

Peter ducked his head and kicked at a hummock of snow. Then he glanced up at her shyly. "Really?"

Lacy nodded. "It worked for *me*."

"Okay," Peter said. "Thanks."

She watched him trudge back up the hill to the house, and then she turned her attention back to the deer. Lacy would have to feed them until the snow melted. Once you started taking care of them, you had to follow through, or they just wouldn't make it.

They were on the floor of the living room and they were nearly naked. Josie could taste beer on Matt's breath, but she must have tasted like that, too. They'd both drunk a few at Drew's—not enough to get wasted, just buzzed, enough so that Matt's hands seemed to be all over her at once, so that his skin set fire to hers.

She'd been floating along pleasantly in a haze of the familiar. Yes, Matt had kissed her—one short one, then a longer, hungry kiss, as his hand worked open the clasp on her bra. She lay lazy, spread beneath him like a feast, as he pulled off her jeans. But then, instead of doing what usually came next, Matt reared over her again. He kissed her so hard that it hurt. "Mmmph," she said, pushing at him.

"Relax," Matt murmured, and then he sank his teeth into her shoulder. He pinned her hands over her head and ground his hips against hers. She could feel his erection, hot against her stomach.

It wasn't the way it normally was, but Josie had to admit that it was exciting. She couldn't remember ever feeling so heavy, as if her heart were beating between her legs. She clawed at Matt's back to bring him closer.

"Yeah," he groaned, and he pushed her thighs apart. And then suddenly Matt was inside her, pumping so hard that she scooted backward on the carpet, burning the backs of her legs.

"Wait," Josie said, trying to roll away beneath him, but he clamped his hand over her mouth and drove harder and harder until Josie felt him come.

Semen, sticky and hot, pooled on the carpet beneath her. Matt framed her face with his hands. "Jesus, Josie," he whispered, and she realized that he was in tears. "I love you so goddamn much."

Josie turned her face away. "I love you, too."

She lay in his arms for ten minutes and then said she was tired and needed to go to sleep. After she kissed Matt good-bye at the front door, she went into the kitchen and took the rug cleaner out from underneath the sink. She scrubbed it into the wet spot on the carpet, prayed it would not leave a stain.