



When Spencer's old college roommate offers him a job at Steele Construction, he doesn't hesitate. Not only does he get to be closer to his sister and her family, but he may also finally have the chance to repair the rift between himself and his parents.

His parents live only three hours away, but it may as well be on Mars as a blizzard moving up the coast has him seeking refuge at The Red Gate Inn. Spencer prides himself on playing it cool, but something about the raven-haired innkeeper has him overheated.

As a single working mom, Gina didn't get much time to herself. With her mom and daughter off to Florida for a week, and the inn she owns closed for the holidays, she is looking forward to some me time. Then it started to snow. In good conscience she couldn't turn away her brother's newest employee when he needed shelter from the storm, but her guest has her feeling anything but professional.

It may be cold outside, but things are heating up at the Inn.

## EXCERPT

He could still see the faint outline of tire tracks from a vehicle somewhere in front of him, but the snow was getting deeper. Fast. The vehicle who made the tracks couldn't be seen, but he didn't think it was because it was so far ahead, it was just hidden by the all-encompassing blanket of white. A blizzard had not been in the forecast when he headed out this morning.

There was no way he was getting to his parents in Maine this tonight. He'd be lucky if he got to The Red Gate Inn. When the snow began to fall and his tires had begun to slip and slide, he'd called his friend Ben who lived in this area, hoping for a recommendation should he have to get off the road.

Ben had called him right back with an updated forecast and directions to the best B&B, his words, in St. George. *If only I can find the place*, he thought.

It was on the outskirts of town, but not far from the highway. He'd already passed by where he thought it should be once, had turned around and was now coming at it from the other direction. Through the snow, he saw a figure in a red parka, brushing off a sign near where he thought the street still was. He slowed down.

He could see the outline of the driveway and though it looked recently plowed, it was filling in fast. Peeking out over the snowbank he saw the tip of a gate. A red gate. That must be it.

He hit the window control, lowering the passenger window. A puff of cold air invaded the warmth of the car's interior and the snowflakes instantly began to melt into little puddles on his front seat.

"Is this The Red Gate Inn?" he asked the figure which he could now tell was a woman. She was bundled up in the parka, a toque covering her hair, and a scarf hiding the lower half of her face. He could only see her dark, sparkling eyes. Little ice crystals had formed on the end of her lashes.

"You must be Spencer," she said, pulling the scarf down to her chin. "I was getting worried. I couldn't believe it when Ben said you were out in this weather. Drive on up – I will meet you there." She gestured to the stately Victorian home at the end of the drive.

"Do you want me to drive you up?"

She gave his car a quick look, and he thought she was evaluating its pristine interior, then she smiled. "No, it's okay – I'll meet you there."

He frowned and rolled up the window. He didn't know why but her swift dismissal of the car displeased him. It was only a rental, and while he'd asked for snow tires, he should have been smart and also asked for four-wheel drive.

The car wasn't cutting it and yeah, he laughed, he couldn't blame her for turning down the ride. She was probably able to walk to the house faster than he was able to navigate the sedan to the top of the drive. Of course, the house was up a hill, he shook his head.

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