









...gold.

*Part One:*  
**THE TRAIL.**

---

*My darling boy.*



I believe I would consider the hardships of this year quite insuperable, had I not endured them directly.

In consequence of so many disappointments, I barely dare think these words, far less write them. And yet here they are:

I am coming, Caleb.  
I am coming to find you.



I have languished fifteen months without intelligence as to your welfare or prosperity.

Since Christmas 1897, that is, upon which hateful day your father led you ashore at Dyea, singing hymns, to join the line at the Golden Stair.

I did not see you surmount the pass at Chilkoot, though I have often imagined you there, and indeed beyond on the shores of Lake Bennett.



Awaiting the thaw with a smile and a prayer, and then onwards again, along the cold Yukon, where all the bold men of the world have set their hearts.

To a mean little creek the heathens call "Klondike," and all the gold in Christendom.