
PAUL. (*Writing again.*) Oh it's getting hot over here. This is a hot part.

JOY. That's it!

(*JOY gets up and goes over to his computer.*)

I am here on a retreat, and I can't retreat when you are always advancing.

PAUL. Maybe you should retreat somewhere else.

JOY. Listen, I get it. You're a fancy-pants writer from the big city with all the ideas and the book sales and the adoring fans throwing themselves at you, but some of us are struggling and need help!

PAUL. You're wrong.

JOY. Oh really?

PAUL. I don't have any adoring fans throwing themselves at me. In fact, I'm . . . alone. For Christmas.

(*He's sad now.*)

(*NARRATOR 1 shakes the jingle bell.*)

I guess that's the problem when you write romance for a living. Real life just doesn't measure up. I'm sorry I interrupted your writing session, I'll go be alone in my room for a while, spend some more time in my make-believe world, since that's so much better than the world I'm living in.

(*He shuts his laptop.*)

(*NARRATOR 1 shakes the jingle bell again.*)

JOY. Wait. Sorry I was being rude.

PAUL. Yes. You were being rude. I agree with you.

JOY. This retreat isn't working out how I wanted.

PAUL. Maybe we just need a change of scenery.

BRIDGETTE. I've got an idea. Maybe you could check out downtown Hopewood Falls I'm sure there's romantic Christmas-themed activities going on that will get you out of your slump.

JOY. With him?

PAUL. With her?

JOY. Not a chance. I would prefer to pair up with one of the other very attractive single men around here.

(PAUL sidles up to BRIDGETTE.)

PAUL. Maybe you and me could do some of those romantic activities.

(BRIDGETTE laughs nervously.)

BRIDGETTE. Ha ha ha I am the sassy friend, I don't get mixed up in romance.

PAUL. You can be sassy with me.

NARRATOR 1. All right stop! You guys are taking too long. You're both romance writers, you're going to be together. Quit fighting it.

JOY. But, like, of all the guys, he's the worst one.

PAUL. I heard that! I want to be with the sassy friend even more now!