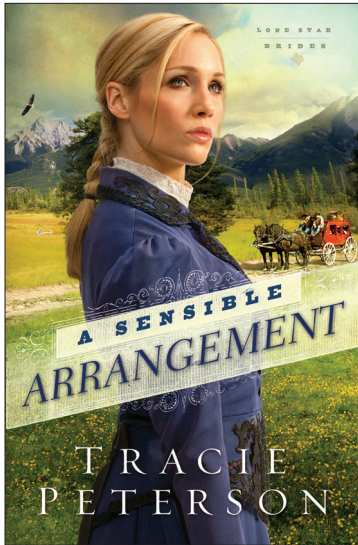




QUESTIONS & ANSWERS WITH TRACIE PETERSON



A Sensible Arrangement

LONE STAR BRIDES #1
by Tracie Peterson

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1. What is *A Sensible Arrangement* about?

A Sensible Arrangement is book one in the LONE STAR BRIDES series. But the really fun thing about this series is that it ties two of my former series together—but more about that in a minute. In this story, Marty Olson is a widow who answers Jake Wythe's request for a Texas bride. Jake is working at a bank in Denver, but his heart has always been on the ranch in Texas. Marty desires only to leave Texas and all the pain of the past behind, while Jake is only working a stuffy office job in order to earn enough money to return home. When the 1893 banking crisis causes problems for the entire country's economy, life and choices change dramatically for Marty and Jake, forcing them to learn to rely on God.

2. So what gave you the idea to tie two former series together?

I heard from so many readers that they wanted to know more about what happened to Jacob Wythe from the STRIKING A MATCH series. Then, after writing the LAND OF THE LONE STAR series, I had a lot of readers sending me notes about how much they loved little Marty and would like to see what she turned out like as an adult. So the idea came to me that I could marry those two together. It's proven to be a fun and a neat way to take the reader into the next generation of characters from these series.

3. What has been the biggest challenge in writing *A Sensible Arrangement*?

Keeping the characters' pasts straight. I make extensive character sheets and synopses for each book, so that has helped a lot, but it's also been a matter of taking quirks and idiosyncrasies of characters at different ages and imagining how that would look in their adult life. I wanted to keep the adult character of Marty, who was only a child in the LAND OF THE LONE STAR series, true to who she was as a child. I also wanted to keep Jake true to his character by having him retain the problems and issues he struggled with in previous stories. Added to this was also the challenge of expanding on the lives of characters in their previous series, such as giving them families, births/deaths/marriages, moves to new locations, etc. Lots to keep track of.

4. What is the spiritual focus of *A Sensible Arrangement*?

Both Marty and Jake go into this arranged marriage for selfish purposes. Neither is completely truthful with the other, and this causes problems. Marty has always been given to exaggeration and not telling the truth, and now it catches up with her. Both Marty and Jake have walked away from God, feeling that because of past problems, God can't possibly care about them anymore. I believe this is a theme many of my readers will connect with, and I hope to show God's consistent love through the fictional characters of this story.

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5. Did this book require any special research?

I did find it necessary to delve into the 1893 financial crisis in America. It was a fascinating time period of new innovations, monopolies being broken, and the business world restructuring. Silver was devalued and gold increased in importance as the country went from being a bi-metallic system (gold and silver) to gold alone. I also enjoyed learning more about the opulent 1890s prior to the collapse, as well as the effects of the financial crash on the country. It all made for fascinating story detail.

6. What do you hope the reader takes away from this book?

I hope they enjoy seeing where life took their beloved characters. I would also want them to be encouraged by the spiritual message woven throughout the story, as well as become educated about the time period and the conflicts that arose due to the depression of 1893. Ultimately, as before, my prayer is that each of these stories will allow the reader to fall a little more deeply in love with Jesus.