

kindling
EMBERS

By Carrie Daws

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*My God will meet all your needs
according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.
~ Philippians 4:19*

CHAPTER ONE

Friday, October 9th

White billows replaced the dark, ominous clouds that still drifted over the tops of the loblolly pine trees along the North Carolina roadside. Inspector Cassandra McCarthy released her breath, knowing the color change meant the firefighters had water on the blaze. Those who were returning to nearby homes at the end of the workday should be safe.

Her phone on the console beside her buzzed with an incoming text message. “On the scene yet?”

Showing her identification card from the Silver Heights Fire Marshal’s office, Cassandra pulled her white Chevy Tahoe around the sheriff’s barricade shutting down the country road to all non-emergency traffic. Stopping in the grass near the last tanker truck, she grabbed her phone and responded to the text. “Just arrived. Beaver Creek and Black Branch Fire Departments both on scene. Flames still visible.”

She knew her boss wouldn’t be satisfied with that answer, but before she could give him more details, she had to get her mind on her job. Her heart ached with memories of today, of the anniversary she should be celebrating. Releasing her seat belt, she grabbed the camera from the passenger seat. She could at least start taking pictures for the report she’d have to file later.

Her phone buzzed again. “Contained? Any woods burning?”

Swallowing her nostalgia, she walked around Black Branch’s engine while throwing the camera strap over her head and looking

for someone she knew that would have a moment to talk to her. Being careful to avoid the area the firemen were working, she finally saw Beaver Creek's chief, Scottie, in recovery behind the ambulance parked across the street.

"Hey, Scottie. You good?"

Most of his fireman turnout gear in a pile beside him, Scottie drained the last of the water in his bottle. His reddish brown hair looked dark in the fading sunlight. "I dinna know, lassie. But I'm getting a bad feeling about this."

"What do you mean?"

The emergency medical technician handed Scottie another bottle of water.

"Thanks, Kelan." Scottie twisted the lid to break the seal but didn't remove it. "In August and September, we reported to sixty-three fires. All of those were easily explained except for two that happened in the early evening on abandoned buildings during weather that nae should be a contributing factor. This one here—it makes three."

Cassandra tucked a lock of blonde hair behind her left ear. "Are you saying we have a serial arsonist?"

Scottie opened the bottle and gulped half of it. "Nae sure what we got. Maybe it's coincidence. Maybe it's just a bad summer for curious kids."

Cassandra crouched down beside him, ignoring her buzzing phone. "Tell me what your fireman eyes see, Scottie."

He studied at her for a moment, his eyes narrowing. "You never want to know what I think before you have a look for yourself."

"I know." Something in her whispered the importance of Scottie's impressions while they were still fresh in his mind. "Just indulge me this one time."

He refocused on the old wood shed that had been no match for

the blaze within it. “I see an abandoned shed that should have been demolished years ago. I see a road with light traffic and lots of places a person could hide if a car drove by. I see a thin strip of woodland protecting a neighborhood of about thirty homes in potential danger from a fire in this spot. Yet I also see that between the old shed and the woodland is a wee creek, full after yesterday’s storm.”

Cassandra froze as the meaning of Scottie’s words hit her. “Somebody waited for a storm to fill the creek?”

Scottie took in a deep breath and exhaled slowly. He stood, pulling up his fire pants and snapping the suspenders into place. Grabbing his jacket, he paused to pat Cassandra on the shoulder. “I hope not, bonny lass. That speaks of pre-meditation, which means this wasn’t just some kids playing with matches.”

Cassandra stood and watched Scottie make his way back to where his men were busy double-checking the ground cover for embers that could relight. She and her boss had wondered about the first two fires, as had Detective Campos, who was part of the investigations. While they didn’t have many leads, the char markings at one scene pointed to the use of accelerants. Everyone wanted to blame teens for both fires. That would be routine, rather than some of the other scenarios that were more alarming.

