


BEACONS OF HOPE  BOOK TWO

# Hearts Made Whole



JODY HEDLUND



BETHANYHOUSE

*a division of Baker Publishing Group*

Minneapolis, Minnesota

Jody Hedlund, *Hearts Made Whole*  
Bethany House, a division of Baker Publishing Group, © 2015. Used by permission.  
(Unpublished manuscript—copyright protected Baker Publishing Group)

© 2015 by Jody Hedlund

Published by Bethany House Publishers  
11400 Hampshire Avenue South  
Bloomington, Minnesota 55438  
www.bethanyhouse.com

Bethany House Publishers is a division of  
Baker Publishing Group, Grand Rapids, Michigan

Printed in the United States of America

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means—for example, electronic, photocopy, recording—without the prior written permission of the publisher. The only exception is brief quotations in printed reviews.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Hedlund, Jody

Hearts made whole / Jody Hedlund.

pages ; cm. — (Beacons of hope ; book 2)

Summary: "In 1865, Caroline has tended the Windmill Point Lighthouse in Michigan since her father's death, but her home and livelihood are threatened when a wounded Civil War veteran arrives to take her place"—Provided by publisher.

ISBN 978-0-7642-1238-3 (softcover)

1. Lighthouses—Michigan—Fiction. 2. Man-woman relationships—Fiction. 3. United States—History—Civil War, 1861–1865—Veterans—Fiction. I. Title.

PS3608.E333H43 2015

813'.6—dc23

2014046625

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

This is a work of historical reconstruction; the appearances of certain historical figures are therefore inevitable. All other characters, however, are products of the author's imagination, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, is coincidental.

Cover design by Jennifer Parker

Cover photography by Mike Habermann Photography, LLC

15 16 17 18 19 20 21      7 6 5 4 3 2 1

*To all the women who worked in lighthouses*

Thank you for your courage and for showing  
that women are capable of doing anything.







# Chapter 1

## WINDMILL POINT LIGHTHOUSE MICHIGAN, MAY 1865

A distant flash of lightning crisscrossed the darkening skies of the west, followed by the call of a nearby loon. “I don’t think you should set out.” Caroline Taylor clutched her shawl tighter against a cool gust that wrestled with it. “The storm’s coming fast.”

Her father shoved the rowboat across the gravelly shore of Lake St. Clair. “We’ll be fine,” he said over his broad shoulder. “We’ll beat the storm. Besides, I’ve crossed this lake in more storms than I can count.”

The old doctor already waited on a bench inside the cutter, clasping his top hat and fighting with the wind to keep it on his head. “I can’t stay any longer, Caroline,” the doctor said. “I’ve done all I can for your sister.”

She wanted to blurt out that she knew that. That she’d been

in Sarah's room when he'd examined her and made his dismal prognosis. That they'd all known Sarah wasn't getting better. That no matter how much they'd hoped and prayed over the winter, Sarah had only gotten worse. But instead of saying anything, Caroline merely nodded.

"Unfortunately I've got too many other patients needing my attention." Beneath the brim of the doctor's hat, deep grooves etched his forehead and seemed to grow deeper with each visit. "Too many young men ripped apart from limb to limb."

With General Lee's surrender at Appomattox a month ago, some of the fighting men had begun to return home. If reports were true, many of the soldiers who had made it out of the bloody war were injured, maimed, and only half alive.

Caroline's father gave one last heave, and the boat screeched against the rocks as though in protest of having to leave. Holding on to the bowline, her father limped on stiff legs into the murky water. His rheumatism was always worse when the weather was about to change.

Caroline glanced at the sky again, to the piles of dark clouds gathering in heaps on the horizon. Her lungs pinched. "Father . . ." she began but quelled her protest by nibbling on her bottom lip.

The waves slapped high against his rubber boots and doused his trousers at the knees. His blue eyes, so much like her own, reached across to her tenderly. "Cast your cares on Him, honey."

His gentle admonition loosened the tightness in her chest only a little. They both knew she was prone to worry. It wasn't something she was proud of. But there were times when anxiety crowded into her head like a thick, heavy fog, blinding and choking her.

He glanced toward the keeper's cottage, where her siblings

stood. “Mind Caroline while I’m gone!” he shouted above the wind.

Tessa stood on the step in front of the weathered house, her beautiful, dark wavy hair flowing like ravens taking flight. She had her arms around the twins, anchoring the wiry boys to the spot, as Caroline had instructed her.

Even though ten-year-old Harold and Hugh squirmed, anxious to be set free to get into their usual trouble, they were obeying Tessa and staying by her side—at least for the time being.

“We’ll be good,” one of the boys called, peering from beneath his scraggly brown hair that was overdue for a haircut. But Tessa didn’t say anything. From the downward slant of her lips, Caroline could tell Tessa wasn’t pleased with their father’s admonition. At seventeen she’d made no secret that she was ready for her independence.

