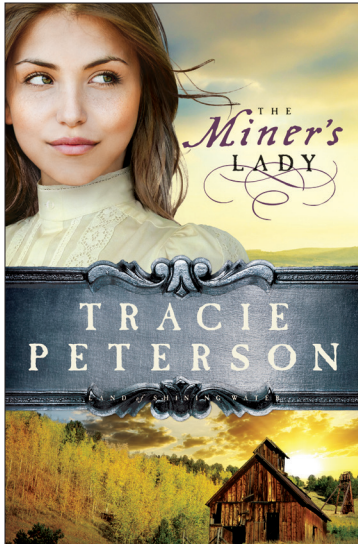




QUESTIONS & ANSWERS WITH TRACIE PETERSON



The Miner's Lady
LAND OF SHINING WATER
by Tracie Peterson

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1. Where did the idea for *The Miner's Lady* come from?

A few years ago I was on a book tour that took me all over Minnesota. I often asked readers where they'd like to see future stories set, and there was a huge response to writing about Minnesota. Several people in particular suggested the Iron Range in northeast Minnesota. I started researching the area and found fascinating information about the industry and the history of its people. I thought it would make a perfect backdrop for a story of romance and intrigue.

2. What is the focus of this story?

The Miner's Lady is definitely a Tracie Peterson historical romance, but it's also a kind of Romeo and Juliet—times two!—story. I wanted to show a situation where two families who had been at odds for generations are finally brought together to deal with the past when their children fall in love and decide to marry no matter the cost. It compelled me also to look at problems related to the mining industry and the cultural problems that divided people.

3. What inspired the characters of Chantel and Isabella?

I loved the idea of having two sisters, who, although very close, had been separated for a long period of time and were just coming back together. The elder of the two, Chantel, is stunned to learn upon her return home that her sister has fallen in love with Orlando Calarco. And though the Calarco family has been considered their enemy for decades, Chantel sees that her sister's love is sincere. Chantel comes to learn over time that she can't "fix" everything, that the heart can't be dictated to, and that God is bigger than vendettas and grudges. Isabella, on the other hand, is a bit of a wild child who believes her marriage to Orlando is God's direction for her life. She's madly in love with him and thinks this is just the ticket for healing the two families.

4. What happens to complicate this love story?

Chantel falls in love with her adversary—Orlando's brother, Dante. She doesn't set out to fall in love, but rather to help her sister's efforts to hold on to true love. In the midst of this, she finds herself confronting and avoiding Dante Calarco, yet love develops between the two.

5. What made you create a story that focuses on holding a grudge?

I think this story is very applicable to our culture today. The attitude of holding a grudge requires the belief that we've been wronged. So often we see people take situations into their own hands when they feel they've been wronged. They feel that they are somehow entitled to something better. They often even believe that they are being kept from God's blessings by others. I wanted to tell a story of human error and the complications that come from holding on to feelings of anger and betrayal.

6. What do you want the reader to take away from this story?

That human beings are fallible and will make mistakes. But when those mistakes are made, they don't need to control our life. We need to let go of the attitude that we are entitled and trust that God will deliver us from evil and set us on a path that will be glorifying to Him. But we have to be willing to hear His voice and respond.