Her phone buzzed at her hip again, and Cassandra grabbed it. Seeing her boss’s name across the screen, she answered. “Chief, we might have a problem.”

Saturday, October 10th

Early the next morning, Cassandra pulled off the road near the

burnt shed, parking behind the detective's unmarked silver Dodge Charger. She grabbed her pink hard hat and the camera before stepping out into the pleasant morning. Seventy degrees felt so much better after three days above eighty.

"We might get to enjoy some autumn weather after all," said Detective Samuel Campos, leaning against his vehicle with his arms crossed over his black polo shirt with the sheriff's department logo on the upper left side.

Cassandra pulled her sunglasses off and tossed them in the front seat before shutting the door of her truck. "Wouldn't that be nice? I'm ready for a break from the heat."

He smiled at her. "You picked the wrong job if you don't like the heat."

"Yeah, well, a girl's gotta do something to pay the bills. You looked around yet?"

"Nah. I was waiting on you and Chief to show up."

Cassandra pulled her phone out of her pocket to check the time. "Looks like he's running a couple minutes late."

"Not unusual for a Saturday morning."

"No. I think he said a couple of his grandkids were spending the night, so that's probably why he's delayed." Cassandra set her helmet on the back of the detective's car and pulled her wavy locks into a low ponytail. "Want to go ahead and start?"

"Lead the way."

Cassandra and Sam ducked under the yellow caution tape she'd put up last night before leaving. The old building would need to be demolished to protect the community. The roof was gone and the door sagged on burnt hinges, but the frame around the sides remained standing. Cassandra snapped pictures, working clockwise around the outside while Sam scoured the nearby area for clues.

“Hey, Cass!” yelled Sam. “Come take a picture of this.”

”What did you find?”

He stood near the narrow creek bed. It was only a few inches deep but held enough water to maintain a gentle flow. Sam pulled some weeds aside and pointed. “Looks like a partial foot print.”

“It sure does.” She adjusted the lens for a couple of close-up shots. “It’s got a tread on it, like tennis shoes.”

“You two find something?”

Cassandra finished her shot and turned to face her boss.

“Maybe, sir,” said Sam. “Then again, this footprint may not be related to the fire at all.”

Fire Marshal Gabriel Burns joined them and crouched down to look closer at the print in the soft sand at the creek’s edge. His gaze moved across the water before he stood to his full six-foot height, unintentionally making Cassandra feel shorter. Most of the time, her sixty-two-and-a-half inch height didn’t bother her, but even the top of Sam’s head was a good four inches below the chief’s.

“Since it appears the person was walking in that direction, we should take time to check the other side for more prints. I know there’s a lot more grass over there, but we might get lucky.”

Sam nodded. “How about I work on that while you two get started inside the shed? Not sure that thing could support the three of us anyway.”

“Sounds good,” said Chief. “I have a tea party to attend with Olivia and all of our closest friends when I get home.” While his tone gave nothing away, his eyes sparkled.

“Are these friends real?” said Cassandra, delighted with the grandparent she sometimes glimpsed in her otherwise stringent boss.

Not abandoning any of his seriousness, Chief said, “Oh, they’re quite real. To Olivia. There’s Allie the stuffed giraffe and Teddy, her first bear.” He paused for a moment. “I can’t remember the

elephant's name, but it's her special day so she's the guest of honor."

Cassandra wasn't sure Sam would contain his chuckle, but he made a valiant attempt. Chief had retired as an Army Special Operations Engineer after twenty-five years. Now, twenty years later, he still maintained an impressive physical condition and demeanor. Even at the age of sixty-three, he was not a man to be messed with, which was why everyone simply called him Chief.

"Well, let's get you to that party!" Cassandra turned on her heel and walked toward the shed door. "Do you want to go in first?"

While Sam crossed the creek, Chief followed Cassandra, pausing at the door to scrutinize the casing.

"This is pretty charred, but the wood hasn't thinned much."

"So the heat was intense, but the fire didn't burn long."

