



ANNA  
SUGDEN

A PERFECT  
DATE

**Anna Sugden**

## **A Perfect Date**



A New Jersey Ice Cats short story

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## A Perfect Date

“I’m sorry I can’t make it.”

This could not be happening. Zoe Coombs climbed out of the limo, smiled at the driver holding her door and strode purposefully across the shovelled and salted walkway towards the front entrance of Grey’s Steak House. Gripping her phone, she flipped her scarf nonchalantly around her neck, as if her perfect Valentine’s evening hadn’t just been torpedoed. By the man she was supposed to be spending it with.

“You know I wouldn’t do this unless it was important.” Thomas ‘Trey’ De Mountfort III reiterated how close he was to finalising the major real estate sale he’d been working on for months. “Dinner with the client will seal the deal. I promise, with the commission I’ll earn, to fly you anywhere you want in the world for dinner. Paris, Rome, Rio. Your choice, babe.”

Clenching her teeth -- she hated when he called her ‘babe’ -- while trying to maintain an increasingly brittle smile made her cheeks ache. “This was a rain-check dinner from the last time you had to cancel for a client.” Out of a total of eight planned dates, he’d bailed on half. Clearly, she wasn’t as important as his job.

“I’d much rather be there with you, than this guy and his awful wife, but I can’t let the firm down.”

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Voices interrupted him. “Gotta go. Don’t waste the reservation -- Grey’s is one of Jersey’s top restaurants. Have one of their award-winning steaks, order a nice wine and my driver will take you home after.”

Before she could argue, he hung up.

“Sh ...” she cut off the curse, as an elderly couple walked past, and amended her words. “Sugar plum fairies.”

Zoe hurried past the entrance and headed around the side of the building to the deserted summer patio, famous for its spectacular views of Manhattan. Standing beneath the deck, to shelter from the freezing wind blowing off the Hudson, she speed-dialled her best friend.

Sarah answered on the first ring. “Don’t tell me. Trey stood you up again.”

“How did you guess?”

“That’s a rhetorical question, right? I should have made you take my bet. I’d have covered my half of next month’s rent with the winnings.” The pair, who’d been friends since college, shared an apartment in one of the buildings in Edgewater.

“Funny.” Zoe sighed. “I refused because I knew deep down I’d have to pay up. Plus, I didn’t want to jinx tonight. I hoped this time Trey would actually stick to his promise.”

“Uh huh.”

“I can hear your eye-roll.” Zoe managed a half-smile. “So where did you guys end up? I could join you,

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if there's room for one more.”

Sarah and two of their single, dateless friends were having a girls' dinner in the city.

“Always, for you. But, as Trey's paying for dinner, don't you dare let him off the hook. It's not every day you get to eat at Grey's.”

“Alone, on Valentine's night. Not exactly appealing.” Zoe wrinkled her nose. “Besides, this is the final straw. It's over.”

“All the more reason to dine out on his dime.”

“The three of you could come here and keep me company. At Trey's expense.”

“Oh sweetie, we would. But we've already ordered and our entrees have arrived.”

“No problem. Enjoy your evening. See you later.”

“I guess it's too late to take Ethan up on his invitation to dinner?”

Zoe's heart jumped at the mention of their sexy neighbour. “Yes. Even if it wasn't ...”

“There are too many reasons why it wouldn't work,” Sarah parroted back, then sighed. “I don't get why you're throwing up barriers. The man is gorgeous, seems like a really nice guy and likes you. A lot.”

“Ethan plays hockey for the Ice Cats,” she reminded her friend.

“So what? Just because he and your total jerk of an ex-fiancé used to be team-mates, it's not fair to tar the guy with the same brush.”

“They roomed together on the road and Ethan was

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going to be best man at our wedding,” Zoe said firmly, as if she hadn’t been tempted by -- and dismissed, using the same arguments -- Ethan’s repeated invitations to go out with him.

“Was being the key word. Brady’s move to the Cats’ deadly rivals, across the river, cooled things considerably.”

