

A SEASON AT THE CLIFF HOUSE

MEDIA KIT

### 01 Author Biography

Brooke L. Davis is an author, photographer, and avid sports fan.

Davis is the author of A Season at the Cliff House, a micro-memoir, Without You, I Would Be Nothing, and a romantic comedy, Adventures of an Urban Homesteader. When she isn't plotting shenanigans for her next novel, she can be found watching football or basketball, hiking, or taking photographs in the mountains of Colorado and Montana.

A native of Indiana, she has called Colorado home for over twenty years.

To find out more information about her books, please visit her website at:



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### 02 Book Details

**AUTHOR:** Brooke L. Davis

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San Francisco-May-1907 Isabelle Hamilton defies her mother and secretly applies to the California Hospital School for Nurses in Los Angeles. Isabelle's gregarious personality and unbridled passion for the Red Cross often put her at odds with the vain and gossipy society ladies who frequent the Cliff House women's parlor. When Isabelle's sister becomes embroiled in a scandal and her mother suffers a heart attack, Isabelle's dreams of independence and an education are imperiled.

Grace Hamilton arrives in San Francisco for the summer on the same train as beef distributor Frank Buchanan, her secret fiancé. Unbeknownst to her family, Grace has been accepted into the California Normal School in Los Angeles, where she will study to become a kindergarten teacher. When Frank's jealousy turns threatening, Grace devises a dangerous and daring plan that promises to make or break her future.

Set against the backdrop of post-quake San Francisco with frequent visits to the timeworn yet atmospheric Cliff House, a towering white "gingerbread palace" perched on the rocks above the Pacific, A Season at the Cliff House weaves together the lives of two very different women intent on achieving similar ambitions on their own terms. It reminds us that the ties that bind are often the ones that test us most and that the price of freedom may be as heart-wrenching as it is rewarding.

### 03 Chapter One

#### One

San Francisco — May 1907

Isabelle Hamilton stared out at the Pacific from the Cliff House balcony and hoped her cousin Grace wouldn't be yet another conventional and unimaginative young woman.

In the distance, gulls floated overhead on a cool breeze, and the sun sparkled on the water. Behind her, the Cliff House, a gleaming white, palatial Victorian structure with "gingerbread" trim and four floors lined with endless windows, rose like a beacon toward the clouds from its perch atop a rocky outcropping. Isabelle laid a relaxed palm on the thick concrete balcony parapet. The Cliff House was where she dared to dream; it stood as a reminder that not all had been destroyed on that dreadful day a little over a year ago.

Grace Hamilton and her aunt Cora were to arrive the next afternoon after a two-day train trip from Denver. While Cora would return home the following week, Grace would be with the family for "an extended stay after a difficult situation with a suitor." Isabelle had frowned in concerned curiosity when her father, James, had announced the reason for Grace's visit. When pressed, he had waved a hand and dropped the subject, unwilling to provide more details. Despite his dismissal, Isabelle was most excited not only to have a visitor but also to have one so close in age. She had recently turned twenty-one; Grace was twenty.

Footsteps sounded behind Isabelle, and Josephine, her older sister, joined her.

"We're about to go into the women's parlor." Josephine tapped an impatient forefinger on the parapet, a devious gleam in her eye. "I wonder what delicious tidbits Harriet will have to share with us today."

Isabelle sighed. Josephine, along with their mother, Margaret, enjoyed the gossip that was spread as liberally as jam on toast in the women's parlor. Isabelle found it exhausting and silently prayed that Grace would too.

"Really, Isa, why can't you at least pretend to care about what's going on in society?" Josephine teased her sister.

Isabelle scoffed in protest. "It's not that I don't care. It's that I care about different things. *Important things*."

Josephine tsked and cast a sidelong glance at Isabelle. "Still thinking about our guest and more than a little excited to have someone other than Mother and me to talk to?"

Isabelle chuckled. "Yes."

### Chapter One continued

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"Well"—Josephine arched her brows—"don't scare her away with all your chatter about the Red Cross and saving the world. I'm sure she'll have interesting stories to share about living in Denver. And since she's coming because, well, you know . . ."

Isabelle tilted her head. Her father had shared the reason for Grace's visit, but doubts still niggled at Isabelle. What had happened with Grace's suitor?

"What I'm trying to say is," Josephine continued, her face the picture of cautious optimism, "we need to make sure she has a pleasant time."

Isabelle recognized Josephine's expression; it had flickered across the faces of both sisters during the rare bright moments of the previous year.

"We will," Isabelle assured Josephine, who turned and walked away.