Chief nodded.

Cassandra looked around the floor through the open side wall that exposed the interior. She saw only small piles of remains scattered throughout. "It doesn't look like there was much in here before the fire."

"No." Chief stepped inside, testing his steps before putting his full weight down. In five steps he was near the center, crouching down and looking over the ashes. "And the entire structure was engulfed?"

Cassandra nodded. "When I arrived, they had two hoses on it: one there from the door and another from the right side roof."

"As dry as it's been this summer, this was a tinder box just waiting for the right spark." Chief stood long enough to pull a pen from his pants pocket. He crouched down again, using the pen to move a bit of the remains to the side. "Come here with that camera."

"I didn't see any signs of tracks on the other side of the creek," said Sam, walking up to where Cassandra had been standing before she walked around to enter through the doorway. "But as you said,

there was quite a bit of grass.”

Chief looked up at Sam, squinting at the bright sunlight outside. “How far did you walk?”

“Around the bend just a bit,” said Sam. “Far enough to see several long, dirt driveways.”

Cassandra looked between Sam and Chief. “So the footprint could have been a resident out for a walk this morning.”

“Yeah,” said Chief, “or the perpetrator could have driven here and parked just far enough down one of those driveways to not draw suspicion from those driving by.”

“So, we got nothing,” said Sam.

“Well, not much anyway,” said Chief.

“Not much?” said Sam. “We have a supposition based on a partial footprint that even a first year law student could get discredited.”

“Come here, Cassandra.” Chief pointed to the small pile of remains he’d disturbed. “Get a good close-up of this.”

She moved forward, crouching down as Chief straightened and moved out of her way.

Sam leaned forward through the missing wall section. “What is it?”

Cassandra focused the lens on the spot and then gasped when she saw what Chief had found. “It looks like the end of a wooden match.”

Chief nodded. “We’ll want samples from that area. I’ll get the mason jars out of the truck.”

Cassandra unlocked her front door and threw her keys on the small table in the entry way. “I’m home,” she yelled down the

hallway as she passed it to collapse on the couch.

Fourteen-year-old Ashley poked her head around the corner, half of her mocha-colored hair in small spiral curls. “That didn’t take too long, Mom.”

“No,” said Cassandra, loosening the laces on her pink work boots. “It was an empty shed, and the person who lit the fire didn’t leave much evidence around.” She kicked her boots off and slouched back on the couch, propping her feet up on the coffee table. “Did Jess make it out of here on time for work?”

“Of course.”

Ashley was already back to her room, and Cassandra could imagine the eye roll that came with her short reply. Her two girls were so different. Jessica, at sixteen, was structured and methodical. She set a goal, then took logical steps to achieve it. Jess was her mother’s daughter, from her thought processes to her caramel-colored eyes. Ashley, though, was much more of a free spirit. She loved a good time, tended to be very spontaneous, and lived for social events.

“So much like you, Rob,” she whispered. She looked at the family picture taken five years ago that sat above the television on the well-worn particle board entertainment center. Both girls had his dark hair, and Ashley had his smile. Otherwise, the girls looked a lot like Cassandra.

“We’re still going out for dinner tonight, right?” Ashley yelled down the hallway.

The October after Robert unexpectedly died, she and the girls had celebrated her wedding anniversary by going out to a fancy dinner together. It was a tradition they’d continued, although the fire last night had delayed them a day.

“What time does Jess get off work?”

“Three.”

Cassandra sighed deeply. Lately work had required long hours during the week, and more than once she'd had to report in on weekends because of fires and storms. She wanted to turn on a football game and ignore the world for a while.

"Sure." She grabbed the remote. If Jess didn't get off until three, then she could catch part of a game. "Whose year is it to choose the restaurant?"

"Yours." Ashley plopped on the couch beside her, her head covered in curls.

"Oh, sweet! Then I'm having a steak tonight."

Ashley smiled at her. "Dad would approve."

