



"Journey to True Love"

Production Notes

A three-act skit with a short prologue based on the concept of a mail order bride.

SUMMARY: Set in the early 1900's, mail -order bride Abigail Randall is on a train journey to meet her husband-to-be. Reporter "Scoop" McAlister is writing about her adventures as she makes this journey to meet her true love.

THEME: The retreat theme was "A Significant Journey" and the theme verse was Psalms 84:5. The visual theme include antique items suggesting a journey--old suitcases and trunks, antique camera, typewriter, old wedding dress. In this skit, we follow a mail-order bride on her journey to meet her husband-to-be. She faces challenges and temptations which we can compare to what a believer faces in the world, awaiting to meet her heavenly Groom. Both have letters and promises from their beloved; both face temptations by other suitors and the challenges of storms and enemies along the way.

CHARACTERS:

Reporter "Scoop" McAlister (*Scoop's repeating gag is the word "fascinating" which is she exclaims at every chance. Expression should be exaggerated!*)

Abigail Randall

Man in Black - represents the enemy

Conductor

Virginia - another mail-order bride

Ruby - old woman, a busybody, nosy and meddlesome

Courier

SETTING AND PROPS:

Chairs

Table

Typewriter, preferably antique

Teapot/teacups

Chairs to set up for train (*six chairs should be set up as in a train, two sets of two chairs facing each other, on set of two set up behind them*)

Signs: "Harrisburg Train Station" "Train to Sacramento Leaving __:__ am (*depending on the time skit will be performed*)

Character props

Scoop: "Press" badge

Abigail: hat, suitcase and purse, hankie in purse, coin purse, fan, letters to pull out

Virginia: fan, letters to pull out

Man in Black: dressed in black, info packet on Sugarland Express

Conductor: train tickets

Ruby: fan

Courier: telegram

The set can be elaborate or simple. In our case, this particular year, we had someone who wanted to make a realistic train setting. See the pictures below.



TIMING:

Prologue/teaser - 1-2 minutes

Act I - 15 minutes

Act II - 20 minutes

Act III - 15 minutes



"Journey to True Love" Prologue/Teaser Script

Reporter (*sitting, pecking on typewriter*): Scoop McAlister here--investigative reporter for The Daily Bugle--preparing to meet with mail-order bride, Abigail Randall. Miss Randall has said "yes" to the proposal of a man she has never met in person. Tomorrow, Miss Abigail is embarking on a journey to meet her husband-to-be. That's right folks, she has never met the man she has promised to marry face to face. Her journey will take her across the country--never an easy journey. Will there be someone waiting for her? Or has she been deceived? Is her journey based on misleading lies? Will this trip be in vain? Will her journey end in disappointment? Will she survive this trip across the dangerous and rugged terrain of the frontier? Will she have the determination to remain on her planned path--pure and untouched--or will she be tempted along the way to settle down and find happiness elsewhere? Will she be side-tracked by devious villains or eaten by wild squirrels? This reporter wants to know. Miss Randall will be meeting me at the Harrisburg station tomorrow morning for an exclusive in-depth interview before she boards the westbound train heading to Sacramento, California, where she expects to meet the man of her dreams. Is true love enough to make a level-headed woman leave her old life behind and journey to places unknown? It promised to be nothing less than **FASCINATING!**

This report is the first in the series entitled "Journey to True Love" and your faithful reporter Scoop McAlister will be finding out the answers to all of these questions and more. I'll be adding weekly installments to the series, as I am updated on her travels. So hang on to your pinafores and pinstripes--this should be a significant journey!



"Journey to True Love" Act I "Interview"

(at the train station)

(Sign for train station; table with two chairs, set with teapot and two teacups)

Abigail *(walking up, reaching to shake hands with Scoop)*: You must be Scoop McAlister. I've read your column in the Daily Bugle for years.

Scoop: Yes, Miss Abigail--that's me. I'm so glad that you have agreed to this in-depth interview, sharing with me and our readers about this adventure you are embarking on. Actually, my Aunt Beatrice was a mail order bride, too--but I never had the privilege of meeting her or her husband. So you are the first mail-order bride that I have ever met!

