



Wm. Delia Books

Write Now

the monthly e-newsletter from Wm. Delia Books

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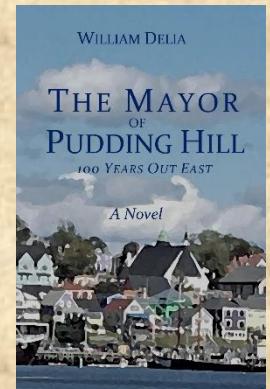
Issue 9

February 2022

The new writing year is officially in full swing. There are not enough hours in the day to keep up with it all. I've spent the last few weeks doing final rewrites on two novels I completed in the past year. "Final" is misleading when it comes to rewriting—the process seems endless, as I can always find some weak word choice or sentence or paragraph that I could have written better. Anyway, I polished one manuscript for publication and the second for entry into the annual *Florida Writers Association Literary Awards Competition*. By the way, the Florida Writers Association invited me to be a judge, again, this year. I've included more below about the soon-to-be published second book. As a result of all this other work, my novel in progress, *Relative Proof*, has suffered from lack of attention. I hope to get back to it soon.

Update

I'm pleased to announce the pending release of my new novel, *The Mayor of Pudding Hill*, subtitled 100 Years Out East. The book resulted from our trip to Nova Scotia in 2019 and some of the wonderful people we met there. The novel tells the life story of centenarian Albie Albertson, affectionately known as the Mayor of Pudding Hill because of his generous caring for his neighbors. Albie's life touches on nearly every significant event in Nova Scotia's 20th Century history. But the story is more than a history lesson. On many levels, it's a love story, one I think you will enjoy. Watch for more details when it is released in a couple of weeks.



Current Titles – Available on Amazon.com or from the author

<u>Novels</u> Healing River Home to the Mountains I Once Was Lost Truth, Lies & Consequences One Day More Shelter from the Storm Remember Who You Are	<u>Books of Faith</u> Jesus Told Them Many Things – Devotional Standing on the Promises – Devotional Waiting for the Light – Advent Study Walking in the Light – Lenten Study—New!
<u>Children's Book</u> Bucky the Manatee	<u>Poetry Collection</u> On the Edge of Forever

Recent Selection

People often ask where I get the ideas for my books. The short answer is, "I don't know." Often, they simply appear, like the one below. As I was writing my current work in progress, this scene popped into my head and interrupted my work. It doesn't fit with anything I am currently writing, and I now think it might be the opening to a book waiting to be written. I'd love to know what you think. Would you like to read more?

For such a Time as This

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ONE

"Wait!" Laz called out in a steady voice as he rose from his seat in the back row.

A heavy silence swept over the room, as forty frightened souls stifled their sobs and held their breath. The man by the stage glanced over his shoulder, but kept his gun trained on the woman at the podium.

His eyes widened, and a sneer came to his face as he said, "You! It's really you, isn't it?"

He wheeled around and leveled the gun at Laz.

"Well, this is more than I... I never expected you to be here, in the flesh. This is great! No, it's perfect! It's all your fault, and now I can make it right! I can save everyone else from the hell you put me through!"

Laz nodded and said, "Yes. It's my fault. Blame me." He pointed at the woman and said, "She's only saying what I told her to say. And these others here? They've all been duped, just like you were."

"You don't want them. I'm the one you want. Let the others go..."

* * *

Three Days Earlier

He closed his eyes against the glaring television lights, and in his head, he heard familiar voices from long ago.

"It's all good, little one. Don't cry. Everything happens for a reason. It's all right."

"Woman, you're not doing that boy any favors, telling him that nonsense. You're his grandmother. It's up to you, now, to teach him how to survive in this godforsaken world."

"He's only five years old, Joseph. He's just a baby."

"Well, thanks to his mother, he's got to grow up early, so babying him ain't doing him no favors."

"She's coming back. She's got some troubles to work through, but she'll come back for her baby boy. You wait and see."

"Alicia, your daughter is gone. She's lost. Give the boy a fighting chance. You gotta be his mother, now."

"No, I don't. But if I did, well, then you would be his father."

"No, no, no! I didn't take you in to wind up raising another family. I'm too old. Besides, I wasn't any good at it the first time around. If you want, you can stay and the boy can stay, too. But raising him is up to you. Leave me out of it."