Cassandra grabbed Ashley's hand and squeezed before turning her attention back to the television listings to see if her North Carolina Tar Heels were playing this afternoon. "Yeah, he would."

CHAPTER TWO

Monday, October 12th

Cassandra flipped over the tag on the fire extinguisher and snapped a picture with her phone. “All of your extinguishers need to be inspected monthly.”

The manager of the small convenience store wrote a note on her yellow tablet. “Do we have to call someone to do that? Or do you come out to do that for us?”

Cassandra took a deep breath, trying not to think about how long this inspection had already gone. This lady was sweet, organized, and thorough in her questions, but she had zero knowledge of the fire code. “No. Just have an employee check that the safety pin is still where it belongs here on the handle, the arrow on the pressure gauge is in the green area, and there’s nothing that would make it difficult to get to if someone needed it.”

“So this whole area needs to remain clear of all merchandise.”

“Within reason, yes. You don’t need to clear four or five feet around it. But you don’t want anything underneath it, and an average person should be able to walk up to it and take it off the wall without having to move anything.”

“Okay.” The manager scribbled more notes. “And then I sign that tag?”

Cassandra’s phone buzzed. She glanced at the screen before replying. Another building fire in Beaver Creek’s district. “Whoever inspects it for the month needs to write the date of the inspection and their initials. It doesn’t have to be you. Any employee can do it, but

it's wise to make sure it's someone who's at least checking the charge."

"I see." The manager nodded and scribbled another note. "The charge?"

"Making sure the arrow is in the green."

"And if it's not?"

"Then you call the company who does the annual inspections. They can come out at any time to inspect and charge it for you."

"Okay. Do you have someone you recommend to handle that?"

"No, we're not allowed to mention any names because it can come across as an endorsement. Just look up fire extinguisher recharging in the yellow pages or on the Internet."

The manager nodded her head while she made her notes.

"So that's everything. When I get back in the office, I'll type up the official report and bring it back to you in the next couple of days. We'll go over it to make sure you understand what needs done, and then I'll give you two weeks to fix everything."

"Okay. But can I go ahead and start fixing things from my notes today?"

"Of course, and I'll mark on the report whatever you've fixed when I come back Wednesday."

Cassandra headed out the door to her Tahoe, wishing all her inspections went so well. The lady might not know anything, but she was at least courteous and seemed compliant. Cassandra checked her phone for the address of the fire and let Chief know she was on the way.

The charring pattern in the middle of the old house's entry was textbook classic, and the water pooling within its circle had a

rainbow sheen to it.

“Accelerant.” Cassandra’s mind went to work on the similarities and differences between this and the other three fires over the last couple of months.

“Looks like it,” said Chief. “We need to search for a gas can.”

Cassandra nodded. “I’ll grab the camera and get started on the perimeter.”

The firemen were almost done loading the hoses, but Cassandra saw that the ambulance was still on the scene. She came around the open back door and ran into a man with the palest blue eyes she’d even seen.

He put out arms to steady her. “Whoa there.”

“Oh!” she blurted while grasping his firm arms to regain her balance. “Sorry about that.” She released him and backed up a step. “I didn’t expect you to be right there.”

“Barreling into people isn’t your usual form of greeting?”

She returned his smile. “No, not often.”

“So was that an added blessing to my day, or did you need some attention?”

Cassandra paused, not sure if he meant more by his words than what he said. His light, easy tone and facial expression carried a lot of mirth. “I saw you were still here and wanted to be sure that no one was hurt.”

“I was still here?”

Cassandra blushed. Most people didn’t fluster her so quickly. “I mean the ambulance.”

He leaned closer to whisper before winking at her. “It’s okay if it was the other way around.”

“Excuse me?” Was he flirting? Just having fun? Surely this man wasn’t that full of himself, but the gleam in his eyes indicated the intentional decision to goad her.

“I’m okay, Ms. Cassandra.”

