

# A WALK



Where do your walks take you?

AC WALLACE



# **A Walk**

*Where do your walks take you?*

AC Wallace

# AC Wallace Creations Publishing 2026



Published by AC Wallace Creations, Website: [www.acwallace.com](http://www.acwallace.com)

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, businesses, places, events, locales, and incidents are either the products of the author's imagination or used in a fictitious manner. Any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, or actual events is purely coincidental.

No part of this book may be reproduced, or stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without express written permission of the publisher.

Copyright © 2026 AC Wallace

All rights reserved.

A Walk was first published in 2026.

ISBN TBA

Printed in the United States of America

I woke that January morning to a town buried in snow, and by noon I'd vanished from it.

That's getting ahead of myself. The storm had hit Friday, and I'd brought my work laptop home knowing the office would close. By Tuesday I'd been in sweatpants for three days straight, and the cabin walls were starting to lean in. So, I showered, pulled on jeans and a sweater, laced my boots, and grabbed my jacket off the hook. A walk would do me good.

The street hadn't been plowed. The neighborhood kids had it instead — running, screaming, one of the older boys nailing a girl square between the shoulder blades with a snowball. She turned on him with a face like thunder, and I laughed out loud before I could stop myself. It pulled me back thirty years, to a different street and a different snowball, and I was still half inside that memory when I looked up and realized I'd walked to the edge of town.

No cars. Not one, the whole way. That should have struck me sooner.

A row of trees ran off to my right, leading to a road I didn't remember. It had been years since I'd come out this far, so I told myself the road was old and I'd simply forgotten it. At the end of it, just visible, stood a small house. I started down the road.

Thirty minutes in, I stopped and turned around.

I was in the same place I'd been when I started. Not approximately — exactly. The broken fence rail at the road's mouth was still ten feet behind me, the same gap in the same boards, the same nail bent at the same angle. I pulled my hood up against a wind I hadn't felt before and started walking again.

The watch said quarter to twelve. That couldn't be right. I'd left the house mid-morning, and I'd been walking for hours. I turned around again. The fence rail. Ten feet behind me. Same nail, same angle. I felt the first cold thread of real fear work its way up my spine.

I turned and walked back the way I'd come — toward the main road, toward town, toward anything. The road behind me stretched longer than it had any right to. By the time I stepped off

it onto the main road, the sun was gone. Full dark. My phone said ten-fifteen at night.

I turned to look at the road I'd just walked off. The trees were there. The road wasn't.

Headlights. A car coming down the main road — which had been plowed sometime in the hours I couldn't account for. I flagged it down, and a woman rolled her window down.

“You need a ride?” she asked.

“Please. I went for a walk this morning and lost track of time.”

I wasn't about to tell her the rest of it.

The doors unlocked. I climbed in. The heater was running full blast and I realized only then how cold I'd gotten. My fingers wouldn't bend right, and my feet felt like wood inside my boots. I wasn't hungry, which was strange. I should have been starving. The radio was on low.

“Thank you for listening to CBNY-FM, broadcasting to you from the Great Northwest,” the announcer said.

“Northwest?” I said.

“Oh — sorry. I like their music.”

“No. Northwest of where?”

She glanced at me, then back at the road. “Canada, eh?”

Something in my chest dropped through the floor of the car.

“Where in Canada?” I asked.

“Norman Wells.”

I left my house that morning in Barre, Vermont. Norman Wells was the name on the sign at the head of the road that no longer existed. Three thousand miles between the two, and I had no passport, no ID, no way to explain any of it.

Houses appeared along the roadside. Streetlights flickered on as we passed under them, one after another, as if my arrival was

switching the town on. The woman pulled into a driveway. The garage door rolled up, and she eased the car inside.

“I think you'd better come in,” she said.

I nodded. I followed her through the door.

\*\*\*

I woke up with children shouting in the street.

It was late morning, and the light coming through the blinds was the wrong color for any room but my own. My own ceiling. My own bedroom. My phone was on the nightstand exactly where I'd left it on Monday night. I sat up slowly. The door opened.

“Oh — you're awake.” My best friend Brenda stood in the doorway, holding a mug in both hands. She turned her head to call over her shoulder. “Doc, you can come up. She's awake.”

The doctor I'd known since I was twelve came up the stairs behind her and set his bag on the chair in the corner.

“Why is he here?” I asked.

“The kids found you passed out in the snow,” Brenda said. “You're listed as me on your emergency contact, so they brought you here. The town is still closed, so I called Doc. You don't remember any of it, do you?”

“I remember —” I stopped. “I remember something different.”

Brenda's eyes moved to the doctor. He gave her a small nod and opened his bag. He took my pulse, listened to my chest, looked in my eyes with a penlight, and said nothing the whole time. Then he pulled out a needle and a row of empty vials.

“Just a few tests,” he said. “To be safe.”

He drew five vials. I'd given blood plenty of times in my life, and no one had ever needed five vials for anything. I watched the dark red climb up the glass and didn't say a word.

“I'll call if anything comes back,” he said when he was done. He snapped his bag shut and let Brenda show him out.

I pulled the blanket back from my feet. I'd expected frostbite — black toes, blisters, something. My feet were pink and warm and perfectly fine. They had no business being fine.

Brenda came back upstairs with a fresh mug of tea and sat down on the edge of the bed. She held the mug out to me with one hand. With the other, she lifted a small dry-erase board from her lap and turned it so I could read it.

*They can hear us. Be careful what you say.*

She held my eyes. Waiting.

I nodded. *Who*, I mouthed.

Brenda wiped the board clean with her sleeve. She drew an arrow pointing up. Beneath it, one word.

*Aliens.*