Abigail: Well, I'm glad to share with you. If my story can convince even one other person to take this step of faith, it will be worth it!

Scoop: **FASCINATING!** This whole concept of mail order brides just **FASCINATES** me. You say you want to convince others to experience it--and you haven't even met your groom face to face! Yet you seem very excited. But you must have some fear and trepidation... Wait! Where are my manners? Why don't you have a seat? Can I get you some tea (coffee)?

Abigail: Oh, I would like that very much, Mr. McAlister. *(She takes a seat)*

Scoop: Please call me "Scoop"

Abigail: I will. *(Scoop pours her a cup of tea from teapot)* Thank you, Scoop.

Scoop: Now I have a few preliminary questions that I've put together here. I want to let my readers know exactly how you arrived at this day, willing to leave your old life and begin this journey. First of all, how long have you known this husband-to-be that you will be meeting at the end of your journey?

Abigail: Well, I've known of Him for a while. He wrote an introductory letter to my church, and it was up to us if we chose to respond to Him. I was one who did.

Scoop: **FASCINATING!** Why do you suppose your future husband used this method to find a wife? It seems like a very peculiar way of finding a wife.

Abigail: Yes, I can see how you would think so. But in the dating world, people wear masks and judge by appearances. This way eliminates all those games; by reading and studying His

letters I have learned of His character without being distracted by His appearance or anything else.

Scoop: Simply **FASCINATING!** You're a beautiful young woman, Abigail. I'm sure you've had your share of suitors here in town. Why not accept one of them?

Abigail: Other suitors? Why, yes, I've had other suitors, but what they had to offer was really empty in the end. One offered his wealth and success and said I would gain the world; another offered his looks and pleasures of this life, saying we could eat, drink and be merry. They all offered me a life that would seem right to men, but it was all selfish and temporary. I was never really sure of their love for me; they loved me as long as I pleased them. Clearly, their love had strings attached!

Scoop: And this Groom waiting for you has offered you what? Something more lasting?

Abigail: My Groom-to-be offered me abundant life--eternally. He has made me free to follow Him and free from the bondage of sin and fear. He has promised to provide for me, to protect me, to guide me With Him, I have the peace and assurance of knowing that He loves me just the way I am, and nothing I do will change that. In fact, it was His free gift that made this journey possible!

Scoop: Absolutely **FASCINATING!** And you know all this just because He said it in a letter? How can you be sure that those are not just words on a page?

Abigail: They are not just words on a page! Without even knowing whether I would accept His proposal, my Groom paid the price that would set me free so that I could embark on this journey. He paid the price for my trip. He made a huge sacrifice, not knowing whether I would choose to accept His proposal or not!

Scoop: **FASCINATING!** And what do you leave behind? What sacrifice are you making?

Abigail: Well, I guess you could say that I am giving up my way of life and doing things my way. But my way was not really working out, so that's not a big sacrifice. And His way is so much better. I leave behind a job which basically enslaved me. There was no hope of my ever being free of the bondage of Sin on my own. And what kind of life was it really, working 24/7 trying to be free of debt? It wasn't working for me. His way offers me freedom from condemnation and forgiveness--as much and as often as I need it!

Scoop: Again, **FASCINATING!** You gain this freedom and all these benefits...but what does He require of you?

Abigail: His only requirement was that I accept His proposal and choose to follow Him. I'm sure He desires my faithfulness to Him, but I **want** to give Him something in return! He's given me so much, including hope for my future. I'm so grateful to Him. He has a wonderful plan, you know. Even this journey I am embarking on is part of His plan.

Scoop: **FASCINATING!** And may I ask what is in that suitcase of yours? I know it can't hold all of your belongings? What did you choose to bring on this significant journey?