Isabelle inhaled the salt air and focused her attention on Seal Rocks, a lump of boulders sprouting up from the ocean in the distance. She had learned long ago she could never hope to be Josephine. With innate elegance and an ease with social graces, Josephine was what every parent wanted as a daughter. When Josephine walked into a room, those within noticed. Isabelle simply arrived without fanfare. Josephine's smoldering beauty also didn't help; her dark hair and eyes and her consistent choice of rich, jewel-toned dresses did nothing to downplay her looks. The reflection that usually stared back at Isabelle in the mirror was that of a bright and passably attractive young woman with piercing green eyes and a pert upturned nose. Isabelle, however, struggled to keep her dresses unwrinkled, her long honey-blond hair presentable, and her eagerness in check. She often felt like the more awkward of the two.

Isabelle gripped the edge of the parapet and closed her eyes. She grimaced, envisioning the roaring stretch of flames that had licked the clouds on the morning of the tragedy.

At least Josephine was alive.

One of the largest earthquakes on record had destroyed nearly 80 percent of San Francisco thirteen months prior. Houses had collapsed, water lines had burst, thousands had wandered wounded and bloodied in the streets, and the city had burned for three days. Isabelle scrubbed her arms, a shiver worming its way up her spine. Through sheer luck and overindulging during Isabelle and Josephine's parents' anniversary party, Josephine and her husband, Henry, had stayed at Isabelle and Josephine's parents' home the night before the terrible temblor.

### Chapter One continued

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The terrific shaking had awoken them the following morning. As the blazing inferno had filled the sky with enormous black plumes of smoke, Isabelle had tried to comfort her terrified, wailing sister. Henry and Josephine's home on Nob Hill, their staff, and their beloved King Charles spaniel, Muffin, had perished.

In the months that followed, Isabelle found her calling. Though the Hamiltons' home had been damaged, it remained standing, alongside a handful of other Victorians on the west side of Van Ness Avenue. Still, Isabelle's entire family had lived in a tent across the street from their home in Lafayette Park, alongside many other displaced residents, until their house had been deemed safe for them to return. During that time, Isabelle had helped neighborhood women distribute food and supplies. She had watched carefully and finally assisted the nurses who treated those suffering from smoke inhalation, lacerations, and burns. Her desire to help others and a chance encounter with a short notice in one of her father's recently discarded *San Francisco Call* newspapers had determined her fate; she would become a nurse.

Unfortunately, her mother vehemently disapproved. Women belonged at home, doting on husbands and nurturing children. Financially supporting charitable causes was one thing, but outside of being pressed into duty due to a disaster, voluntarily working on the front lines was out of the question. Isabelle, however, thrilled at the idea of being in the thick of the action instead of relegated to the sidelines, where she was forced to mingle with other social-climbing women who cared more about being seen than about making a difference.

Isabelle stole a glance over her shoulder; she would not be Josephine. She had no interest in idle gossip, had no idea if she wanted a husband, and couldn't imagine anything more tedious than having her time dictated by a prescribed schedule of domestic and societal duties.

Instead, unbeknownst to her family, she had set a plan in motion.

With any luck, this would be the last summer she would spend in San Francisco, maybe for a very long time.

## 04Sample Interview Questions

01 What provides inspiration for your books or characters?

02 What is your favorite part of the writing process?

Who are some of your favorite authors?

04 What makes a strong character?

What would your advice be to beginning writers?

06 Which periods of history interest you most?

07 How do you conduct research for your books?

How do you stay motivated when writing gets tough?

09 Why did you choose to write this book?

How does travel influence your writing?

### 05 Target Audience

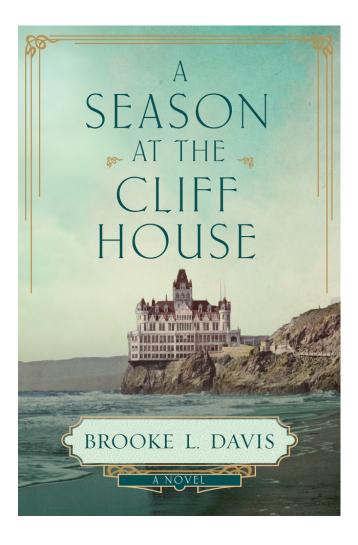
#### FEMALE HISTORICAL FICTION AND WOMEN'S FICTION LOVERS

Readers of Kate Morton and Kristin Hannah will enjoy this tale of dreams, daring, and deception in old San Francisco. Isabelle and Grace are determined protagonists who battle inner demons and societal conventions to try and live the life of their dreams.



## 06

### Downloadable Cover Image



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to request a copy of their cover image for usage in articles and other various media coverage.

## 07

# Connect with Brooke L. Davis

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