

# There By Candlelight

by Tanaqui

"Will you stay the night?"

The question hung in the air. For so long that Jake had time to mentally kick himself. It was too much, too soon: Heather had only told him that he was the one she wanted to be with that afternoon. But he was greedy: while the hours since then had been all that he could have hoped for—exchanging long kisses out on the porch, cooking and eating dinner together in quiet companionship—he wanted more. He wanted to make love with her, the way he'd dreamed about for the past week, ever since his eyes had been opened and he'd realized what an idiot he'd been.

But only if she wanted it too.

"I'm sorry," he mumbled, starting to back away from her and lift his hands from her shoulders. "I shouldn't—."

Her quick, fierce nod, and her hands linked around his neck, resisting his attempt to pull away, stopped him. "Yes," she whispered. "Yes, I will."

She drew him back to her for a kiss that confirmed her words, her mouth eager under his. Her desire fed his own need and he returned the kiss fiercely, wrapping his arms more tightly around her. The small part of him that wasn't swept up in the feel of her in his arms nudged him and pointed out that she'd probably just been unsure what he meant. After all, he'd not exactly been clear about what he wanted at any point in the year and a half they'd know each other.

Reluctantly breaking the kiss, he once more pulled away from her. He didn't want to stop kissing her, but he also wanted them to make their way upstairs, to where the bed waited for them. "The bedroom?" His voice sounded hoarse in his ears.

"Uh-huh." She gave another quick nod, licking her lips.

Twining his fingers in hers, he half turned to lead them from the kitchen, but her hand tugging him back a little made him halt. He raised an inquiring eyebrow.

A blush colored her cheeks as she met his gaze. "If we're going to.... Do you...?" The blush deepened. "Do you have... protection?"

This time, he was the one who needed a moment to figure out the question. Then his lips twitched, because it was so like Heather to be *practical*, even at a time like this—and God, how he loved that part of her!

"Yes," he told her, because maybe it had been tempting fate but he'd made sure that if this moment came, if she chose him, he'd be ready. That she'd know he wouldn't be reckless with her happiness ever again. He reached up with his free hand and caressed her cheek. "Heather, I know I messed up, and I hurt you, but I don't ever...." He struggled to find the right words. "I don't ever want to do anything to hurt you again, or put you at risk, or make you do anything you don't want to do. If you're not—."

She put her fingers to his lips. "I am," she whispered, the blush returning. "I just, you know, don't want any... consequences."

Jake couldn't help grinning at her. "Not that kind, no." He pulled her close again, dropping a kiss in her hair. *Not yet, at least*, a little voice murmured at the back of his mind, because he hoped one day that—. He laughed inwardly: *definitely* too soon to mention that, or he really would scare her off. He squashed down his sudden fear that maybe in the morning she'd change her mind, decide she'd made a mistake, that she didn't want him after all....

She leaned against him quietly, a brief squeeze of her fingers entwined in his her only reply. After a few seconds of listening to her quick breathing and feeling the tension in her, he realized she was waiting for him to make the next move. He wasn't surprised, after all that had happened, that she was looking to him to set the pace. And he didn't mind a bit....

Stepping back once more, he drew her out of the kitchen. He'd blown out the candles in the main room after they'd cleared the dining table, which meant he couldn't see much of her expression in the faint light from the fire as, exchanging quick, shy looks, they climbed the stairs together.

Reaching the door to his bedroom, he murmured, "Wait." It was fully dark outside now, and only a little light fell through the window as he stepped forward and groped for the matches on the nightstand. A small circle of light blossomed as he struck one and touched the flame to the wick of the candle that stood ready next to the matches.

Turning back, he saw Heather hovering in the doorway, her hands bunched in the skirts of her dress. In the half-light that scarcely reached her, she looked like a ghost or a vision, and another moment of fear gripped him: that he was once more dreaming and about to wake again to the cold reality of finding himself alone.

Then he held out his hand and she came to him, warm and very real in his arms as he slid them around her. He held her carefully, because he wanted her so very badly, his body aching for her, but he was still afraid he'd frighten her with too much, too soon. She put her hands on his shoulders, giving him an apprehensive smile, and he dipped his head and captured her lips once more, teasing them softly with his. She was tense, but her hands sliding over his shoulders to settle on his back and pull him toward her let him know that she was nervous rather than unwilling.