Abigail: Well, I have a stack of all the letters He sent me. They're full of His wisdom for the journey. I love re-reading those letters. Every time I read them, I learn something more about my Beloved. And I need them to help me stay focused on my destination. There wasn't much else from my old life that I needed. In fact, He told me to leave everything behind so that I could press forward to know Him better and find out what His plan has in store for me. Actually, what I have in this suitcase are things that He provided for my journey. He sent me wisdom and strength, and I have the garments of faith and truth and righteousness in here. He even told me that I would need a weapon! He says that He has provided everything that I need for my journey.

Scoop: **FASCINATING!** It is hard to imagine that you will need a weapon, but if He planned your trip, I guess He may be aware of enemies that you may encounter... (that's not very reassuring, is it?) *(laughs)* Now, Abigail, I hope you don't mind, but I did my homework and checked into your background. I know you have cares, and responsibilities. Your suitcase should be overflowing!

Abigail: Yes, my life here was full of burdens and responsibilities. But He asked me to ship all of those burdens ahead, and He would carry them. They would only serve to weigh me down on my journey.

Scoop: **FASCINATING!** I know the train will be arriving soon, so I will just ask one more question. He promised you a lot of wonderful things. I can see why you might choose Him. You even mentioned the sacrifice He made to make your journey possible. But--really--what assurance do you have that His word is true? All you have are His letters, right?

Abigail: Well, Scoop, there are just somethings that you have to take by faith. As I said earlier, this journey is a step of faith. Even if I was to marry someone here in town, I still need to have faith that the one I've chosen to marry is who he says he is. I have chosen to believe that what my Beloved has said in His letters is true. I believe He is who He says He is and that His words are true.

Scoop: Well, we will be keeping up with you as you make this amazing journey to your Beloved. Thank you so much for agreeing to communicate with me via telegraph at various points in your journey, Miss Abigail. Good luck!

Abigail: I'll stay in touch, Scoop! (Abigail takes suitcase, and heads to the train)

Man in Black: *(walking up to Abigail)* Howdy, Ma'am! You have a ticket for this train to Sacramento?

Abigail: Yes, sir, I do. It is scheduled to leave in about a half an hour.

Man in Black: I am aware of that. But it may be that you don't realize that this isn't the only train to Sacramento. Could I interest you in at least considering another train for your journey?

Abigail: I'm sorry, I already have my ticket....

Man in Black: No matter. It can be quickly and easily exchanged should you choose the Sugarland Express. Let me tell you what it has to offer!

Abigail: Well....I don't have much time...

Man in Black: Well, this train you are booked on doesn't hold a candle to the Sugarland Express. The Sugarland Express is luxury all the way. Plush seating, personal air controls, shaded windows; everyone travels first class. We even have a gourmet dining car. Comfort and convenience are key to travel enjoyment. And I can pretty much guarantee that this train you have tickets for is equipped only with the basic essentials. At best, it is third-rate travel. And consider this--the Sugarland Express is just what it says--"express"--basically non-stop straight to Sacramento. If **that** doesn't convince you, I don't know what will. No one enjoys those countless stops and layovers.

Abigail: Well, I'm sure those amenities would be nice, and I can't imagine how nice it would be to make the trip with no stops or layovers. But I am choosing to take the train that my Beloved chose for me. For whatever reason, He gave me tickets for this particular train, and I'm not going to change now. Now if you excuse me, I have to go now...

Man in Black: You'll regret it!



"Journey to True Love" Act II "Temptations Without"

(in the train)

Conductor: All aboard! Please have your tickets ready... *(begins walking down the aisle collecting tickets)*

(Abigail walks in and sits down by another passenger, making a place for her suitcase/purse; Man in Black walks through the car and Abigail visibly is concerned, staring at him as he walks through)(Ruby is sitting behind, eavesdropping and responding with facial expressions to their talk)

Conductor: Hello ladies. So glad you joined us. Got your tickets?

Abigail and Virginia: We sure do! *(both hand tickets to conductor)*

Conductor: Ah...Allentown and Harrisburg--you're Pennsylvania girls. Traveling all the way to California. That is a long journey. I pray you will have joy in this journey. As you travel, may you have wisdom and strength, with patience and longsuffering. Any difficulties you encounter on this ride, I assure you, do not compare with the glory that awaits you at your destination! *(Conductor hesitates for Virginia's answer, then walks thru car and collect other tickets)*

Virginia: *(to conductor)* Wow! Thanks! *(to Abigail)* Hi, I'm Virginia. I think I heard that you are a mail-order bride like myself. I love when she talked about "the glory that awaits" us!