“Still, it would be way too awkward.”

“No-one’s going to think you’re a puck bunny because you have dinner with someone else on the Ice Cats.” Sarah’s perceptive comment only hardened Zoe’s resolve.

“I know, but I also don’t want to risk making the same mistake twice. No more hockey players.”

However enticing Ethan might be, she added silently.

“Anyway, it’s too late. Speaking of which, your food’s going cold and I should make my mind up whether I’m going to eat at Grey’s by myself.”

“You can do this. Walk in there with your head held high and fake it. Tell them your date is late and will meet you there shortly. Order, have a drink, then pretend to get a call, ask for a doggy bag and leave. Best of both worlds.”

That actually sounded like a workable plan. “All right. Maybe I’ll get them to add a double order of their supposedly amazing tiramisu.”

“Now you’re talking.” Sarah laughed. “Save some for me.”

“I’m not making any promises.” Zoe hung up,

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walked back around to the entrance of the restaurant and opened the heavy glass door.

The warmth inside was welcome and soon chased away the chill. Zoe checked her coat, then made her way to the front of house podium. Using the story Sarah had created for her, she asked to be seated while she waited for her tardy date.

Turning up the wattage of her smile, she followed the maitre d' through the crowded restaurant towards her prime table, next to the floor-to-ceiling windows, overlooking the lights of Manhattan. Maybe if she read a book on her phone, she'd be able to manage a solo dinner. It seemed a shame to waste the evening.

As she sat, she caught sight of a familiar figure a few tables away. Her stomach tightened. Damn it. Why did Brady have to be here tonight? She really didn't need her ex to witness her charade. Perhaps she should move up the schedule for the fake phone call and leave straight away.

Zoe took a deep breath, then sipped some water. No. She wouldn't allow Brady to chase her away. Besides, hopefully he was too wrapped up in his latest girlfriend to have noticed her arrival.

Her decision to stay was reinforced, when her server brought an enormous bouquet of red roses to the table. It would have been better if Trey had actually showed, instead of sending flowers, but at least the showy gesture bolstered her story. Graciously, she accepted them, and the chilled bottle of champagne

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he'd pre-ordered.

Now all she had to do was manage this screw-up of a situation, so it didn't look like she'd been dumped.

\* \* \*

"I can't believe you turned down an evening with the Leveaux twins, to be with us," Ethan Blackmore slapped his friend and team-mate, Kenny Jelinek, on the back, as the stretch limo they'd ordered so no-one had to be the designated driver, pulled up in front of Grey's.

"Lunatic decision." Hank Delvecchio shook his head, unsnapping his seatbelt. "If my date hadn't had to work the late shift, I'd have ditched you guys in a heartbeat. But more power to you."

Ethan would rather have been with someone else too. But, once again, Zoe had turned him down flat. She already had a date -- that flash dude, What's-his-name the Third, who'd taken her out a few times.

"Don't be fooled," Linc, Kenny's younger brother, chimed in. "Bro didn't want to be worn out for tomorrow night's game against the Fly-boys, after what happened last time he partied with the Leveaux twins. Puffed like a train and skated like a granny all night."

Kenny nudged Linc's crutches, which were propped against the leather seat, with his boot. "Careful, or you could find yourself falling out there and breaking your other leg."

"As if." Linc laughed. "Mom would kill you."

"How would Mom find out?" Kenny shrugged. "So you hit a patch of black ice and slipped. None of



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the guys here will say any different, right boys?”

Ethan held up his hands. “Keep me out of it.”

“Me too.” Hank agreed. “Karina laying into us because the kid here got even more banged up, is not worth thinking about. Especially if she ropes in Bad Boy’s mom too.”

Karina Jelinek and Tina Badoletti, their captain’s mother, had been best friends for longer than most of them had been alive. They were a formidable pair. They treated most of the Ice Cats’ players as family, particularly those who didn’t have folks locally, and wouldn’t hesitate to admonish them like one of their sons, if they thought the situation demanded it.