Joseph drained his beer bottle and dropped it in the trashcan on his way out. The child blubbered something and then burrowed further into the old woman's embrace.

"Don't you worry, little boy. Everything is gonna work out. You are here for a reason. God's gonna do big things with you. Yes, you have a purpose in this world and before you're done, everyone will know who you are. For now, Nana will watch over you. Yes, I will. Yes, I will."

"Mr. Harding?"

He started at the sound of his name, then shook his head to clear the cobwebs from his mind.

He looked at the woman and said, "Yes, sorry. Your last question took me back. Are you ready to start again?"

She nodded and said, "Just pick up where we stopped. We'll cut out the gap in final edit."

He began, "It's true. My mother abandoned me when I was five years old. Well, abandoned is a harsh word. She left me with my grandmother.

"I don't really remember much from those days, but I can tell you this—my grandmother was a saint. She never complained about having to raise another child in her seventies. Right up until the day she died, she always put me first."

"What happened to your mother? Did you ever see her again?"

"Once. She saw me on one of the television late-night talk shows right after my first book hit the bestseller list. She called, and we met for lunch. Turned out she didn't have much to say. She left before the waiter brought our food."

A voice from behind the camera said, "Joanne, we need to stop again, just for a moment."

Joanne Jones slumped back in her chair.

"What is it this time, Kenny? This isn't rocket science. We need another five minutes to flesh out the segment. Let's get it done!"

"Give us a second—we'll get it right this time," the faceless voice answered.

Harding asked, "What's left that you want to talk about?"

"In a moment, Mr. Harding. I make it a practice never to talk off-camera with people I'm interviewing. It breaks the mood and changes the tone of the conversation."

"I agreed to an hour," he said, "but it's been nearly two. I have a plane to catch."

"Kenny!" she screeched.

"Okay. We're ready. In three, two, one..."

"Mr. Harding, you've built a self-improvement empire on the strength of your own story. I grant you, it's a great story, an almost unbelievable story. Personal tragedies, natural disasters, acts of violence—events that would have done-in any normal person. But you survived every one of them. It's as if you've led a charmed existence."

She waited, but he said nothing.

"Mr. Harding?"

"I'm waiting for the question."

"I guess my question is, how is it possible for one person to endure all that you have endured?"

He looked past her and straight into the lens of the camera behind her left shoulder and said, "My grandmother always told me, 'Everything happens for a reason.' We may not understand what that reason is, but even the worst of times can make us better."

She said with a smirk, "Isn't that a bit naïve? You don't really believe that do you?"

"Yes, Ms. Jones, I do, and as of this month, we've trained more than two million people who now believe it as well. All of us have a purpose in life, and no matter what happens to us, nothing will keep us from fulfilling that purpose."

The camera zoomed in close, so her face filled the frame as she said, "And how do we know what that purpose is?"

He answered with a confident smile, "I think we all know, deep inside. But if you need help trying to figure it out, our introductory seminar can point you in the right direction. It's not hard, I assure you, but you have to take it seriously."

"Thanks for inviting me to be on the show. I've enjoyed speaking with you and your viewers."

He stood up and unclipped the lavalier microphone from his jacket.

"And we're through?" Kenny called out.

"I suppose we are," Joanne said, as Lazarus Harding brushed past her on his way to the door.

Annabeth greeted him as she held the car door open, "How did it go, boss?"

"Okay, I suppose," he said as he slid into the back seat. "One interview is like another these days. I think they must all go to the same school. No one ever has a thought-provoking question. It's as if they want to avoid making anyone think. It's all about two things—emotion and screw-ups. They all want to make you cry or say something outrageous. God forbid you might actually have something worthwhile to say."

"That's probably more than you wanted to know."

She laughed, then took her place in the driver's seat, and headed the car for the airport. Twenty minutes later, they were stopped in heavy traffic when Laz's phone chirped.

He listened to a recorded message, then said, "Great. Don't sweat the traffic, Annabeth. Our flight has been delayed. We're stuck here, wherever we are, for another two hours."

You have been selected to receive these brief updates because you have shown interest in my writing. If you would prefer not to receive future issues, simply reply to this email with "NOT INTERESTED" in the subject line and I will remove you from the list.