He couldn't blame her: deep inside, he was terrified he was going to screw this up. But he was finding it hard to think clearly, to plan what he should do next and when, because kissing her felt so good. And though he'd meant to go on kissing her gently, he couldn't help deepening the kiss. Her small gasp, half-masked by his own groan, as his tongue met hers sent heat flooding through him. He instinctively drew her more tightly against him, growing even harder as she pressed herself to him. Her hands gripped his shoulders more fiercely, and they went on with their long, deep, breathless kiss.

Eventually, Jake became a little more aware of things beyond the moment. Drawing back from the kiss, he let his mouth slide away from hers to nuzzle her neck. He breathed in her scent, lying under the stronger notes of soap and shampoo, while he let his racing heart slow a little. She still held him close, her hands firm on him, and her cheek pressed against his hair, but he felt her relaxing too, drawing breath.

Quietly, he lifted his hands from her waist to catch her elbows, running his palms lightly up her arms to her shoulders. He let his hands rest there for a moment before he slipped the tips of his

fingers under the edge of her cardigan and began to slide it from her shoulders. She let her own hands fall away from him so that he could draw the sleeves down her arms. Her mouth returned to his, tenderly exploring it, as she shrugged out of the cardigan. Another surge of need coursed through him as he realized she'd taken the initiative for the first time, providing proof that she wanted him just as much as he wanted her.

When his hands made their way back up her arms, his fingers brushing over her newly bared skin, she shivered, while her mouth faltered a little on his. He tensed, his heart thudding in his chest as he wondered if he'd made a misstep. Then he tensed in an entirely different way, letting out a small gasp, as he realized she was fumbling with his sweater and T-shirt, pushing her hands up underneath them to caress his back.

Their kisses grew more certain again as he accustomed himself to her touch on him, his skin tingling where her fingertips brushed over him. He guessed—hoped—things were the same for her: that she'd felt the same moment of surprise and adjustment to the newly kindled spark between them as he ran his palms up and down her arms.

Though this felt so good, he grew impatient for yet more. He was still afraid he'd mess up, but the way she was responding eagerly to each step he took gave him confidence. Letting go of her, he broke the kiss so he could drag his sweater and T-shirt together over his head.

She put her palms flat on his bare chest and tipped back her head to meet his gaze as he dropped his clothes on the floor. He shivered when he saw his own desire mirrored in her eyes, while the feel of her hands against him burned him. Murmuring her name, he once more lifted his hands to cradle her face and draw her to him for another long kiss.

Over the past week, while he'd helplessly waited for her to make her choice, he'd remembered every previous occasion when he'd held her in his arms—and what it had been like. The taste of her when she'd given him that sweet, unexpected kiss beside her truck, which he'd instinctively returned with the same eagerness with which she'd bestowed it. Her scent as he'd pressed his face into her neck in that long hug when she'd walked—miraculously alive!—into the Sheriff's Office. The feel of her in his arms as Whisper had carried them away from the Franklin mine and Constantino and his minions. Remembered—and tortured himself with the memories, because he might never taste and smell and touch her like that again. Because that might all be for Beck, and he only had himself to blame if it was.

And yet here she was, and the reality—not a few, snatched moments, but these slow kisses, their fingers brushing over each other in trembling discovery—was even more wonderful than he'd dreamed.

Still he wanted more.

Once again, he pulled back from her and ran his gaze over her, figuring out just how—. *Ah. Like that.* With his hands on her shoulders, he gently turned her to face away from him, catching a moment of confusion on her face. Then she let out a low chuckle—*God, does she have any idea how sexy that is?* he wondered, a jolt of desire shooting through him at the sound—and her shoulders relaxed as he lifted her hair away from her neck and fumbled with the zipper of her dress. Sliding the zipper down, he leaned forward and dropped a kiss between her newly bared shoulder blades. She shivered and leaned back towards him, and he slid his hands inside the dress and wrapped his arms around her waist, pulling her back against him.

She was drawing in deep breaths as he went on kissing her neck and shoulders. He reveled in the

feel of her pressed against his chest and her bare skin against his. While he explored her with his mouth, she reached up so she could tangle her hands in his hair, sending tremors through him as her fingers teased him.

For a while, they were content with these new discoveries. Then Heather, apparently growing impatient for a new sensation, twisted in his arms and sought out his mouth with hers. Jake wasn't sorry to renew their kisses, but his body ached for the feel of her skin against his, even though her heat still struck through the thin cotton that separated them. Reaching up, he began to slide her dress from her shoulders.

To his surprise, she tensed again and put her hands up to cover his, stopping him. He pulled away a little so he could meet her gaze. "Heather?"

She bit her lip, an embarrassed look on her face.

He leaned forward to touch his forehead to hers, closing his eyes and murmuring, "It's okay. We don't have to do this if you don't want to." Although, God knows, if they didn't, he was going to have to do *something*, because he was suddenly and painfully aware now they'd pulled apart of how much his body wanted hers and how hard he'd gotten.

"No, I do," she whispered back. "I'm just.... I'm.... What if I'm... no good? What if I'm, you know...? I mean, I've done this before, but not in a long while, and not very much, and I don't think I'm very good at it, and what if when I take my clothes off you don't like—."

"Heather?" Still with his forehead pressed against hers, he put his fingers to her lips to silence her. "You're babbling."

"Oh." He felt her swallow. "I'm sorry. I guess I'm nervous."

He snorted quietly. "And you think I'm not? I'm terrified I'm going to be a huge disappointment and you'll realize you don't want me after all."

She pulled back so she could look at him and shook her head slightly. "I don't think there's much chance of that."

It was his turn to blush. He managed a wry grin. "We'll figure it out, okay?" he offered. "Together?"

"Okay." She gave him a nod. Taking a half pace back from him, she slid her dress down and stepped out of it, turning away from him for a moment to drape it over a chair. Underneath, she wore a plain bra and panties that managed to be both demure and yet at the same time show off her soft curves and what was still to be revealed in a way that made Jake's breath catch in his throat.

When she turned back to him, still looking uncertain, he stepped forward and wrapped his arms around her again, holding her close while he once more kissed her. Again, she slowly relaxed, growing more confident as they explored each other with their hands and mouths and got used to each other. She felt so good, so *right*....

Jake started to back them up towards the nearest of the twin beds and then stopped as he realized the next part would go a lot easier if he was wearing fewer clothes as well. He pushed her away, kissing her briefly on the lips before holding her at arm's length. "Wait." He quickly stripped off his socks and pulled down his jeans but, in his haste, found himself hopping around on one foot as the other tangled itself in the material. Glancing up, frantically trying to free himself, he saw Heather

had a hand pressed to her mouth and he realized she was trying not to laugh. He silently cursed, because this was so not how it happened in the movies, but he just didn't seem to be able to get the damn jeans off.

Then Heather's hands were helping his, and his foot was free, and she had her arms around him again as they straightened and was pulling him into another deep kiss, her mouth urgent and hungry. Jake wondered if making himself look like an idiot had broken some of the tension for her. Whatever the reason for her unexpected boldness, he didn't much care. He backed up some more and they crashed over onto the bed, her lying half on top of him.

His mind reeled once more from the feel of so much of her against him, their legs tangled together and her weight pressing him down. He pulled her hard against him and went on kissing her, delighting in the shivers and soft moans he drew from her as his lips moved from her mouth to her neck to the tender skin behind her ear, before making their way back to her mouth again. Her hands were in his hair, or stroking his shoulders or his arms, his skin tingling wherever she touched him.

After a while, when their kisses grew a little less frantic, Jake realized they were still sprawled awkwardly half on and half off the bed. "Let's...?" He wriggled until they were settled more comfortably, lying close on the narrow cot, one of Heather's legs draped over his. He stroked her hair back from her face, trying not to notice how good it felt to have her wrapped around him, only the thin layers of their underwear separating her heat from him. He knew he could be quickly ready for her, but he wanted to be sure she was ready for him, that this was going to be good for both of them.

Besides—he grinned at the thought—there was still more to explore. Holding Heather's gaze, he ran his hand down her shoulder, sliding her bra strap down her arm. Then he bent his head and kissed the swell of her breast just above the lace that edged the concealing cotton. She moaned quietly, and he slipped her bra strap further down, chasing after the retreating lace with his mouth as he slowly exposed her breast until, at last, he could wrap his lips around her nipple.

She gasped again, pressing herself towards him and tangling her hands in his hair as he flicked his tongue across her. He felt a powerful rush of excitement as she squirmed and whimpered under his touch while he went on sucking and teasing her.