She looked around the irritating newcomer to see sixteen-year-old Dylan sitting on the bumper of the ambulance. His face smudged with soot and his chestnut hair in disarray, he held a half-empty water bottle.

“I just got overheated, and Mr. Kelan was making sure I drank enough water before he left.”

“Kelan Bratcher.”

The man had his hand extended out to her like they had just been formally introduced. She hesitated before grasping it. “Cassandra McCarthy.”

“Nice to meet you, lass.”

“Lass?”

“That’s what Chief Scottie called you the other night. Or do you prefer bonny lass?”

She glared at him. “Only Scottie calls me that. You were at the shed fire?”

He nodded. “Was almost home after work when the call came in. Do you prefer *honey* or *baby*? Seems a lot of folks in this area use those terms of endearment rather freely.”

“I prefer—”

“Cassandra!” Chief’s bellow echoed around the small open field surrounded by trees.

“I know that yell,” said Dylan, standing up and grabbing his junior firefighter’s helmet. “I’m feeling much better, Mr. Kelan. Thanks for the water!”

Dylan scampered off to help with the hoses while Chief bellowed again.

Kelan nodded toward the house. “Sounds like you’re wanted.” He picked up an empty water bottle from the ground and tossed it into the back of the ambulance. “See you around, lassie.”

“Cassandra,” she muttered as she spun on her heel to retrieve the camera from her truck. “My name is Cassandra.”

Tuesday, October 13th

Detective Sam Campos’s office was small and functional, his desk sufficient for his computer, a short stack of filing trays, and enough space for him alone to write notes. He was currently scribbling location notes on the outside covers of four folders.

A large map of Silver Heights covered the wall above the lone three-shelf bookcase covered in binders. She angled toward Chief, who was using stickpins to mark the locations of the four abandoned building fires on the map.

“Two of the fires were well inside Beaver Creek,” said Chief, marking two spots in the northern part of their premier department’s fire district. “The other two were along boundaries, still within Beaver Creek’s area, but close enough that they pulled resources from other stations.”

“The one in August,” said Cassandra reading from her notes, “pulled trucks from Pinewood.” Looking at the map Chief had marked, she pointed to the most southwestern pin. “And the one last Friday pulled from Black Branch.”

Sam tossed his pen onto his desk. “And you’re telling me the fires started in different ways too.”

Cassandra nodded. “We only found accelerant at the two northern ones.”

“And we found the match here last week,” said Chief, pointing to a pin in the southwest corner of Beaver Creek’s district. “But no pour patterns or other signs of accelerants.”

Sam leaned forward on his desk. “What does that tell us? Someone lit a match and tossed it on a pile of trash?”

“Maybe.” Chief moved the chair beside Cassandra so it was in front of the bookshelf and the open doorway was to his left. “Or maybe he used an incendiary like a pillow pack.”

“A pillow pack?”

Cassandra straightened in her chair. “Some arsonists will make a time delay device by tying several matches around a lit cigarette. Often they’ll also attach a bit of cotton or something that burns well, then lay it in an area that will catch fire.”

“Like a pile of trash.” Sam leaned back in his chair. “So, are we chasing one guy who starts fires in different ways, or two guys that are starting fires in the same area?”

“That’s a good question,” said Chief. “Experienced arsonists like to use what is already on hand rather than carry supplies in. It’s less suspicious.”

“So they won’t carry in gasoline,” said Sam.

“Not necessarily,” said Cassandra. “But it is a distinction in these fires we need to pay attention to. It might be critically important.”

“And the likelihood any of these were started by a firefighter?” Sam’s question hung in the air between them.

Chief shrugged. “If you want to dig into the numbers, arson is statistically tough to pin down. Most arsons don’t technically earn the label until someone is convicted. Furthermore, even when someone goes through the justice system, their occupation isn’t written down on documents that are searched and tracked by anyone.”

“I get all that,” said Sam. “But we have to do our due diligence. Since we don’t have enough information to narrow our search, I need to come up with some sort of profile, people and patterns to be watching for.”