Abigail: Me too! I'm Abigail Randall. I just boarded in Harrisburg. I'm so glad to meet another mail-order bride! I know we'll have a lot in common!

Virginia: We will, I'm certain of it. I don't think it is a coincidence that we're on the same train and heading to the same destination.

Abigail: I was hoping to meet someone to make this journey with. In His letters, my Groom-to-be expressed His desire that I find fellowship along the way. He said that it would be helpful to have at least one other likeminded bride who would be an encouragement and support to me as we travel together. So, I think the Conductor said that you boarded in Allentown?

Virginia: That's right. I've been on this train just a bit longer than you have. Actually, I met one other mail-order bride, sitting a few cars back. Maybe we'll be able to convince her to join us for some meals later.

Abigail: I'd like to meet her too. How has your journey been so far? Is it what you expected?

Virginia: Well, there have been a few rough spots, but all in all, I'm surviving! There are challenges, but in one of His letters, my Groom told me that I would be more than a conqueror! I take that to mean that nothing will get in my way for long!

(Man in Black walks through again, drops something near Abigail's feet, stoops down for more than a moment and then stands up again and exits)

Abigail: *(staring at Man in Black as he exits)* Virginia, do you know that gentleman? He gives me the creeps!

Virginia: Well, I don't know his name, but the minute I boarded the train, I heard rumors that he is nothing but trouble. They say he roams the train, seeking those he can devour. He's up to no good, that's for sure!

Abigail: Even before I boarded this train, he tried to derail me... He tried to convince me that he had a better way to get to California--the Sugarland Express! I wasn't expecting to see him again. Did you think it was funny how he dropped something right by my suitcase? Maybe I should check my purse. *(fumbles through purse)* Oh no! My money is gone. Oh, no!! That thief! *(starts weeping in her handkerchief)* I think he took every penny I had! I can't believe it. I just got on the train. It wasn't supposed to be like this. What am I going to do? I have no money. *(more crying)*

Virginia: I'm so sorry, Abigail. I guess this is why my Groom told me to be on the alert for an enemy and his subtle tricks.

Abigail: What am I going to do?

Virginia: Well, did your Groom give you any instructions in case something like this should happen?

Abigail: *(crying dries up)* Actually, He did. He told me not to fret because of the man who brings evil schemes to pass, because my Groom would supply all my needs. I just can't see how He can do that long distance.

Virginia: I guess we will just wait and see.

Abigail: So, tell me about the One you will be meeting in Sacramento.

Virginia: He's so awesome. He's strong and powerful, He's wealthy yet humble and generous, He understands me, He's full of compassion...Oh, I could go on and on!

Abigail: He sounds very much like my Beloved.

Ruby: *(moves forward, pushing Abigail to the window and sitting with them)* Ladies, I hate to eavesdrop, but did I hear the Conductor say that you are mail-order brides?

Abigail: Yes, Ma'am, you did. We are both on this journey to meet our grooms in Sacramento.

Ruby: Bless your hearts, Sacramento is a long ways away. You'll meet your Grooms for the first time there? You know, I'm meeting my brother and his friends in Illinois, and he asked me to keep my eyes open for some eligible ladies on this train. He and his friends would love to meet sweet gals like yourselves. If I telegraph ahead, they will meet us in Chicago.

Abigail: No, no--no need. I've made a commitment to my Groom-to-be.

Ruby: You know girls, back in my day, I was taught that "a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush." You've heard that saying, right? My brother and his buddies are looking for wives. They're good men. I can vouch for all of them. Any one of them is able to provide you that nice house with a white picket fence in the suburbs. It's the American dream--and the life you've dreamed of. Admit it... the financial security, good standing in the community, the admiration of your neighbors, the affection, a family....Why go all the way to California when you can have it all right here?

Abigail: No, that is not what I want. At least not any more. There is more to life than the American dream. My Beloved has promised to do exceeding abundantly above all that I could ask or think.

Ruby: Promised? Just words on a page, as far as I can see. And who knows how long you will have to wait to see that fulfilled! I'm offering you a shortcut. No waiting--

Abigail: Shortcuts won't do. My heart is set on making it to Sacramento!

Virginia: Me too!

Ruby: Well, bless your hearts, maybe you'll change your minds before we get to Chicago. Let me know if you do!

(Conductor enters)

Conductor: I want to warn you gals...there is talk of a deceiver and swindler on board this train who will shamelessly lie to you to get what he wants....and he wants to kill, steal and destroy. You need to be alert and watch out for him.

Virginia: He was here not ten minutes ago!

Abigail: And he stole all my cash. You need to get him off this train.

Conductor: He's known to be very deceptive. Don't be ignorant of his tricks. Resist him!

Virginia and Abigail: Yes, sir! *(Conductor exits)*

Conductor: Next stop: Columbus, Ohio!

Ruby: Hey girls. Our next layover is in Columbus. I just read that there is one of them new-fangled moving picture shows there. Why don't we get off there and we'll go see that handsome Cary Grant and Kathryn Hepburn?

Virginia: *(to Abigail)* Wouldn't that be so fun?! I just adore Cary Grant.

Abigail: We've been traveling all day. I am ready for a little distraction and entertainment. Do you think we could?

Ruby: Sure you could. I checked the train schedule. The layover here is only an hour, but you could catch the next train to Sacramento tomorrow morning. I know a great place to eat in Columbus, too.

Abigail: So the movie won't end in time for us to get back on this train?

Ruby: What's your hurry? If what you say is true, your Groom will still be waiting for you. You can start again tomorrow.

Abigail: That's true..... But my Groom told me.....

Ruby: Young lady, you can make your own decision. What business does he have telling you what to do? We're strong, independent women. We've got the vote! We're free to make up our own minds!

Abigail: That's true, I am free. But....

Ruby: Anyway, are you really disobeying him? You are just postponing things. There's nothing wrong with going to the movies. What objection could he have? Doesn't he want you to have fun?

Virginia: *(to Abigail)* I was told to ride this train, weren't you? I know my Groom, and He wouldn't make rules that He doesn't have a good reason to make. He wants the best for me.

Abigail: You're right. I was really tempted by her offer. I think you just gave me a "way of escape" by reminding me of that. *(to Ruby)* Thank you, but I think I'll pass on your very kind and tempting offer, Ma'am. I am free to make my own decisions, and I choose to obey my Groom in this case. I hope you enjoy the movie!

Ruby; Well, if I can't get you girls to join me, I guess I'll just stay on the train. Besides I've seen that moving picture show three times. *(Ruby returns to her seat)* They get married in the end.

Abigail: Well, I am getting off when the train stops. I need to run and send a quick telegraph to Scoop, updating him on my travels. Hope the telegraph office is nearby. I promised to report to him. *(starts to walk out)* Oh no, I just remembered! I don't have any money. It will cost at least 35 cents to send that telegraph. What am I going to do? Wait! What is that? *(Points to floor in front of her)* Is that money? It looks like three quarters! *(gasps)* It is! Seventy-five cents!

Virginia: This will pay for this telegraph and the next one, at least! He supplied your needs, just like He said He would!

Abigail: Yes, Virginia, He did. Just like He said He would.

* * *

Scoop: *(typing)* Well, folks, our mail-order bride is finding that her journey is no railway full of roses. She's encountering ruts and rough spots and rifts. In her travels so far, she has run in to a conniving con man offering caviar and comfort on the Sugarland Express, a thorough thief without a thread of decency thinking to thwart her, a handy offer to harness a handsome husband in a hurry and find happiness outside of Hoboken and an intriguing invitation to indulge and inspect some indiscretions on the big screen. Our heroine stayed the course and remained faithful to the journey that she has set her heart to, confident that she will be rewarded in the end. Here's what's **FASCINATING!** She's found another mail-order bride on the very same train, going to the very same destination. Mail-order brides just **FASCINATE ME!**



"Journey to True Love"

Act III "Doubts and Fears Within"

(on the train)

(ladies are fanning, looking haggard from long trip)

Abigail: Wow, Virginia. I just had no clue how long this journey would be. I'm so weary of traveling.