After a while, he shifted his mouth, seeking out her other breast—but the cotton was stretched too tight for him to push it aside, held in place by the other bra strap. Before he could move again, Heather put her hand on his shoulder. "Wait." She sat up and, looking down at him with a slightly embarrassed expression on her face, reached back and unhooked the fastener and wriggled out of her bra.

Jake gazed at her breasts for a moment as she disposed of the bra onto the floor, drinking in how amazingly perfect they looked in the candlelight, before he lifted his eyes to hers. He hoped she could read from his expression how beautiful he found her. How incredibly sexy. She smiled shyly at him, and he reached up and pulled her down to kiss her, telling her wordlessly what he felt.

He trailed his hand downward, lingering for a moment to cup her bared breast, enjoying the feel of it in his hand and the way Heather pressed herself into his touch with a deep sigh. Then he moved on to run his fingertips along the leg she'd wrapped back around him, tracing a path from thigh to knee and back again. She pressed herself closer to him with another contented murmur against his lips, and he went on stroking her leg and kissing her, shifting the path his fingers took a little each time until he was caressing her inner thigh.

A little to his surprise, as he moved cautiously in on her, she did the same, slipping her hand, which had been pleurably tracing light circles on his back, down inside his underpants. Her touch was tentative but he gave an approving low growl in the back of his throat—unable to help himself, really. It seemed to encourage her; she began working his underpants off. Jake slid his hand upwards, resting his fingers lightly between her legs, feeling the damp cotton of her panties under his fingertips.

He pulled back from this kiss and met her gaze. "Are you... ready?" He was pretty sure she was, and that she was happy for him to go on, but he wanted to be certain.

She nodded, only a hint of nervousness in her expression.

"I need to, uh..." He gave a slight shrug. "Condom."

"Uh-huh." She nodded again, her cheeks flushing slightly.

He shifted away from her, the cool night air replacing the heat of her skin against him, and scabbled in the nightstand drawer. He felt her move behind him and turning back, he saw she was wriggling out her panties, a curtain of hair hiding her face as she bent forwards. There was something so very *Heather* about the gesture, about her getting on with the necessary preparations while he was busy, that made heat burst in his chest. It wasn't just because she was pretty—though she was—that had made him fall in love with her....

He realized she'd tilted her head, pushing her hair behind her ear, and was watching him with a slight frown. Probably wondering why *he* was looking at *her* the way he was. Snapping himself back to the present, he squirmed his way out of his underpants and quickly rolled on the condom. Drawing them both back down to lie next to each other, he began to roll on to his back—only to find Heather was resisting the move. They tussled for a moment longer before he suddenly realized that she was trying to roll so *he* was on top.

He stopped pulling and frowned at her. "Don't you...? Wouldn't you rather be on top?" That was always the way Emily had wanted things—although right now the memory of being with her was muddled and it was more something he knew had happened than could recall—while the few other women he'd slept with in his time away had seemed to like that as well.

"Oh." Heather bit her lip and shrugged. "I've only ever done it, you know, the *normal* way...." Bright spots had appeared on her cheeks.

Now it was Jake's turn to say, "Oh," as he caught her meaning. A part of him was boggling at *normal*, but he pushed it away for now. She had warned him she didn't have much experience, after all. And if she didn't hate him in the morning, they'd be able to work on changing that. He swallowed and said croakily, "Okay. Well, we can do that...."

This time, he let her roll them over so he was on top of her. She spread her legs so he could lie between them. Supporting himself on one arm, he fumbled for a moment to try and figure out where.... Then her hands were on him to help guide him and he lifted his head and met her gaze as he began to slide into her. She let out a small gasp as he pushed a little further in, and a shudder ran through him, because this was so much better, so incredibly much better, than he could ever have imagined: Heather underneath him, around him, looking up at him.

He went on slowly sinking into her, feeling her open up to him. Her hands on his backside encouraged him on, and she shifted a little, tilting her hips and wrapping her legs around to allow

him deeper. All the time holding his gaze, desire and trust naked on her face.

When he was deep inside her, he stopped, raising his eyebrows: *are you okay?* She gave a quick nod and he began to move, shallow thrusts at first. They were awkward for a moment, and then she caught his rhythm and they began to move together, longer and a little faster. She closed her eyes and tipped her head back, pulling in deep breaths. He bent forward and pressed his face into her neck, breathing in her scent.