“See the crap I have to put up with?” Linc pulled a mournful face. “Bad enough that I’m out for two months and had to come home to recuperate, instead of staying with my team. At least, Tru is in Denver and Ike is too busy balancing daddy duty with being the superstar, Cats’ goaltender, so I only have to put up with this knucklehead.”

Linc had been having a great season with the Ice Cats’ AHL affiliate, until he’d blocked a ninety-mile-an-hour shot with his leg, which now had several pins holding it together.

Their driver opened the rear doors, stopping the brotherly back-and-forth from escalating, and the group piled out. For a variety of reasons, the friends had been without Valentine’s plans, so had decided to enjoy a relaxed dinner at the restaurant owned by former Ice

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Cat, Ryan Grey.

Better than sitting at home alone, thinking of Zoe out with Mr. Slick the Third.

Ethan reckoned he could match the guy for money, looks and charm. Unfortunately, the one area he couldn't compete counted most for Zoe; Ethan made his living on the ice, instead of behind a desk, in an office. Not for the first time, he cursed Brady's crappy behaviour. His former room-mate had been a total ass, and Ethan was paying the price.

"We're early. Let's grab a drink in the bar," Kenny suggested. "Your leg can hold up, Linc, right?"

Ethan tuned out the brotherly banter and scanned the buzzing restaurant. Packed, as always, the Valentine's crowd was a mix of couples out for a romantic meal and groups of celebrating or commiserating, jovial singles. The latter were on bigger tables, further from the windows, while the couples got ringside seats looking across the Hudson at Manhattan. Not that anyone could complain; with the wall of tall windows, everyone got a great view of the city's bright lights, including the Empire State Building lit in red.

His gaze halted on a familiar face.

His heart slammed against his ribs, as he cursed silently. The last thing he wanted to do was spend the night watching Mr. Smooth the Third fawning over the woman Ethan had dreamed about since the moment he'd met her.

Especially when Zoe looked amazing. Her

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shoulder length dark hair was caught up at on one side in a sparkly clip. Her lipstick was a rich scarlet, matching the lacy dress which hugged her delicious curves. He couldn't see her shoes, but he knew that they would sexy, with spiked heels -- as if her gorgeous legs needed any enhancement.

What he wouldn't give to be the one to fill the empty chair opposite her.

Ethan frowned. Where was Mr. Fancy-Pants the Third? Late, again? Slapping down the childish spark of pleasure -- another strike against his competitor -- he felt bad for Zoe. She shouldn't be sitting there all alone. Even if she didn't seem concerned by her date's tardiness, as she sipped champagne and read something on her phone.

Still, tonight was a crappy time to leave a woman hanging in a nice restaurant. Perhaps he should wander over and keep her company while she waited. It would be the right, friendly thing to do.

Before Ethan could move, Kenny growled, "What the freaking hell is Brady Fulton doing here?"

"Like there aren't enough fancy restaurants on his side of the Hudson," Hank muttered.

Linc huffed. "They should have a special alert on the bridges and tunnels to prevent traitors being able to cross into Jersey."

Ethan swore under his breath. Not that he gave a damn for himself -- Brady had made his choice, money over loyalty -- but that made Zoe's situation even more

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uncomfortable. Especially as Fulton was watching her, with a feral smile.

Although moments earlier he'd hoped that Mr. No-Show the Third would stay away and give him the chance to take his place, Ethan now willed the guy to get his damn skates on and make an appearance. If de Mountfort wasn't here in five minutes, Ethan was stepping in, even if only as a freaking stop-gap.

At three and a half minutes, the situation took a turn for the worse. Brady rose and made his way over to Zoe's table. She must have spotted her ex at the same time, because her dark eyes widened briefly, before she blinked and a mask of calm descended.

He couldn't wait; he had to act now.

Ethan quickly explained to his pals what he planned and not to hold up their dinner waiting for him, then strode through the tables towards Zoe. No way in hell was he going to let her face Brady alone and on the back foot. He just hoped she'd see him as the lesser of two evils and play along.

