

Date: September 30, 2032 A.D.

Location: Glacier Peak Wilderness, near Chelan, Washington

A tired young man twenty-five years of age is hiking his way alone into the wilderness of the North Cascades. He's about 5'10" and wears an old leather coat and a knit wool hat, dark-chocolate hair, wind-blown, a beard of several days' growth, and a dark tan from his wilderness journey. He looks as if he belongs to the mountain. The brightness of the setting sun is reflected off his face, forcing him to squint a bit even with his mirrored Oakley sunglasses. His boots are caked with mud and are still wet from following the trail that often had water or snow on it. He's at an altitude of 4300 feet and about seven miles from the trailhead where he started today.

Weird. That's what it was. He hadn't seen anyone or any signs of civilization for hours. It was time to camp. Somewhere out there, if his friends were correct, is a wilderness community. His friends told him to meet them there. Why did they want him to hike for three days to get there? Why couldn't he have taken a helicopter shuttle out of Entiat or Chelan to where they were? Why did they want him to hike it?

Now it was quiet. Inside himself, however, Ken was a tangle of emotions. Like a cauldron of water on a hot stove, bubbling, and spilling over onto the stove. Nothing made sense in his life. His church seemed oblivious to the failing culture, his girlfriend of ten years died, a mentor he trusted gone on to heaven. Where was God in all this?