He tried not to hurry, tried to give her time, but he couldn't help his pace quickening as he moved towards his climax. It worried him that though she seemed to be enjoying what they were doing, she didn't seem to be, well, getting anywhere herself. But he had no clue what her tells were for that. Pushing up a little, he took another look at her. She opened her eyes and smiled up at him, lifting her hands to stroke his bangs back from his face—and that undid the final shreds of his control. With a few last jerking thrusts, he came, calling out her name with a strangled cry.

oOo

Heather held Jake close, wrapping her arms around him as he collapsed against her, panting hard. Some of the fear that had tinged her enjoyment of their lovemaking ebbed away. It hadn't been a complete disaster, after all. In fact—she allowed herself a small, triumphant smirk as she listened to his breathing as it steadied—it seemed like she'd managed to do a pretty good job of making him feel good.

After a few seconds, he lifted his head, pushing himself up a little so he could meet her gaze. "That was..." He shook his head slightly, like he couldn't find the words. "Thank you." He leaned down and kissed her gently, his lips soft against hers.

She felt him shift, and realized he was reaching down to hold on to the condom while he slid out of her. Cold air fingered her skin as he pulled away from her, and she wanted to cry out to him to stay, to hold him where he was and keep him within her. *Don't be silly*, she told herself. They were done, and they couldn't stay like that forever. But as he rolled away from her, leaving her staring up at the flickering shadows cast on the ceiling by the shifting candlelight, she realized that she'd thought it would be different with Jake. That, afterwards, she wouldn't feel so... empty.

"Here."

She realized Jake had half turned back to her and was holding out a tissue—in case she needed to clean herself up, she guessed. Swallowing down her disappointment, she took it and gave herself a quick wipe *down there*, because everything did seem to be a little sticky. It *had* been nice, the way Jake had touched her and kissed her, and the feel of him inside her....

He took the tissue back from her, getting rid of it somewhere, and then settled himself back down beside her, sliding one arm under her shoulders to pull her to him. He let his other hand rest lightly on her hip, looking down at her with an intense expression in his dark eyes. She put her hand on his shoulder, wondering what he was thinking and why her hadn't just drawn her against his chest and settled while he took a quick nap.

He licked his lips. "I'm sorry I... that I couldn't wait for you." His voice sounded a little rough.

She looked at him uncomprehendingly for a moment before she realized what he meant. "Oh." She blushed and wriggled her shoulders slightly. "Oh, it's okay. I don't—. I mean, that... doesn't happen for me."

His eyebrows shot up. "Never?"

She bit her lip and shook her head, wondering if he thought she was a freak. If this was going to be what made him decide in the morning that, after all, he didn't really feel like *that* about her. "Some women don't, you know?" she pointed out, hating that she sounded so defensive.

"Yes, I know." He looked a little chastened as he lifted his hand to brush her hair from her face. He opened his mouth to speak and then paused for a second. Finally he spoke, seeming like he was still reaching for the right words. "Heather, I want this to be good for you. For both of us." He gave her one of the lopsided grins that always made her stomach flutter. "I don't want it to just be me having a good time."

"It wasn't—," she started to object, wanting to reassure him, because behind the grin she could sense he was upset, but he shook his head, silencing her.

"I know. I just...." He again smoothed the damp tangles of her hair back, his expression grown serious. "It was *really* good for me. And I don't want it to be just okay for you. I want it to be... amazing, okay?"

She tensed. *But I already told you I don't....* The words formed in her mind but she didn't dare say them, because that would make his eventual disappointment in her real right now, instead of something they could maybe both pretend for a little while wasn't going to happen.

Perhaps he knew what she was thinking, because he shook his head slightly. "Heather, what we did. The way we did things, earlier. That isn't the best way for some women. A lot of women, from what I've heard." He hesitated again. "I'd like to see.... If you'll let me try...."

She swallowed, wondering if he'd be more upset if she said no or if she let him do whatever it was he wanted to do and it still didn't work. She was pretty sure he wouldn't have much luck. On the other hand, this seemed important to him and she didn't really have anything to lose by letting him try, did she? Maybe then he'd accept she was a lost cause when it came to this. Though she did still feel that odd empty ache inside that perhaps meant... something. She licked her lips. "Okay," she whispered.

