asked.

"I think so." Ramona said. "There is something to all of this and I think we need to investigate it further." Then she asked, "Do you kids feel it, too?"

All three of them said that they did. It was much like the feeling that was in the Gover's home the night before last when they sat around listening to Wayne and Morris explain things to them.

The time basking in that feeling was interrupted when Morris and Sheila came out of the front door, followed by their immediate families. Everyone who had been waiting outside gathered around to greet the newlyweds. The Brasons got their turn as well.

Sheffield felt a tap on his shoulder and turned around to see the woman he first met nearly five years earlier when she and her daughter climbed over the edge of the Reprisal's outboard elevator, wearing only oil soaked nightgowns. "Do you remember me, Captain Brason?" she asked.

"Mrs. Watson." Sheffield gasped. "Of course I remember you. How are you?"

"I'm just fine Captain, except my name is now Mayfield. This is my husband Chet.

"Chet, this is Captain Sheffield Brason, the one who fished Molly and me out of the sea and rescued us from the Germans."

"Pleased to meet you, Chet." Sheffield said and he extended his hand.

"The pleasure is mine, Captain." Chet responded as he shook his hand. "I have heard so much about you."

"Please, call me Sheffield. Don't tell me, this must be Molly. My how you've grown. How old are you now?"

Molly gave her hero a hug and answered, "I'm thirteen now."

"I can't believe it. I would have never expected to see you her."

"We live in Salt Lake now. I met Chet when he was working in Washington. He's from Salt Lake and we moved back when his assignment there was over. Will you be at the reception this evening?"

"That's plan."

"Good, we can catch up then. It's so good to see you again."

"You too, Debra."

Sheffield turned around to see where Ramona and the kids had gotten off to. She was visiting with Sheila's parents and the kids were with the Gover kids and a bunch of their cousins. Sheffield felt another tap on his shoulder and turned around to see a handsome couple with a small child.

"Simon Ballard." Sheffield said. "I'm not surprised to see you here."

"Hello Captain. It's good to see you again sir. This is my wife Audrey and our son Matthew."

"I'm pleased to meet you, Audrey." Sheffield said just as Ramona rejoined him. "I'm sure you remember Ramona."

"No, I've never met her. How do you do, Mrs. Brason?"

Sheffield continued, "And this is his wife Audrey and their son Matthew."

Wayne called out loud enough for everyone to hear, "Can I have your attention." When everyone quieted down, he went on, "It's time to go to lunch, so lets all head downtown."

"Lets talk later, Simon." Sheffield said. He turned to Ramona as the kids left their new friends and were coming to join them.

They all got into the Gover's car and followed the procession to the Bluebird Restaurant on Main Street in downtown Logan. It was a quaint little place. The sign indicated that it had been established in 1914. Once inside, they found themselves seated across from Simon and Audrey and they were able to continue their conversation while they ate.

They learned that Simon and Audrey had been married for going on two years and that Matthew was eleven months old. He and Audrey had met at a church dance soon after he got out of the Navy. She had lived in his neighborhood, but being four years younger than him, he hadn't known her. Simon had a good job as a meat cutter at a butcher shop in Salt Lake. After catching up on what had taken place since they parted company, the former captain and the former seaman reminisced about the time that they had served together aboard the Reprisal.

"I'll never forget," Simon reminisced, "accompanying you in Algiers as your translator. It was good of you to take Morris and me along with you when you and that Army Air Force Colonel went for a camel ride."

"Oh," Ramona interjected, "you've met Harvey. Do you want to hear a funny story about him? Right after Sheffield and I were married, Harvey and I discovered that we are first cousins. Isn't it a small world?"

"Yes ma'am it is. By the way, thats a very lovely dress that you're wearing."

"This old thing. I have to say, its one of my favorites. Sheffield got it for me in Algiers."

"I know." Simon said. "I accompanied him as his translator when he picked it out and when he went back to get it."

"See, there you go, it is a small world." Ramona repeated.

"I remember," Sheffield chuckled, "how you blushed when you had to explain the bust line to me."

"I remember that too, I had to think fast what the proper word was. I nearly said 'breast line'. That's why I blushed." Simon blushed again as he confessed his embarrassment.

Everyone listening to the story got a laugh out of that.

Their conversation was interrupted when the bride's father addressed those assembled for the luncheon. He was followed by Wayne, who after a few remarks, turned the floor over to anyone else who wanted to say something.

After two or three other people, Sheffield stood up and said, "I have met a few of you, but for those of you who are wondering who we are, I'm Sheffield Brason from Roanoke, Virginia. Here with me are my wife, Ramona and our children, Craig, Norma, and Janet. It was my pleasure to be associated with Morris for three and half years during the war. I first met him when we crossed the equator. For those of you not familiar with naval tradition, when a sailor crosses the equator for the first time, he is subjected to abject humiliation as he is initiated into the what we call the Realm of the Deep. He was brought before me to be judged, for he claimed to have crossed the equator before.

