

Group Discussion Questions for *Stand-In Groom*

by Kaye Dacus

1. Anne Hawthorne is a single woman who helps other people get married. Have you ever been in a situation where you've had to do something for or give something to someone else that you really want for yourself but can't have? Read Philippians 4:11–12 and Hebrews 13:5b–6 and discuss what it means to “be content with what you have.”
2. When we first meet George Laurence, he is signing an agreement to pretend to be something he is not, to be dishonest with others around him. Have you ever been asked to be dishonest by your employer or someone in a position of authority over you? How did you handle the situation? How do you think George should have handled it? What could he have learned from the story of Jacob and Esau before getting himself into this situation (Genesis 27:1–42)?
3. Many of the Psalms mention fear and how God is greater than our fears, and in I John 4:18, we read that there is no fear in love. But some people, like Anne, live with fears and phobias that can be debilitating. Discuss how the idea that there is no fear in love helped Anne face her fear of flying, and how love can help us face fears in our own lives.
4. What does it mean to hold a grudge? How did the grudge that Anne held against her ex-fiancé affect her life? Have you ever held a grudge against someone? Who did it hurt more—you or the person you held it against? How does Matthew 6:15 apply to holding grudges?
5. Anne's cousin Forbes Guidry decided to keep information from Anne that affected Anne's and George's lives in this story. Have you ever been tempted to try to keep information from loved ones because you think it might hurt them? Have you ever had someone do that to you, only to find out the truth and be more hurt by it later?
6. Mama Ketty quotes Isaiah 30:5: “For thus the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel, has said, ‘In repentance and rest you shall be saved, in quietness and trust is your strength’” (NASB). She then tells George, “Until you find peace with God, you ain't gonna have happiness with yourself nor no one else around you.” Do you agree with Mama Ketty? What does the verse mean when it says, “in repentance and rest you shall be saved”?
7. In Chapter 19, when Anne and Forbes argue about Anne letting a client take money for a new wedding dress out of Anne's fee, Anne tells Forbes that by doing this, she has shown the client Christ's love. What do you think Anne meant by this? Has anyone ever done something like that for you?
8. Even though his contract specified complete confidentiality, should George have found a way to tell Anne about Cliff Ballantine before Cliff showed up at the site of the engagement party? Was Anne justified in being angry with George over keeping Cliff's identity secret?

9. In Chapter 24, Meredith tells Anne that before Anne can move forward in her relationship with George—in order to have a happy life together—Anne needs to forgive her parents and God. Why did Anne need to forgive her parents? Why was she still carrying anger at God for their deaths? Have you ever been angry at someone for dying? Have you ever been angry at God for taking a loved-one from you?

10. When Anne overhears George's phone conversation at the reception, she jumps to the conclusion that he has once again been dishonest with her—just like she thought her ex-fiancé had been. What would have been a better way to handle the situation? Have you ever assumed someone was untrustworthy based on your past experiences, then found out later they deserved your trust all along? Have you ever made a decision based on a misunderstanding and come to regret it later? What have you learned from those kinds of situations?