

June 10th, 1902

Skagway, Yukon Territory

To, My Dearest Mother

I hope this letter finds you in good health and spirits. I can barely find the time to write, but I promise you, Mother, that I'll keep you updated on my adventures in the Klondike. Skagway is bustling with activity; the town has transformed into a boomtown in the past few years. The White Pass Railway has made it easier for stampeders to reach the goldfields, but it's also brought in a new set of characters. I've seen everything from saloon owners to laundresses like Martha Black, who's become a pillar of this community.

As a merchant, I've been fortunate to have a steady supply of goods coming in from Seattle and San Francisco. I've partnered with a few of the local outfitters to cater to the miners' needs. It's a delicate balance between providing the essentials and making a profit. I've had to navigate disputes over claim rights and deal with the occasional scoundrel trying to swindle me out of my hard-earned cash. But it's all worth it when I see the look of hope in a prospector's eyes as they strike it rich.

Speaking of which, I've got some exciting news. A group of us have been working on a new claim near Bonanza Creek, and we finally hit pay dirt! It's not a small find, either – we've got a decent amount of gold, and I'm confident it'll bring in a tidy sum. Of course, there's always the risk of the claim being taken over by a large mining syndicate, but for now, we're celebrating.

The environment here is unforgiving, Mother. The temperatures drop to -50°F in the winter, and the wind howls like a pack of wolves. I've seen men freeze to death on the Chilkoot Pass, and it's a constant reminder of the risks we take. But there's something about the Yukon that gets into your blood – the vast wilderness, the Northern Lights dancing across the sky, and the camaraderie among the prospectors. It's a harsh but beautiful place.

I know you're worried about me, Mother, and I understand. But I'm doing fine. I've got a good network of friends and acquaintances who look out for me. I've even taken to learning some of the local customs and traditions from the Native Americans who live here. It's amazing how much you can learn from the people who have lived in these conditions for generations.

As for supplies, I'd love it if you could send some of those hard-to-find items – a new pair of boots, some decent tobacco, and a few pounds of coffee would go a long way. I've also got a few requests from the other prospectors, so if you could send some of those as well, that would be wonderful.

Well, Mother, I'd better wrap this up. I've got to get back to work – there's a shipment of supplies coming in today, and I need to make sure everything is in order. I promise to write again soon, and I'll try to include some more news from the goldfields.

With love and best regards,

Your Son

P.S. Don't worry about the rumors of a new strike in Nome, Alaska. I've heard it's a long shot, and I'm sticking with the Klondike for now. But I'll keep an ear to the ground and let you know if anything changes.