

### **“Redemption In the Wings” Sample Pages #3**

#### **Begin Act 4.**

**Actions during the next part of the narration:** *Charlotte and Owen, still in costume, rise from the set and brush off any hay strands. Owen smiles at her in congratulation for the scene, to which she respond back with a tired smile. Nate returns, and he moves to Charlotte, who holds up a hand to prevent any questions.*

**Narrator:** *(Back to Nate's narration.)* The evening's efforts had been draining and tiring, but worth it. As I headed over to discuss some final points of the last act, Charlotte held up a hand and said not to worry about it; she had decided she was going to cancel the last act and end it as it was. Glancing at Owen, I could tell he was distressed over this development, and I certainly couldn't stand by and see this come to such a sad conclusion. When I asked why, she explained that she couldn't act with Old Johnny, whom she now knew to be her runaway father, as if nothing had ever happened. She admitted that she was still struggling with her bitterness over her father's abandoning her and his family; a feeling which she had thought long forgotten. So, she planned on telling him that the play is over and that due to a shortage of space and food, he must move on.

**Actions during the next part of the narration:** *Charlotte, unwilling to listen, gets up with a frustrated attitude and walks to the front of the stage. Nate also stands and comes up behind her on one side, continuing to press his point. The Director's face shows her feelings at what he is saying, though Nate can't see it. The pain of the truth, and denial of what she needs to do, plays in her eyes as her hands clasp together nervously. At Nate's last line, she shows irritation, and turns her head back toward his direction. She watches with knitted eyebrows as he walks away, then worry as she turns back to the front and she gets a faraway look. She goes to sit down again, and leans over with her hand on her forehead, partially covering her eyes.*

**Narrator:** I pointed out that only hiding the symptoms would do nothing to deal with the cause, which was the bitterness in her heart. She admitted that it was something she had to deal with, but later. There was too much to work through to let the play proceed now. So having said that, she asked Owen to go find Old Johnny and ask him to come see her. At the very least, she reasoned, she would tell him the disappointing news personally. I murmured that such an act might bring more satisfaction to her than consolation to him. I could tell from her sharp look that I had angered her, but sometimes the truth stings, and few people react to a sting with a smile.

**Actions during the next part of the narration:** *Owen comes on stage, with Old Johnny following. He is wearing his costume robe, but not the beard, if one is used. Owen gets Charlotte's attention, as she had been sitting with her eyes closed and her head in her hand as if deep in thought or emotional turmoil. She wearily motions for Old Johnny to sit down, and takes a breath to give him the bad news. But he is upset himself, and before she can say anything he begins sobbing. He takes an old piece of paper out of his pocket and unfolds it.*

**Narrator:** As I left her to think about what I said, I passed Owen bringing in Old Johnny, with an expression like a kind warden leading a repentant but convicted man to his execution. With an apologetic expression, he presented him to Charlotte, then left shaking his head in sadness. This was one conversation he didn't care to partake in, tender-hearted fellow that he was. Just as Charlotte was about to lay it on him, Old Johnny suddenly broke down. "Miss Vickers," he said, "I need you to do something for me." Taking a well-worn piece of paper from his pocket, he told her he needed her help. Explaining, he said that he knew that he had hurt people in the past, and couldn't bring himself to go to them to ask forgiveness. But he had written a letter to his daughter that he wished Charlotte would deliver for him, and he asked her to read it and see if it was worth doing.

**Actions during the next part of the narration:** *Charlotte takes the letter, but after looking at it briefly, hands it back with her comment. The old man, the letter in hand, then reads it to her. As she listens, her face reveals the impact the words are having on her heart. She is obviously being touched by them as he goes on. She even turns her head to hide her reaction and tears.*

**Narrator:** It was with obvious reluctance that she took the letter from his hand, and cast her eyes on it the way one might curiously take in an accident scene. Handing it back to him, she told him that there was something splashed on it and she couldn't make out all the handwritten words. Johnny nodded, and explained that the stains on it were from his tears, dropping onto it as he agonized over it for many days. So, he began to read it to her, never realizing he was actually reading it to the one to which it was addressed.