Her father nodded at the boys, his smile lingering over each of them. He’d already said his good-byes when they’d been gathered in Sarah’s room earlier. He’d already told each of them he loved them, that he was blessed by God to have five fine children. There was no need to linger now and say the good-byes again. Not with the storm coming.

“If you must go,” Caroline said, “then you’d best be on your way.”

The boat was jerking up and down in the rapidly churning waves. Another flash of lightning lit up the western sky.

Her father took a backward step toward the bow, but then hesitated. “You know I have no choice in going. I have to find medicine for Sarah.” Helpless anguish shadowed his face for the briefest moment, giving Caroline a glimpse of his inner turmoil at having to watch his sweet young daughter suffer day in and day out.

“I’ll be praying you find something,” she said, knowing he would need all the prayers they could offer. Medicine of any kind was in short supply due to the demands of the war. The closest town to their isolated lighthouse, Grosse Pointe, had run out of even the most basic medicine long ago. And her father had been forced to search the backstreets of Detroit on more than one occasion in recent months.

The war may have ended, but their battles were far from over.

“I love you, Caroline,” her father said, the lump in his throat moving up and down. “Thank you for all your help. I don’t know how I’d get by without you.”

She shooed him with a flutter of her hands. “I’m sure you’d do just fine.” Although she didn’t know how he’d manage either, especially the light. When his rheumatism was bothering him—which seemed to be most days lately—he couldn’t get his legs to work to climb the tower stairway. And she’d taken over lighting the lantern on all but a rare day.

He heaved himself over the edge of the boat, the strength in his arms making up for the weakness of his legs. He settled himself at the oars, his muscles bulging through the seams of his jacket.

She had to remember he was an experienced lightkeeper and sailor, that he knew the lakes better than most. If anyone could traverse Lake St. Clair in a storm, he could likely do it with his eyes closed.

Even so, the airways in her lungs constricted again.

He dug the oars into the water and pressed the boat back against the waves. “Remember what I always say,” he called to her with another of his kind smiles. “God is good—”

“All the time,” she said, finishing the sentence for him.

He strained against the waves, pushing the boat in small



but steady increments away from the shore. His smile was just as steady.

The waves crashed higher, sending water in a rushing cascade toward her boots and forcing her to retreat from the shoreline. She drew in a deep breath, the brisk wind bringing the scent of the wet arrow grass and cattail that grew along the lake and overpowering the aroma of the newly bloomed Indian paintbrush.

If only she didn't worry so much . . .

But in the years since her mother had died, as the oldest child she'd fallen into a motherly role with her family. As her father's joints had continued to stiffen with pain, she'd gradually shouldered his work too.

She hadn't minded. In fact, she loved taking care of the lighthouse for her father. It was one of the many duties she relished.

Yet there were times when she half agreed with her father that perhaps she'd had to bear too much too soon in her short life. At twenty, she couldn't remember a time when she'd ever had the freedom to be a child, to play, to experience life without worries—like the twins did.

With each stroke of the oars her father propelled the boat farther out on the lake, steering it toward the wide mouth of the Detroit River where hopefully he would meet calmer passage.

She cast another glance at the ominous black clouds. Even though it was only midday, the descending darkness was like that of eventide. She would need to climb the tower steps and crank up the lantern during the storm. The light would not only help her father but all the many vessels sailing across Lake St. Clair in their journey from Lake Huron to Lake Erie.

For a long moment, however, she remained motionless on the shore, her eyes fixed upon the tiny boat bouncing against the whitecaps.

She watched and waited . . .

Until finally her father lifted his hand and waved.

Warmth stole into her heart. She rose to her tiptoes and stretched her arm in a wave back to him. In spite of her worry, she smiled at their tradition, one that she'd shared with her father since she'd been a little girl just learning to walk.

With a long last wave she forced herself to spin around. The keeper's dwelling and the tower stood less than fifty feet from the shore and would have made a picturesque sight any other spring day with all of her flowers blooming around it. But with the gray chill, she was reminded once again of the harsh Michigan winter that had only recently passed.

"I'm going up to light the lantern," she called to Tessa, who'd released her grip on the twins. The boys had already darted toward the shore to watch their father until he was out of sight. "Keep an eye on the boys. I don't want them running off to play during the storm."

Tessa gave an exasperated sigh, as if keeping track of the twins was life's greatest hardship. With their energy and penchant for mischief, the boys were a handful. But Caroline knew that Tessa enjoyed taking care of them, almost as much as she herself loved overseeing the lantern.

Caroline strode across the grassy knoll. Even though the green was lush and thick from the warm, sunny days they'd had lately, the vegetation and her flower gardens could use the coming rain.

If only it would hold off until her father and the doctor made it across the lake to the river. She reached the enclosed walkway that connected the tower to the house, and a burst of wind ripped at her shawl, wrenching it from her shoulders and plastering it against the peeling white paint of the stone tower.