"I demanded proof, so he produced his journal and other records that indicated that he had indeed crossed the equator a few years earlier on his way to Brazil as a missionary. That let him off the hook as far as the initiation was concerned. I also discovered that he spoke Portuguese. Since we would be operating out of Rio de Janeiro, I asked him to be my translator and personal assistant.

It didn't take long for me to discover that there was something very special about him. He was not like ninety nine percent of the sailors in the Navy. He didn't smoke or drink, nor did he use foul language. You see I also fit into that one percent and found it refreshing to be around him. It didn't take long to figure out that he had a strong work ethic to boot. I don't know what I'd of done without him.

"Then when I was injured and required months of mending, he remained with me and saw to my every need. Between him and my dear wife, I recovered and was able to return to duty. I was next given an assignment in Washington D.C. and I asked Morris to remain with me, and later when I was promoted to admiral I retained him on my staff until I retired from the Navy. It is quite rare to serve so long with someone like that. Even more rare is to serve with someone like Morris Gover. May he and his lovely bride, Sheila have a wonderful life together, and as I have just learned was possible, eternity as well."

Following Sheffield, Debra Mayfield shared her association with Morris. There were one or two others who paid tribute to the bride and groom as well.

After the luncheon, the Brasons returned to the Gover home. They were the first ones there and eventually Wayne and Gail and their kids returned as well. Others trickled in and out during the afternoon as well until it was time to go to the reception at the church.

As Sheffield and Ramona mingled with the other guests, again they found the Mormons to be a warm and friendly people. The kids seemed right at home among the other kids their age. The visited with others as they waited to greet the reception line. By then they had become acquainted with the brides family as well.

Sheffield and Ramona sat down at a table with some refreshments and were soon joined by Debra and her husband. "Ramona, have you meet Debra?"

"Briefly." she answered. Then turning to Debra, she added, "I met you when you came to see Sheffield when he was in the hospital."

Sheffield then introduced her to Chet and Chet to Ramona.

"I meant to stay in contact with you Sheffield but I'm sorry to say that I dropped the ball on that. I did however, stay in close touch with Morris and he always kept me posted as to what you were up to. For example, he told me all about the two of you getting married."

"I noticed that you came out of the temple with the rest of them." Ramona observed. "I thought only Mormons in good standing were allowed in the temple."

"Thanks to Morris," Debra said, "I am a Mormon. You see, while Molly and I were guests aboard your ship, he took really good care of us and we talked a lot. Knowing that I had recently lost my husband he tried to offer some comfort. He mentioned that when his grandfather died, he knew that he was in a better place. 'What better place?' I scoffed. 'When you die, that's the end.' I told him .

"He asked me if I believed in God. I told him that I hoped there was but I really didn't know. I'll never forget how confident he was when he assured me that there was. I asked him how he was so sure. He asked if he and one of his friends could stop by later in the evening and answer that question for me.

"You were a big help to me too Captain. As we visited while watching the planes land, you told me how your faith in God helped you face through the deaths of your wife and children. I wondered how it could be.

"That evening, Morris brought Simon to my stateroom and they were able to answer my questions in a way that I had never thought about before. They gave me a copy of the Book of Mormon and explained it to me. They had gone to the trouble to mark passages for me to read. The thing that had the biggest impact on me was when they taught me to how to pray. I asked what should I pray for. They suggested that I ask God if he was really there.

"The two of them got down on their knees and invited Molly and me to join them. I'll never forget that. God assured me that he was indeed there, that he loved me, and that with time all would be well."

"I remember you telling me that they came to see you at the time." Sheffield reflected.

"Any way, I stayed up late that night after they left reading the parts of the book that they had indicated. I couldn't get enough of it. It was as if something deep inside of me had awakened. I stayed in the stateroom all the next day reading. I don't think I even bothered to get dressed. I lost all track of time. The next thing I knew, I must have dozed off. When I woke up Molly had got hungry or something and wandered off. Frantically I went looking for her and found her having lunch with you."

"I remember that too. She had drawn some pictures for me. I kept them until my stateroom was destroyed at Salerno." Sheffield said.

“I joined you for lunch, even though I was still in the nightgown that your tailor had made for me. My hair was a mess and I looked awful, but you didn't seem to mind. That's when you introduced me to the concept of a b  th . After lunch, I went back to my stateroom and ran some hot water and mixed in some liquid soap for some bubbles. I slipped out of my nightgown and into the tub and settled down with the book and read some more.

“After a while the bubbles dissipated and the water cooled off, so I warmed it up and just sat there in the tub reading. I realized at one point that there I was naked, reading God's word. At first I felt the need to cover up, but then the shame left me and I felt that in my nakedness, God saw me exactly as I was, as if he was looking through my body right into my soul. So what did I do. I continued reading, naked and all.

“Finally, I was shriveled up like a prune and had to get out. I ran a some water and bubbles for Molly and wrapped up in that nice terry robe that was in the closet and continued reading while Molly had her b  th. When she was done, we both got dressed and joined you for dinner.

“The next day, we arrived in Rio and you and Morris accompanied me to the embassy and and got us on a flight home to Washington. It seems like it took us four days to get there. A few days later, the friends that Morris said he'd have stop in to see me showed up on my doorstep. It turned out that they didn't know him personally, but that he had sent on a referral.

