

## Going home for the holidays – 1

---

### *Scenario*

Your character is going home for the holidays.

### *Questions*

*Write the answer to these questions. You don't have to use complete sentences. If possible, write the answers as part of a scene that may be in your finished story. As you write these snippets, always consider why your character makes these choices. What compels her to make this choice, as opposed to another? What is going on in her life or her past history that drives her to make these choices or take these actions? What colors her interpretation of the events?*

Which holiday?

What does this holiday mean to your character?

What memories does it bring up?

What feelings does it bring up?

Where is "home" for this holiday?

Her grandmother's house? A parent? A sibling? Other relation?

Who is going to be there?

How does your character feel about each of the people who are going to be there?

Does she like them?

- All of them?
- Some of them?
- Any of them?
- If not, why not? Be specific.
- What *specific* memory does she have of each of them that brings up either a good memory or a bad one?
- How does that memory color the way she feels about them?

Which one of them does she dread seeing?

- Why?
- Is it an aunt who drinks to much and gets embarrassingly loud?
- An uncle who can't keep his hands off the little girls?
- A brother or sister she had a fight with that hasn't been resolved?
- An old boyfriend or girlfriend who she knows is going to be there because her family likes them so much but someone about who she knows too much to ever like again?

Who is she looking forward to seeing?

- Why? Be specific.
- How does your character feel about that person and why?
- What one memory does she have of that person that colors her predominate feeling about that person?
- Is it a cousin she used to go fishing with at the lake in the summer?
- A grandmother who gave her her first camera and got her started on the road to being a photojournalist?

Have any of these people done something that changed the way she viewed the world?

- What was it?
- Was it good or bad? Be specific.
- What feelings does it bring up?

Have any of these people done something that changed the course of your character's life?

- If so, what was it?
- Was it good or bad? Be specific.
- Is she happy about it? Sad?
- If it was a terrible thing, did it end up being a good thing in the end?
- If it was a good thing then, did it turn out to be not so good in the long run?

Why is she going home for this holiday?

- Is it just something she feels like she has to do?
- Is it because it's expected?
- Does she love going?
- Does she hate it?
- Does she always try to come up with excuses why she can't make it this year but still goes because she gets "guilted" into going?

How does she feel about going home for *this* particular holiday?

Is this holiday any different than the same holiday in the past?

In what way?

Did something change last year or over the course of the year?

How does that make your character feel?

How does she normally get there?

- Fly?

- Drive?
- Train?
- Does she like traveling like that?
- What memories does it bring up?
- Does she choose to travel that way this time?
- If not, why not?

How does she get there?

Does she even go? If not, why not?

Afterwards, is she glad she went? Glad she didn't go?

### ***Finally***

What does this experience bring up for your character? What specific memory or emotion? Does it change anything for your character?

### ***Choices***

Your character always has choices. What choices does she make at each junction and why?

### ***Think of your current story***

How can you use this in your story?

### ***Next***

Do this exercise for the each of your characters.