Virginia: I know. I'm so glad we have one another.

(conductor walks in)

Conductor: How are you ladies holding up?

Abigail: The train tracks seem to go on forever. Could you tell us what is ahead? How much longer until we get to Sacramento?

Conductor: Ladies, I know the trip is long. I'm sorry, but I came in to give you some bad news. I need to inform you that due to a break in the tracks ahead, we are making a detour. I would never choose this route, because it is always difficult and dangerous. I guarantee we will encounter a violent storm. But we have no choice. We will be delayed. But eventually we'll get back on the westward track to Sacramento. Unfortunately, that detour will take us through a place we railmen call the Valley of Weeping. I

Abigail: The Valley of Weeping?!!

Conductor: Yes, it is a very dry and parched desert area.

Abigail: *(alarmed)* Don't you have any good news?

Conductor: Well, the good news is that there is no need to be afraid. The One who paid for this trip will keep you until you make it to your final destination. He began a good work, and He will complete it.

Virginia: Thanks. We'll keep that in mind.

(conductor exits)

Abigail: A detour... *(looking out the window)* I can tell it will be quite a delay--we are turning way off course, and it looks like the track goes on forever--in the wrong direction. How can this be right? *(tries not to cry)*

Man in Black: *(audience can see him at the far end of the "train" but our characters only hear him as a voice in their mind)* This can't be right. This isn't what you signed up for! You signed on for a direct route. Can you really trust a Bridegroom who put you on this train that is taking you in a direction that you never could have foreseen? Do you think this is part of that "good plan" *(sarcastic)*?

(here, Abigail and Virginia will react to these voices and respond as if voices are whispering in their head. They do not look back and actually converse with the Man in Black)

Abigail: I don't have to understand everything in order to trust Him. His thoughts are not my thoughts, and His plan are not my plans.

Virginia: You are so right. Everything is going to work out for good. We have to keep our eyes on the destination and know that any detours must be part of His plan.

Man in Black: *(whispering)* What kind of Bridegroom would plan a trip like this for someone He truly loved? Guaranteed storms? The Valley of Weeping? That sounds like a great place. And you still have a ways to go to get to Sacramento. What other terrible things does the future hold? Think about it...it doesn't make sense that Someone who loves you would ask you to go through such difficult trials. Maybe you should cut your losses and get off at the next stop... The Sugarland Express might be sounding a lot better right now!

Abigail: I'm getting so hot and tired. I don't know if I can take one more hour of sitting in this chair. And it's so warm. If I only had personal air controls so I could keep cool! The Sugarland Express even had a dining car--cold lemonade and a hot roast beef sandwich sure sounds good about now.

Man in Black: It's discouraging, isn't it? Your Groom could have easily provided those things for you--but He didn't. Do you think He really loves you? Is that someone you want to give your life to?

Virginia: Abigail, we could continue to listen to these lies--or we could re-read our letters and remind ourselves of the truth about the One we have promised to marry. His character is love and His promises are sure.

Abigail: You are right. Let's get our letters out. His words fill me with courage and help me to persevere.

(both women pull out "letters" to read)

Abigail: Look Virginia. He says "don't lean on your own understanding" and "He will direct my path."

Virginia: And listen to this that my Groom wrote: "Beloved, don't think it strange when you encounter storms and trials." I guess He knew this would happen on our journey.

Abigail: Look, He says: "When you run into storms and trials, you can count it all joy, because your faith will grow and produce patience."

Man in Black: (*disgusted*) I've heard enough. I'm just saying, does that "abundant life" have to include trials like this? Maybe you did something wrong! You've let Him down.

(*conductor enters*)

Conductor: Just checking on everybody! How are you handling this detour?