“I started meeting with them regularly and they began teaching us about the Church. I had some issues that I had to work through, but they were patient with me. Alcohol and tobacco had always been a real problem for me, but I was able to put both behind me along with some other issues that I had to overcome.

“Then when your ship, returned, Morris and Simon stopped in to see me on their way home to Utah. They took me to church for the first time in my life. That was a big step for me. After that, things started to fall into place for me and the missionaries were able to make progress with me. I don't remember how many of them that I went through as they would come and go.

“Then when the ship returned after your next cruise, Morris and Simon came to see me again. The missionaries had been after me to be baptized but I kept resisting. That is until Morris said something, I don't even remember what it was, but I felt something stir with in me, deeper than anything I had felt up to that time. I'll never forget it, the missionaries were there too. I knew right then that everything they had been teaching me was true and I knew what I had to do. I asked to be baptized and two days later, Morris and I all dressed in white stepped down into the font and he baptized me. After I came up out of the water I felt as if I was a completely different person and I have never regretted it. At the same time, Simon baptized Molly.

“Morris stayed in touch with me and while he was stationed in Washington with you, he came to see us often. Our home became his second home. I came to see you when you were in the hospital but when I

went to enter your room, I could see that you were asleep. Any way, I didn't come in. But I was glad that I got to see you when I came back a few days later. I always planned to come back again but something always seemed to get in the way. One day I did make it, only to be told that you had been discharged from the hospital. It wasn't long after that that I met Chet at church. He was a widower himself. We started seeing each other and after several months we were married in a civil ceremony there in Washington. About a year after that, his assignment in Washington was over and he brought me here to Utah. A short time later we were sealed in the Salt Lake Temple."

"I never knew any of this." Sheffield said. "Morris is quite the missionary."

"Oh, I'm not the only one that he has influenced. He has told me about a number of his shipmates that he had baptized too."

"Why doesn't that surprise me?" Ramona said. "Maybe he can come to Virginia and baptize us."

"Aren't you getting ahead of yourself, Sweetheart? There is still so much that we don't know."

"I think we both know where this is headed, don't we, Babe."

They were interrupted as three men in their mid to late twenties approached their table. The three men, dressed in suits, came to attention and saluted. "Captain Brason, sir." one of them said.

Sheffield rose from his seat, returned their salute and said "At ease men." He extended hand to the one who had been their spokesman.

"Boilerman Second Class Richard Andrews, from Oakley, Idaho, sir." he said as he shook Sheffield's hand.

The second man introduced himself, "Aviation Storekeeper First Class Louis Spears, from Ontario Oregon, sir."

Sheffield shook his hand.

The third man likewise introduced himself, "Gunners Mate First Class Bert Engles, from Afton, Wyoming, sir."

Sheffield shook his hand.

After their introductions, Richard said, "We were all shipmates of Morris and served under you aboard the Reprisal in the Atlantic."

"I'm so glad that you came to say hello." Then Sheffield's introduced them to his family and then asked each one about themselves, their time aboard the Reprisal, and what they were doing now. They along with Morris, Simon and two or three others were the only Mormons among the entire crew, at least those who would admit it. They met together each Sunday as best they could, given the circumstances of the any given week. They told Sheffield that Morris was their group leader and took charge of their meetings and kept them organized. Again, Sheffield wasn't surprised to learn of that facet of his trusted assistant.

After meeting his former crewmen, Sheffield returned his attention to Debra and Chet. He explained how their family came to be and Debra told him about what she had done since moving to Utah. In parting, they exchanged addresses and promised to stay in touch.

As the reception began to wind down, Sheffield, Ramona and the kids went back to the Gover's for the evening and made themselves at home as they got ready for bed. The family came in much later, tired after a long day.

The next morning, over breakfast, They visited some more. Afterwards the Brasons finished getting their things together for the trip home. As they were ready to leave, and they were saying their goodbyes, Wayne presented each of them with their own copy of the Book of Mormon that he had purchased the day before in Logan.

"Now," he said, "you can each read your own copy, but I'd encourage to read together and discuss your impressions. Also, here's a copy of the Doctrine and Covenants and the Pearl of Great Price as well. They are also part of the scriptures we use. I'd encourage you to read the Writings of Joseph Smith Chapter Two on page forty six and the Articles of Faith on page fifty eight. When you get home and get settled, be sure to contact your friend, Roger Rowan. He'll take it from were we left off."

"We'll be sure to do that. Thanks for everything Wayne. You have certainly given us something to consider."

There was a round of handshakes, hugs, and goodbyes and then the Brasons boarded the Stagerwing for the trip home. Moments later, they were in the air heading east, headed for home. On the way, which was the reverse of the route they came out one, they talked and visited, discussing their trip, the people they met, and the things they had learned.

"And by the way, Dad." Craig reminded. "I still want you teach my how to fly,"

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The part about Wayne's grandfather's encounter with Martin Harris is based on the account from the life of George Godfrey, my great great grandfather.

The story of Debra Watson is found in Missing Geannie Part I Chapter 14 and Part II Chapters 15 and 16.