"Dear Daughter... I know that nothing I can say can make up for the years that we have lost since I left you and your mother, so I won't even try to explain why. I have no excuse. This letter is only to say how sorry I am for not being there when you needed me. At one time I felt that asking for forgiveness was a useless wish, but something has happened to change my mind. You see, I felt that same way about the Lord, against whom I had sinned for my whole life. I believed I could never be forgiven, so I strayed even further and fell into the lowest

depths a man could go. That kind of lifestyle has it's own punishment and consequences, and because of this I don't have long to live now.

For the last few years, I've felt the Lord dealing with me to get right with Him, but I didn't think I could, as low down as I had lived. And I couldn't accept the Lord's forgiveness until I finally realized... that very unworthiness was why I *needed* forgiveness, and why it was offered. It wasn't something I could ever earn or be worthy of, but I *could* accept it... and I did. Now, I'm asking that you can find it in your heart to also forgive me before I die. I don't want to leave this earth knowing that you hold ill will in your heart against me.

It's not worth keeping bitterness in your heart and life for so long. So, if not for my sake, then grant me your release for your own sake, and the Lord's. I'm staying at the "Refuge In The Rock" shelter downtown. Even if you can't bring yourself to come see me, please let me know in some small way, that you do forgive me. Please hurry, I feel that I don't have long left. Even now I sometimes seem to sense an angel at my shoulder, waiting to take me home.

Your father, Jonathan Ayers."

**Actions during the next part of the narration:** *Charlotte is struggling with her emotions, and speaks to Old Johnny as she takes the letter. He leaves, and Charlotte shakes her head clear and calls to everyone to get ready for the last act.*

**Narrator:** Shaken to the core by what she had heard, Charlotte began to realize that if the Lord forgave him and her own self of such a big debt of sin, she cannot withhold her forgiveness of what in comparison is a small one. I could tell she wasn't yet at the point of opening up to him, but she was near. She told him, struggling to keep her emotions in check, that the letter was just fine. She promised she would deliver it to the address given, and she knew that it would make a difference. As Old Johnny left, Charlotte composed herself and called for everyone to prepare for the curtain to open for the last act.

### **Christmas Play Scene Four Begins: The Temple Scene**

**Actions during the next part of the narration:** *Some extras in Biblical robes come onto the stage, moving back and forth and talking to each other here and there. Joseph and Mary walk onto the scene, with the baby in Mary's arms. Joseph is carrying a covered cage containing the doves. People here and there stop to look at the baby, which they proudly pause to allow as they talk back and forth. Simeon, who has been there in the background, spies the family and slowly begins to move toward them, waiting for the others to clear away. When Mary and Joseph turn to go into the temple, they are confronted by Simeon who is gazing at the baby with a loving expression. The rest of the actions are described in the narration.*

**Narrator:** *(Now back to the Biblical Story narrator's voice, not Nate's.)* It's very often true that God is doing amazing and significant things in plain sight among many people, but only those spiritually in tune with his word and spirit are even aware of it. One of the best examples of this is when Jesus was on this earth. He was the very incarnation of God, in humanity's fragile form... but only a few around him knew this.

After the forty days required by the law of Moses for the ceremonial purification of both Mary and Joseph after Jesus was born, they brought him to the temple in Jerusalem to present him to the Lord. For it was written in the law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male is to be consecrated to the Lord." They kept the law also with their sacrifice of a pair of doves, which was a provision made for the poor, who could not afford a lamb. So, as they came into the court for the ceremony, they were, as proud parents have always done, stopping to show admiring people the baby. But of the people there oohing and aahing over the child, one was different in his appreciation. They were seeing the baby with their natural eyes, but he was looking with eyes of faith. His name was Simeon, and according to the Bible he was a righteous and devout man, with the Holy Spirit upon him. The Spirit of God had revealed to him that he would not die before he saw the Christ who was coming, and as he was fervently anticipating and waiting for the Messiah to come, this was not only comforting but exciting to him.

He had been moved by the Spirit to go into the Temple courts, and as he gazed upon Mary and Joseph with the baby, that same Spirit whispered to him that this was the one. Wonder and joy played across his face as he soaked in the vision before him, and as he took the child, who was to be the Father's perfect sacrifice for sin, he began to praise God, saying: "Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you now dismiss your servant in peace. For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the sight of all people, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel."