

# Wavering Faith

*by* Nathaniel Tower

Grady Quail wondered why God didn't just have another son. They always made a big deal about how God sacrificed his only son. If God made everything, surely he could have a second son. To Grady, it didn't seem that big of a sacrifice.

That's what Grady wondered as he stared at the large wooden cross hanging behind the preacher. That and what it felt like having those splinters on the naked back.

The preacher spoke in a hollow voice that suggested he was trying to make his words sound important. Grady knew he had to soak up each word that sprung forth from his overly zealous mouth. He did it because if he didn't and it turned out to be true, then he would have to spend an eternity in the roaring fires of the hell the preacher always warned about.

Grady also had to listen for Lacey. Inevitably, the timidly beautiful woman would ask what he thought of the powerful sermon. It was important to her that his answer be more involved than "I really agree with what he said." Grady needed to formulate a real opinion that showed he was a good and knowledgeable Christian.

He wasn't really sure what attracted him to Lacey in the first place. Perhaps it was her dainty fashion, the way she always adorned herself with those long white gloves even though long white gloves had gone out of style many years ago. Perhaps it was because she was so diminutive she seemed like the helpless type of woman that needed a man like Grady Quail. Or, perhaps it was the fact that she unquestioningly held on to her beliefs.

On that particular Sunday, Lacey looked quite stunning, or at least she did to Grady. A full-length pink floral dress dangled helplessly from her body. She was the single flower in a field of weeds, and he couldn't take his eyes off her, which meant he couldn't pay attention to a damn thing the preacher said. Today it didn't matter though because today he would ask that one definitive question he always felt when. If she could survive, he would at once

ask for her hand in marriage, for he would know that she was so unwavering in her faith that nothing could possibly break her.

"Wasn't that a lovely sermon?" the flower asked Grady almost immediately after the service.

"Oh yes, lovely, but I have a question for you," he spat without a moment's hesitation.

"Yes?" she asked hopefully.

"Well, you seem so strong in your faith and I was wondering if—"

"Yes, yes, go on."

"Well, I was wondering if God really made that big of a sacrifice sending his only son. I mean, couldn't he just have another one?"

While Grady waited for an answer, the flower wilted in spite of the sudden storm of salty droplets rushing down her broken face.