Cassandra shifted in her seat and cleared her throat. She spoke more softly than before. “When it’s a firefighter, they tend to set nuisance fires within the area where their station will respond.”

“Nuisance fires,” said Sam. “As in fires where no one is likely to get hurt?”

“Yes, which pretty well describes all four of our fires there,” said Cassandra.

“What about the arsonist himself?” Sam leaned back in his chair. “Younger? Unhappy at the station?”

Cassandra watched Chief’s jaw clench. “Early to mid-twenties is fairly common,” he said. “He loves fire, usually too much, and is more concerned about the excitement of putting it out or being recognized as a hero than actually protecting the public.”

“He’s usually not good at relationships,” added Cassandra. “If he’s married, it’s not going well. Usually he is estranged from at least one parent, and often is an alcoholic or drug abuser.”

“Look,” said Chief, standing and pacing a step to the door before turning back to Sam. “I know people like to think that arsonists tend to be firefighters—”

“Or fire inspectors,” said Sam.

Cassandra saw Chief’s jaw tighten again. She took a deep breath and let it out slowly. “The bottom line is that we don’t have enough evidence to suspect anyone. We have four fires in abandoned buildings, two lab results indicating accelerants, and one partially burnt match. That’s it.”

“Yes,” said Sam, leaning forward, his elbows on his desk. “But we have to start somewhere, so why not clear the names of those we most trust first?”

Book 2

IGNITING EMBERS



Inspector Cassandra McCarthy thought her life would settle down once the teenagers who had been starting nuisance fires were caught. But a storm is heading to Silver Heights that threatens to destroy both property and lives, and unexplained fires keep her and the fire departments distracted. Can she prepare the town for the looming emergency and protect them from the serial arsonist living among them?

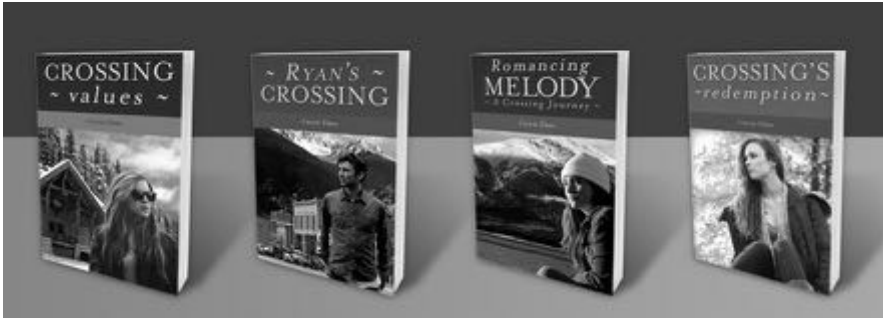
Coming Soon!

Extinguishing Embers

The hurricane left millions of dollars of destruction, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency has invaded to help the community clean up and move forward. Yet in the midst of recovery, a rash of unexplained fires grow more menacing. Deputy Fire Marshal Cassandra McCarthy works closely with the sheriff's office and the county fire departments, following the small pieces of evidence left at each fire scene. But what will it cost her to capture the arsonist?

Also by Carrie Daws

CROSSING SERIES



Book 1: *Crossing Values:* For years, Amber traipsed around the Northwest avoiding the skeletons in her closet. As winter plants itself firmly across the Rockies, she decides to take a chance on a job at a logging company with a family different from any she's ever known before. Could they truly be genuine? Could Faye understand the trauma from her past or Peter think of her as more than just the winter office help? Could this family really hold the key to what she's seeking?

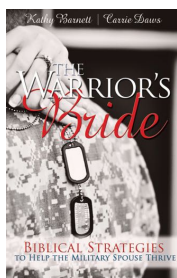
Book 2, *Ryan's Crossing:* After ten years, Ryan's parents found his runaway sister. As he meets her before her wedding, he must decide where she will fit into his life and what his future will look like. Seeing the town where his sister lives only brings more questions. Portland may be the better choice for him in his upcoming move, but small town life appeals to him. Is it the friendly people or the sister of the groom?

