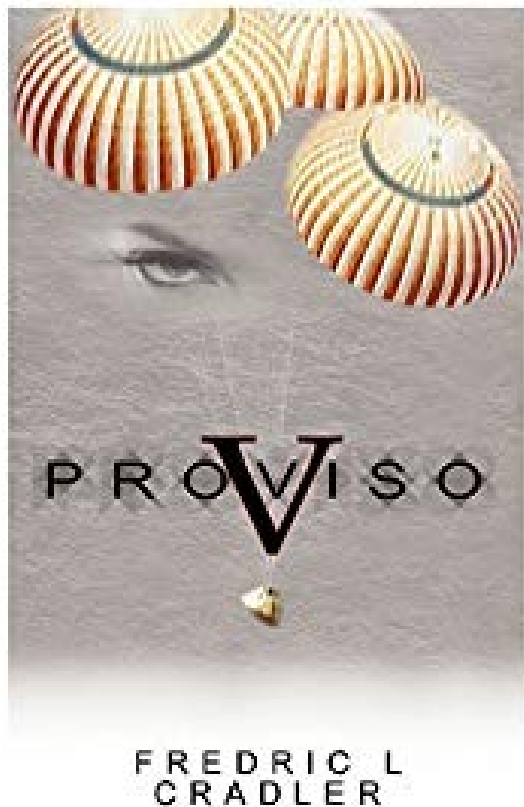


Proviso V



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Glamorous reporter Tracy Ballard finds love and danger when she joins President-elect "Buck" Lattimore's secret plan for achieving Middle Eastern detente and the greening of America. Tracy and an unlikely but potent set of allies enter a deadly race with Chinese, Russian, and paramilitary forces of Lattimore's political enemies, converging on Washington State's storm-tossed entrance to Puget Sound. Somewhere offshore the escape capsule and crew of an aborted Chinese space mission have splashed down. National and multi-national interests are willing risk death and DefCon 1 to acquire the mission's flight recorder. Who will win the race, and can the losers afford to let the winner keep the prize? Will the Pacific Northwest be the birthplace of a new America-or another Ground Zero? The answer depends on one courageous reporter and whether the superpowers will honor a space treaty's fifth provision: "PROVISO V"