

“Christmas Leads Us Home” Sample Pages #02

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Narrator #2: (Trudy) As Grandpa closed the old Bible, everyone in the family clapped... except for one, the smallest of my brother's children. Raising her hand, she let my father know she had a question. When he asked her what she wanted, she asked about the Wise Men. They were at the nativity scene we had set up on the table, but why weren't they in the story? With a smile, Grandpa said that it was a very good question, and he was glad she had asked, as the rest of the story was about to be told soon. Suddenly, there was a commotion of excited voices coming from the kitchen, and I saw my mother holding the phone over her head and beaming with happiness. She shouted that it was Trent, calling from overseas, as he had promised. With my heart in my throat, I managed to take the phone and squeak out a faint "hello?"

Actions during the next paragraph: *Trudy stands for a moment as they converse, then she sits down again to talk. As she talks, the other people in the scene carry on with their talking and laughing, and doing various small things that families do when visiting. Your actors can come up with small things to do during this scene so that everything does not come to a standstill as Trudy talks on the phone. THIS IS TRUE DURING ANY SCENE WHERE THE MAIN ACTORS ARE TALKING.* **Narrator #2: (Trudy)** Trent greeted me lovingly and asked if he was calling at a bad time. I told him it was never a bad time to hear from him. I knew he was asking because of the time difference between here and where he was stationed. But he had timed it perfectly, and I told him that everyone was here, and I could tell that they all wanted to wish him season's greetings. So I held up the phone receiver and motioned for everyone to shout their Christmas wishes which, they did...

(The people on the stage all shout live "Merry Christmas, Trent! We love you!")

Narrator #2: (Trudy) Trent said to pass along to them that he loved them all, and missed them, which I did. To hear my son's voice, filtered over the lines from thousands of miles away, seemed like a miracle. We wished each other a Merry Christmas, and I asked him if he got the package I had sent several weeks ago. He told me that he had, and that he appreciated it. I had sent him a pocket New Testament, along with several salvation tracts that I felt he would benefit from reading. He said he hadn't read any of it yet, but he would. He knew I was praying constantly for him to turn to the Lord, and said that I was getting through to him. I told him how I missed him, and was so disappointed that he couldn't make it as planned. Knowing how upset I was about that, he changed the subject and asked how far along in the traditional happenings we were, and I told him we had sung the Christmas carols, and had just heard Grandpa read the Nativity Story. I told him the kids were getting ready to act out the story of the Wise Men, and he recalled how he had played King Herod for years before he left home. I related that his Uncle Joe had taken over the role for the first time this year, and that Cassie would be playing Mary. I said that "Santa" would be making an appearance soon, triggering a raucous laugh from him, as he recalled the time years ago when, as a 10 year old, he had yanked down the beard to reveal the shocked face of his Uncle Clyde, who always dressed up as the jolly old elf to give out the gifts.

He asked me how his little sister Cassie was doing, and I told him how much she missed him, and had withdrawn from the family somewhat since he had been assigned overseas. He said she was just being a typical teenager, and to give her time; she was raised well as he was, and he didn't turn out too bad, he said laughingly. I agreed, we had made it through some tumultuous years as he was growing up, but he had matured into a fine young man. As the line began crackling with static, he told me that he had to go, they were allowed only short periods of time to use the phone. I reluctantly said that I understood, and that I would continue to pray for him; his safety, and for the Lord to bring him home soon. With a final "Merry Christmas" and "I love you Mama," the line went dead and he was gone. A cold shiver went over me as I was gripped with the fear that I might never see him again; even more, that this could

have been the last time I would hear his voice.... but I reminded myself that I trusted in the Lord, and, having prayed, I couldn't worry about it. So, I put aside the doubt and fear, and looked to the brightness of the season that was right there in my living room. I didn't want to miss the joy of the present gathering by worrying over the future.

Trudy notices that her daughter Cassie, who has been seated to one side and not really participating, is sitting with her head resting on her hand and making a show of being bored. Trudy sits down beside her as if to talk, to which the girl responds by turning her head and rolling her eyes. Undeterred, Trudy speaks to her earnestly.

Narrator #2: (Trudy) However, I couldn't help but notice once more that there was one family member here not taking part in the festivities. Cassie was making it plain that she was bored and would rather be elsewhere.

Actions during the next paragraph: *Trudy begins to talk to her daughter, and we see the girl's face harden and her lips grow tight with disdain. They discuss the matter quietly, obviously whispering to each other as they talk. When they are done, Cassie crosses her arms defiantly as if punished by being made to stay. Trudy, standing, leans over and says her last parting words, but the girl rolls her eyes once again.*

Narrator #2: (Trudy) I observed that I couldn't help but notice that she seemed to not be enjoying herself tonight. She shrugged, saying that her friends were having a Christmas party tonight, and had invited her to it. She wanted to go, but felt duty-bound to be here. I asked her why she would rather be with friends than family, and she scoffed as if it were a silly question; our idea of a party was boring old stories that everyone had heard a million times, and it was no fun hanging around relatives that were seldom seen except at Christmastime. She wanted to be at a real party, where people knew how to have fun. I responded that family was important, since friends come and go, but family is something to cherish while we have them with us. Dismissing the notion with a shrug, she said I never had friends and didn't understand. I almost laughed at that, but kept it in and said that the memories I had of my family holidays lasted much longer in my heart than the fun I had with friends. I expressed my concern that the friends she chose to associate with were not the best influences, and seemed to be luring her away from the path of faith in God. A dark cloud seemed to come over her visage as I mentioned the Lord. She snapped back at me, making it plain that all the "religious stuff," as she put it, was a real downer, and only made her feel bad.

It was just then that my sister Gladys came out of the kitchen and loudly announced to the room that she was out of flour for the pies. Instantly, my brother Clyde jumped up and volunteered to make the trip to the store to pick up what she needed. Year after year, the kids never seemed to notice this repeating scene, but we adults knew full well that this was the ruse to get Clyde out of the room and into his Santa costume for the opening of the presents shortly.

About that time, Grandpa checked the clock and let us all know that it was nearly time for the kids to get ready to do their traditional reenactment of the story of the Wise Men. Noisily the kids left to go change into their costumes. Since Cassie was playing Mary in the reenactment (very begrudgingly, I might add) she had to go put on her costume as well.

Looking back on the scene, I realized that the seeds of Cassie's eventual rebellion and departure from our home and teachings had taken root at that time, and had grown to a twisted and bitter plant that poisoned her life, relationships and health. The darkness that the thought brought returned me to my present situation and condition... sitting alone on Christmas Eve, waiting -perhaps in vain- for Cassie to come visit me in my small room at the nursing home.