Behind her one of the boys shouted, rapidly followed by the other twin's cry. The urgency sent a charge through Caroline's nerves.

She spun only to find them both ankle-deep in water, staring with openmouthed horror into the distance . . . south, in the direction Father had rowed.

Her breathing ceased when she caught sight of her father's rowboat turned upside down. A scream ripped from her lips. "Father!"

She ran back across the grassy embankment toward the shore. Her feet felt wooden and heavy. Her skirt tangled in her legs, causing her to stumble. She careened forward until she stood next to the boys near the crashing waves, her heart pounding, her breath coming in wheezes.

"Father!" she screamed again.

As if responding to her frantic call, a head popped through the waves. Her father's broad shoulders appeared at the rounded hull. He was gripping the doctor's arm, clearly attempting to keep the man afloat in the churning waves.

He wrapped his free arm over the boat and clung to the keel.

"Hold on!" she cried. "Pull yourself up!"

The twins mimicked her call, yelling across the lake at the top of their voices. Tessa joined them at the water's edge and added her shouting.

Caroline knew that Father wouldn't be able to hear them, and that nothing they could say would help him. But she couldn't stop yelling instructions anyway. Every limb of her body shook like the branches of the nearby willow that draped over the lake.

A crashing wave swept against her father and the doctor and then over the boat, plunging them both completely underwater again.

“No!” She lunged into the water, heedless of her shoes and skirt. She had to save them. She had to get to them and assist them.

“You can’t go out there!” Tessa called, splashing after her. She reached for Caroline’s arm and jerked her to a stop. “You’ll only drown yourself.”

The waves splashed up to Caroline’s knees, already weighing her skirt down. Her mind told her that Tessa was right, that she couldn’t swim out into the lake under the current conditions, that to do so would only send her to a watery grave.

But she struggled against her sister’s hold nevertheless. “I have to go to him!”

Her father’s head appeared again, and he flung his arm over the boat once more, still tightly gripping the doctor with his other. She wanted to yell at him to let go of the old man, to save himself. But she couldn’t. She knew he wouldn’t. She knew he’d die first before he let go.

His flimsy grip slipped as the waves came up to choke him again.

Panic swelled in Caroline’s stomach, and she found herself screaming again. Even from the distance, she could see that he was weakening. That he wouldn’t be able to hold on to the boat with one hand. That he wouldn’t be able to crawl on top of it either. And even if he did, how would he be able to stay there? Not with the waves and wind beating against him.

“Hold on!” she shouted again.

He held on by the tips of his fingers. But the weight of the doctor was dragging him down. Like most people, the doctor probably couldn’t swim. And even if he could have, they were too far out and the water too furious to be able to swim back to the shore.

A gust of wind sent more high waves against the boat and the men. Her father lost his grasp again and disappeared beneath the water.

For several long, agonizing moments, she waited for him to reappear as he had the last time. She strained to see him and the boat. But when she caught sight of the hull again, he wasn't there. The underside of the boat was barren, and the water surrounding it empty, except for the doctor's tall black hat bobbing on the waves.

She stared at the spot. "Come on. Come on. Please surface!"

Next to her, Tessa had begun to pray.

The wind whipped at them. And for an interminable minute, they all stood silently holding their breaths, eyes trained on the spot they'd last seen Father.

A sudden crack of thunder caused Caroline's nerves to jump and warned her that the storm was only minutes from hitting. She had to find a way to save Father and the doctor before the storm unleashed even more fury.

"The canoe!" she said, then turned and started sloshing back toward the small boathouse and the old canoe tipped over on its side next to it. She'd take the canoe out to rescue the men. She could paddle by herself. She'd done so hundreds of times in the past.

Again Tessa dragged her to a halt. "No, Caroline!"

Caroline yanked her arm, but Tessa dug in her fingers.

"Don't you dare try to stop me!" Caroline yelled at her sister.

Tessa's beautiful eyes flashed with fury even as tears ran down her cheeks. "What makes you think you can make it if Father couldn't?"

The logic of Tessa's words sent frustration roaring through Caroline. "We can't just leave them out there to die."

Tessa pressed her lips together. But Caroline could sense her unspoken words. She ceased struggling and stared at a glistening tear that dripped from the tip of Tessa's nose, seeing in her sister's tears what she didn't want to accept . . .

It was too late. There was absolutely nothing they could do to save Father now. There never had been anything they could do. They were completely helpless.

Caroline spun and looked out over the turbulent lake. Emptiness filled her vision. Silent screams flooded her chest and expanded until the pressure reached her throat. But her airways were too tight to let the screams pass.

The wind battered her, and the first icy drops of rain sliced into her.

Even then, she stood mutely, frozen.

One of the twins slipped a small, warm hand into her stiff one.

Lightning zigzagged across the sky, opening it, unleashing a deluge of rain. It pounded Caroline's head. When it began to run in rivulets down her cheeks, she finally let her tears flow.