

“Assignment: Comfort And Joy” sample pages section #6
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Narrator Afiel: As I popped back in at the radio station to see how things were going there, I wondered how Steven would feel about things now that he had shared his writing with the audience. Steven settled back and wondered out loud if anyone was out there listening tonight, where there was so many other things to occupy them. As he expressed his concern about whether he was making a difference, he was interrupted in his questioning by Donald, who had wandered in again, bored by the programming on his own station. He answered Steven's question by saying that Steven's reason for being here was the same as his own... to earn a paycheck. Expecting anything beyond that was unrealistic.

(Actions during the next paragraph.) Both of them react to a knock at the door, and Donald goes to it and opens it up. He is surprised as Diane Warren comes in, and asks if she can see Steven Carter. Jerking a thumb over his shoulder to indicate where he is, Donald lets her in. Steven, hearing his name, turns around in his chair toward them, completely surprised to see her standing there. The angel Afiel, standing off to the side leaning against a wall and observing with his arms crossed, also shows surprise, dropping his arms and standing straighter to look. She steps further in the door, and Donald smoothly tries to introduce himself, but she ignores the outstretched hand and walks past him as if not seeing him. This miffs the so-called ladies man, and he crosses his arms as he leans against the door frame. Steven stands as she takes another step closer, and they speak as the narration tells what they are saying.

Narrator Afiel: Just then, a tentative knock at the inner studio door was heard, and Donald said that it was probably his girlfriend, come to spend the final few hours of his shift with him. But when he opened the door, I was as surprised as they were, maybe even more, to see that the visitor was Diane Warren! Ignoring "the Don's" attempt to charm her with an introduction, she and Steven see each other for the first time in years. As Steven rises in wonderment, he speaks her name with a question in his voice. She tells him "hello," and says that it's been a long time. He agrees, and recalls that they haven't seen each other since right after graduation... when she left their little town for the big city. He wondered what she was doing back in town now. She explained that she had come home for the holidays, alone... and that her husband was now her ex. He told her he was sorry to hear that, and she replied that he shouldn't be, as he was in jail awaiting trial for tax fraud.

(Actions during the next paragraph.) Steven offers her a seat, pulling one close to his own office chair, and they both sit down. Donald goes over to the door and puts his hand on the knob but remains to listen in to see what her business there is. Steven and Diane talk as the narration tells what they are saying to each other.

Narrator Afiel: Telling her it was really good to see her again, he pulled up a chair and offered her a seat. He admitted to her that, although he was glad she came, he was curious as to why she was at the station, this late, especially on a Christmas Eve. She replied, with hesitation, that she had some things she wanted to tell him, and a phone call just didn't seem the right way to do it. She confessed that, earlier tonight in her motel room, she was very despondent. She was feeling the lowest in her life, over how her marriage had been violated by her husband, which ended it... also the fact that all her efforts at building a successful life has crumbled around her. She paused, ashamed to tell him, that she was on the verge of calling it "quits" on everything... when something wonderful happened. Steven seemed worried as he listened to her troubles, and prompted her to continue... he was interested to know what had happened that was so wonderful, in the midst of such difficulties.

(Actions during the next paragraph.) Diane moves her chair closer to him and leans forward to be nearer. She looks steadily in his eyes as she tells him. We see Donald, at the door, leaning his body further over to be able to

hear as he eavesdrops.

Narrator Afriel: Diane surprised him again by saying quietly... "You did." She explained that she had turned on the radio for some company, and he was on the air reading his story. The things in it, and what he said afterward about the true source of joy, and how to have peace in the storm, touched her deeply. She had done as he suggested, and invited the Lord into her heart to save her, and help her make something better out of her life. She wanted him to know that he had made a real difference in her life that night... his story, and words, saved her life.... and gave her a new one. Almost at a loss for words, Steven told her that she had made him happy. He said that he had been wondering if anything he had been doing lately was making any kind of difference.

(Actions during the next paragraph.) She reaches out to take his hand and holds it between hers. In the background, Donald looks amazed at hearing her testimony, then he looks down solemnly, as he quietly opens the door and slips out. Steven looks down at her hands holding his, and his expression shows he is pleasantly amazed to hear this.

Narrator Afriel: Diane also told him that she wanted to apologize for the way she had treated him years ago when she left town suddenly. She realised that she and Steven had something special back then, but she threw it away for a chance for life in the fast lane; but she could see now that he had meaning and purpose, while she had nothing. Steven assured her that he had forgiven her a long time ago for that... he recognized that she had more ambition than he did, and he couldn't hold that against her.

(Actions during the next paragraph.) Steven reaches for the binder of his stories, and shows it to Diane, who takes it and thumbs through it as she talks. Steven perks up upon hearing that she could help get it published, and his eyes show excitement. When she asks if he has more, she closes it as it remains on her lap.

Narrator Afriel: Another reason she wanted to see him, she said, was to say that she worked at a graphics design company, and had a lot of contacts in the publishing industry. She said she would like to help him submit his manuscripts for publication. She asked if he had more, and he told her that he had a few Christmas stories that he had written recently.

(Actions during the next paragraph.) Diane stands and picks up the large bag that she had brought in, then brings it over and hands it to the D.J. Also standing, he takes the bag and lifts out of it the small tree that she had been given by her friend. Smiling, he carries it into Studio B and sets it down on the table, and then takes out a small box of ornaments. As he fluffs up the limbs on the small artificial tree, she reaches into the box and brings out the decorations, and together they begin to adorn the tree with them.

Narrator Afriel: Retrieving a bag that she had brought in with her, she gives it to Steven as she wishes him "Merry Christmas." She admitted that it was re-gifted, but since she heard him say on the air that he hadn't put up a tree this year, she thought it might be nice to bring to him and decorate together. She didn't want to be alone this evening, and she knew he was alone... and nobody ought to be alone on Christmas.

(Actions during the song that plays.) The Archie Jordan song "Someone" begins as they talk, laugh, and decorate the tree as the lyrics are heard.

Narrator Afriel: As they continued to adorn the tree together, the shared celebration of the season seemed to be melting away the years and the distance that had grown between them. The things they liked about each other were being recalled, and as they talked, they reminisced about Christmases past as they grew up together. A spark of hope had kindled in Steven's heart, even as the spark they once shared rekindled between them.