He gave her a quick smile and nodded back. Holding her gaze, he let his hand fall back to her hip, resting it there for a moment before he slid it gently between her thighs. His palm was hot against her skin as he curved his hand around her inner thigh. She trembled at his touch, unfamiliar but not unwanted, and saw a response kindle in his eyes that made another shiver run through her.

With light pressure, he encouraged her to spread her legs, giving him room to trail his fingers softly up and down, first one side and then the other, brushing lightly over *in between*. He didn't take his eyes from hers, though she saw him swallow as she quivered under his featherlight touch, while the same tension she'd felt when he was inside her began to build again.

Maybe he sensed it, because he raised his eyebrows questioningly. She nodded in reply. This time, when he reached *in between*, he hesitated for a fraction of a second and then gently slid one finger between her folds.

She sucked in a breath, feeling his touch there, which was somehow different to what they'd done before. Somehow, though it surely shouldn't have been, more intimate, with his dark eyes fixed on her anxiously while his fingertip went on moving, sliding over the slickness towards her entrance

and then back again across—

*Oh!* Heather was dimly aware she'd let out a gasp, but everything else seemed insubstantial compared with the surge of pleasure that coursed through her as Jake's finger brushed over her—.

*Clitoris*, a small part of her mind supplied rather clinically against the rush of sensation. After all, it wasn't as if she didn't know what it was or what it was for, even if sex-ed at school had focused strictly on where eggs and sperm came from and how babies grew. No one had ever talked about how the parts of the body in those line diagrams in the textbook fitted together or could be made to feel good, though. And she'd never been part of the cliques at High School where girls exchanged knowledge passed on from older girls or garnered from furtive experiments with boyfriends. Nor had the few racy romance novels she'd read helped much: they might have made a big thing of how amazing the sex was but were always extremely sketchy on just exactly what the hero was doing to the heroine.

This, apparently. Jake's finger was still moving over her, stroking her and teasing her, and another wave of intense pleasure thundered through her while he gazed down at her. She closed her eyes and turned her head away because, God, it was embarrassing that someone else could do that to her, could make her body feel this, and yet she didn't want Jake to stop, God no, she didn't want him to stop at all.

She drew in deep breaths, trying to brace herself against the overwhelming sensations he was creating within her. She felt him shift a little, though his fingertip never stopped its steady, relentless movement. A moment later, she felt his lips circling her nipple as he took it into his mouth and sucked on it—and it was like there was some kind of direct connection or something, like it was all wired up together. Because suddenly everything was *more*, when she hadn't thought it was possible for there to be more: his fingertip moving over her while his tongue flickered across her.

Soon the waves of pleasure were coming closer together. She could hear herself making small mewling sounds, and maybe she sounded silly, but she didn't care. She felt like she was standing on the edge of a cliff, with Jake's fingers and mouth pushing her closer and closer, but she was holding back, resisting, because this was so good, and then—

—She was falling, falling, falling: heat flooding through her and her hips bucking under Jake's hand and, *Oh, God!*—

She opened her eyes to find Jake grinning down at her. "Good, huh?"

She nodded wordlessly at him, still not quite able to believe. Abruptly, she turned and buried her face in his chest, hugging him fiercely with one arm. "Thank you," she mumbled against his skin.

"You're welcome." She heard him chuckle, the laugh rumbling through him as he pulled her more tightly against him.

He stroked her hair while she lay against him, becoming herself again, getting her equilibrium back. She felt wrung out and yet peaceful, her body relaxed and satisfied. She laughed quietly to herself. Turned out it *was* different with Jake. Maybe that was simply because, in this as in many things, he was more competent than most, but she wanted to believe it was more than just that.

"Heather?" The whispered word pulled her from her thoughts.

"Hmm?" She wasn't quite sure she was ready for whatever was going to come next.

"It's getting a bit cold. Maybe we should actually get into bed before we fall asleep?"

"Oh." Heather couldn't help giggling. Usually, this had been the point when she or her boyfriend—usually him—had gotten out of bed and left. But when Jake had asked her to spend the night, he'd meant this too: falling asleep together and waking up in each other's arms. "Yes. We should do that."

There was a confused tangle of legs and bedcovers for a minute or so before they were settled back against each other under the blankets. Heather closed her eyes and sighed contentedly. Deep down, she still wondered if this would last or if Jake would change his mind. But right now, it just felt good to be where she was. She'd let tomorrow worry about itself.

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