Book 3, *Romancing Melody:* A Crossing Journey: Newlywed Melody Podell gives up everything she has ever known to follow her

husband, a soldier in the US Army, to Fort Bragg, NC. Soon after giving birth to their first child and dealing with her husband's deployment to a dangerous part of the world, tragedy strikes forcing Melody to travel back to home. Walking back into the lives of her old friends in Crossing, Oregon, is the last thing Melody wants to do, but could she be missing something? Is God really in control?

Book 4, *Crossing's Redemption*: Many would describe Patricia Guire as an eclectic force to be reckoned with, but something is wrong. Amber Yager feels called to love on her, yet as she discovers Patricia's hidden past, she is drawn in to a group that brings disquiet to her own soul. Will the love she's found in Crossing be taken from her? Or could Amber and Patricia find peace as God shines light into the darkest places of their hearts?

THE WARRIOR'S BRIDE: BIBLICAL STRATEGIES TO HELP THE MILITARY SPOUSE THRIVE

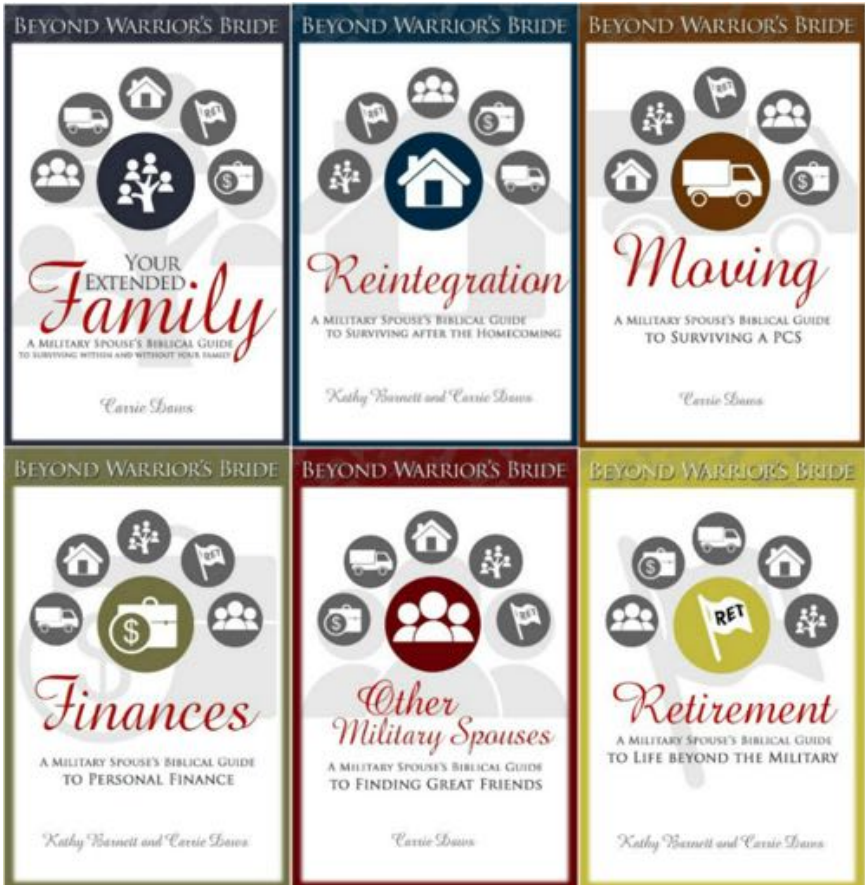


The call came down from Command, and your warrior husband is out the door, leaving you behind to handle whatever he has left undone. Whether it's the day-to-day monotony, the inevitable appliance that breaks, or the months without his presence beside you, being a military spouse brings challenges few appreciate. Yet God see you and longs for you to boldly step into His plan. He purposely chose you for this moment—for your man. He wants to give you abundantly more than what you have right now and desires you to thrive as your warrior's bride.