Abigail: Do you really think we will make it to Sacramento?

Conductor: Ladies, I have ridden this train route for many years--and I can assure you that we will get to Sacramento. No one said the journey would be short or easy.

Ruby: (*Ruby moves forward again, and leans over Abigail to look out the window*) Wow, look at those black clouds ahead. Makes me nervous. They look bad... Didn't I tell you you should have gotten off in Chicago? Then you wouldn't be going through this storm. I've heard these storms can tear right through a tin can like we're traveling in. Do you girls swim?

Abigail: (*aghast*) Surely it can't be that bad!!

Conductor: Girls, pay her no mind. On this train you will have tribulation, but we will get to our destination. The rains may descend, the floods may come and the winds may blow, but you won't be taken down. (*conductor exits*)

Virginia: You know, we're safe, even with this storm, because we know we're on the train that we are supposed to be on. It's bad--look at those sheets of rain. I can feel the strength of the wind.

(*Train starts shaking*)

Abigail: I'm no match for the strength of this storm. What if I don't finish this journey well? What if I'm not strong enough for the storm? What if I had gotten on another train? What if there was another man for me in Chicago? What if it is my fault that I am encountering all these trials?

Ruby: Nevermind all that.... What if this is all an elaborate hoax? What if your Groom (*to Virginia*) and your Groom (*to Abigail*) don't even exist? (*Ruby returns to seat*)

(*Both Virginia and Abigail stare wide-eyed at Ruby and gasp*)

Virginia: What if we remember what we have been told? We know we are to think on things that are true, not the "what ifs." He told us not to be fearful of storms. In fact, He told us that He is our refuge in the storm. He provides a hiding place.

Abigail: Okay, but the ride is getting rough. I hope we make it through. *(both girls hold hands, heads down)*

(Train starts shaking more for a few seconds, then lets up)

Virginia: I think the storm is letting up.

Conductor: Ladies, we made it through that storm and our next stop is the Valley of Weeping. This will be our last layover before the Rocky Mountains. And I have good news. The storm made pools of water in the Valley of Weeping, so there is refreshment for those who are struggling.

Abigail: When we get off, we should go bottle some of that water for the next group that comes through! It's the least we can do. I'm so grateful to be on the other side of the storm. It was a rough ride. I hope that's the worst this journey has to offer.

Conductor: Well, the Rockies are no picnic. But Sacramento lies just beyond the Rockies, so that is where we are going. Just don't look down, you'll be fine.

Abigail: After we fill those bottles, I'm going to run to the telegraph office and send Mr. Scoop another telegram. I promised to report to him. He'll be glad to hear that we are finally on the last leg of our journey. Let's go, Virginia.

* * *

Scoop: *(typing)* Well, our mail order bride is feeling the weariness of her journey. She has faced fear, she has faced discouragement, she has faced confusion and doubt. Her journey has had unexpected detours, and unexplainable storms and trials. And while the storm raged on the outside, she faced a more dangerous storm of doubts and fears in her mind. Thankfully she has others who encourage her, and lift her up when she is down. And re-reading her letters and reminding herself of the Groom's words has proved to be a saving grace for her. Her latest stop is at the Valley of Weeping, and...

Courier: *(walking across stage, waving telegram)* Mr. Scoop! Mr. Scoop McAlister! Mr. McAlister? Telegram from Sacramento!

Scoop: Over here! Sacramento?! Oh, that's the end of the line for Miss Randall. Could she be there already? Let's see...*(read telegram out loud)* "Hard journey (stop) Difficulties and perils (stop)..Rocky Mountains challenging (stop) Arrived Sacramento this morning (stop) My Beloved was waiting (stop) I am my Beloved's and He is mine. (stop) I know what it is to be

totally loved and in love (stop) Journey was worth every dusty mile, every rough road, and every trial and temptation (stop) Better than I ever dreamed it could be (stop).

Scoop: *(back to typing)* **FASCINATING!** Well, well, well. Readers, I guess I can end this series about mail-order bride Abigail Randall. Her journey has ended in the arms of her True Love. I love happy endings!