\* \* \*

Just what she needed. Not.

Brady coming over to make a snide comment about her being alone, while bragging about his latest bit of arm candy. Like she cared. He was the one who couldn't seem to get over her calling off their wedding, because she'd found out he'd cheated on her, while on various road-trips. Thankfully, their paths didn't cross too often since he'd gone to play for New York. But,

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when they did, he couldn't resist a verbal jab.

Zoe had been pretending to text Trey while she sipped her champagne. Smiling, as if he'd been sending cute messages. In fact, she was reading the latest romantic thriller by her favourite author.

"Stood up on Valentine's Day?"

She swiped her screen to messages, before putting it on the table. "What do you want, Brady?" she asked, sounding bored.

"I was having a romantic dinner with Anjelica -- you know, the supermodel -- and saw you sitting by yourself. Thought I'd check you were okay."

"Your concern ..." she injected a wry note, "...is touching, but I'm fine. My date's been delayed."

"Really."

His disbelief irritated, but she refused to react. "Held up in traffic."

"He probably got tired of going out with a ball-buster and left you high and dry."

Before she could roll her eyes at the predictable insult, a warm hand settled on her shoulder, making her pulse skitter.

"I'm so sorry I'm late, darlin'." Ethan leaned down and pressed his mouth to hers.

Her lips tingled, then parted, unwittingly deepening the kiss.

Heat shimmered through her body. Her mind seized, then whirred.

What was Ethan doing?

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She didn't care, as long as he didn't stop kissing her. This was what she'd been missing out on?

"Blackmore?"

She frowned, a small sound of dissent in her throat, as Ethan lifted his head.

"Didn't see you there, Fulton." The instant coolness was noticeable. As was the fact that Ethan's hand remained on her shoulder, his finger gently caressing her collarbone. "Slumming it on this side of the river, are you?"

Ignoring the question, Brady glared at her. "He's your date?"

She really shouldn't enjoy her ex's discomfort so much, but she couldn't help smiling, as she laid her hand over Ethan's. He squeezed her shoulder, urging her to play along. "Better late, than never."

"You're kidding, right?" Brady laugh was brittle.

Ethan grabbed the chair opposite and pulled it beside her, catty-corner, before rearranging his pace setting. "That's better. I hate having so much table between us."

Oh, he was good. And he was making it hard to remember why she'd fought so hard against dating him.

"You're right. That's definitely cosier." Her gaze locked with his. She'd never realised what a clear blue his eyes were; like a bright, spring day.

"Zoe," Brady pressed, irritation darkening his expression. "You're not seriously with him, are you?"

Ethan continued to ignore Brady. "Oops, I've

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smudged your lipstick,” he murmured, touching his thumb to the corner of her mouth.

Her stomach dropped, as desire spiked through her. “That’s okay,” she said huskily, reaching over and mimicking his action with her own thumb, wiping a smear of red from his bottom lip.

“Is this how you get back at me for a couple of lousy, little mistakes? How many more of my former team-mates have you slept with?”

Ethan’s gaze narrowed, his blue eyes turning stormy and firing with angry sparks, but he didn’t look away from her.

“Watch yourself, Brady” he warned, his voice low and calm, but underlined with threat. “You do not get to disrespect my lady.”

“Lady?” Brady’s derisive tone cut through the warm, delicious feeling, leaving her cold and furious.

“I don’t owe you an explanation. It’s none of your business who I’m seeing,” she said curtly. “Just like you pointed out it was none of my business who you slept with when we were engaged.”

“We weren’t married yet.” Like that made cheating okay.

She shrugged. “You threw me away -- your loss, my gain.”

“The gain was definitely mine,” Ethan tucked a loose tendril of hair behind her ear.

“You’re welcome to her, man,” Brady said haughtily. “But I warn you, she’ll give you indigestion,

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while freezing your nuts off.”

Ethan’s chair scraped back and he surged to his feet. His fury was palpable, as he fisted the front of Brady’s shirt.