“Wow! This book is fantastic. It's a wonderful treasure of information for married women...military and civilian. Even though the authors promote this book as advice for military spouses, all of the principles and guidance found here are applicable for any married woman...If I could give this book six stars, I would. But I give it five stars, and firmly believe, it's worth every star!”

~Author Joanie Bruce, *Alana Candler, Marked for Murder*

BEYOND THE WARRIOR'S BRIDE SERIES:



Book 1: Your Extended Family: A Military Spouse's Biblical Guide to Surviving Within and Without Your Family

Family. They can be one of our biggest blessings and one of our biggest stressors. Family members that don't understand the military system can complicate your life, and sometimes the best-intentioned relative can undercut everything you are trying to build with your husband. Living far away can also be hard if you have a medical

emergency. Deployments and high ops tempos give loneliness and depression the opportunity to take over. Are there really any practical answers? What does the Bible say about dealing with and living apart from family?

Book 2: Reintegration: A Military Spouse's Biblical Guide to Surviving after the Homecoming

Deployments are inevitable in military life. Short or long, relatively safe or extremely dangerous, time away from our men is standard issue. How can the family left behind best deal with the transition before and after deployment? And what should we do if he comes home different? Those who deal with long separations due to a career know that the first weeks back can be trickier than when you first began living together as a couple, particularly if the mission was stressful or life-threatening. While the Bible doesn't specifically mention reintegration, God still gives us great advice on preparing our hearts and minds so that our marriage can thrive even through Reintegration.

Book 3: Moving: A Military Spouse's Biblical Guide to Surviving a PCS

We've got orders! As many military spouses know, these simple words change your life. Whether you are moving just a couple of states over or around the world, a flurry of activity is about to consume your calendar. Where do you start? How do you begin to process all your emotions or prepare your children to say goodbye to their friends? How do you know if you need to host a yard sale or even what your weight limit is? Take a deep breath and know that help is available. This book and the free moving checklist will get you started in the right direction.

Book 4: Finances: A Military Spouse's Biblical Guide to Personal Finance

Money. It's one of the biggest stressors in marriages. Many live paycheck-to-paycheck, struggling to both cover all the bills and save for retirement. Often husband and wife disagree over petty expenses, forgetting that they are on the same team. But money doesn't have to be a constant battle. Not only does the Bible give a lot of guidance, but God also provided examples of people getting it right. With a shift in focus and a little disciplined effort, you can gain control over your finances instead of your finances controlling you.

Book 5: Other Military Spouses: A Military Spouse's Biblical Guide to Finding Great Friends

Other military spouses can be one of the biggest stressors in a wife's life. From gossipers to back-biters to spouse shamers, the problem is reaching epidemic proportions, and many don't know what to do about it. What if you could find a better way? Instead of attacking the problem-women head on or avoiding all women entirely, what if you could find women worth knowing and cherishing? No matter where you are, God placed around you women of great value, women who strive to love Him first, and women who want to love and encourage you. Instead of resigning your-self to a life of loneliness, let me show you who to avoid and what characteristics to look for in quality friends.

Book 6: Retirement: A Military Spouse's Biblical Guide to Life beyond the Military

The years have been hard, filled with deployments, trainings, moves, forced flexibility, and uncertainty. Retirement finally looms, yet a fresh uncertainty takes hold. Gone are the days of someone telling you where to live and providing a house for you. No longer will someone tell your man where to go and what to take with him. Now all those choices are yours and his. Where do you start? Among

the plethora of options open to you, pieces of the military will likely always follow you. As your ETS (Expiration Term of Service) nears, learn from retired military spouses Kathy Barnett and Carrie Daws, who have already walked the road you face. Make the journey forward a little easier by arming yourself with what they've discovered in retirement.