Zoe touched his arm. “He’s not worth it,” she insisted quietly.

“Is there a problem here?” Ryan Grey appeared beside the table. Despite his steady tone, a steely note underlay his question. The former Ice Cat, who’d had to retire due to concussion issues, was not a man to be messed with. “Fulton?”

Brady hesitated, weighing up his options, then threw up his hands, dislodging Ethan’s grip. “Not for me,” he muttered, glaring at Ethan.

“Then why don’t you leave these two to enjoy their evening.” His tone brooked no argument. “Besides, I think your date is feeling a tad abandoned.”

Zoe felt sorry for the blonde frowning at their table. If she was smart, she’d learn what her date was like soon enough.

“Whatever,” Brady huffed and stalked off.

After watching her ex return to his table, Grey turned back to them. “Good to see you, Blackmore.” He shook hands with Ethan and clapped him on the back. “Zoe. You too.” He leaned down and kissed her cheek. “Sorry about the disruption.”

“Don’t worry, man.” Ethan waved off his apology. “You’re not responsible for your customers’ behaviour. Even if some are riff raff from across the river.”



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“Their money’s as green as everyone else’s.” Grey smiled. “I hope he hasn’t ruined your evening.”

“We won’t let him, will we?” Ethan smiled at her.

A little unsettled that he was continuing with the charade now that Brady had gone, she shook her head.

“So, how long have you two been seeing each other?” Grey asked, pouring champagne into Ethan’s glass. “That’s a piece of gossip I hadn’t picked up on.”

“This is our first date,” Zoe blurted out at the same time as Ethan said, “For a while.”

Grey arched a curious eyebrow.

“We’re neighbours, so we’ve known each other for a while,” Ethan added quickly. “But this is our first formal date.”

“Well, I’m honoured that you came to my restaurant. Your appetisers are on the house.” He gave a quick wave goodbye. “Enjoy your dinner.”

As Grey moved on, strolling between the tables, greeting familiar customers and welcoming new ones, an awkward silence fell between Zoe and Ethan. As they sipped their drinks and studied their menus, their gazes kept raising, catching, then dropping. They smiled at each other, hesitantly, yet warmly. Like two teenagers, with their first crushes, rather than two adults who’d left high school behind more than a decade ago.

“Thank you,” she said finally. “I really appreciate you helping me out with Brady.”

“No problem. It’s my job to read difficult situations and prevent trouble from happening. Though,

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usually around our net, not in a restaurant.”

“You’re clearly good at what you do, no matter which arena you’re in.”

“Thank you kindly, ma’am.” He grinned, then became serious. “I won’t intrude on your whole evening. Just stay and keep up the pretence until Brady leaves. Which looks to be any minute, as he’s paying.”

“That’s nice of you, but not necessary,” she demurred, not really wanting to explain, but knowing she couldn’t avoid it.

“Sure it is.” Ethan frowned. “Aside from it being Valentine’s Day, there’s nothing worse than a beautiful woman seated alone.”

His compliment sent a warm glow through her. “But your friends are over there. Besides, I won’t be here for long. Trey isn’t coming.” She told him about the earlier phone call and the plan she’d cooked up with Sarah. “As soon as Brady’s gone, I’ll ask them to pack up my dinner to go.”

“What the hell’s wrong with the man?” He grimaced. “Sorry, but it makes me mad that What’s-His-Name the Third can’t put you first tonight.”

“It’s okay.” She smiled. “I get a nice meal out of it and this will definitely be the last time he stands me up. He and I are done.”

Ethan looked marginally happier. “I’m not letting you sit here alone and there’s no way you’re getting take-out.” For a moment, he looked uncertain. “Unless of course that’s what you really want. In which case, as

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soon as Brady has gone, I'll clear off."

Zoe hesitated for a moment, then brushed aside any lingering concerns. Ethan had proved he was nothing like Brady. And it wasn't like Trey had been any better. "I'd love the company. But are you sure you don't want to rejoin your friends?"

"Hell ... heck, no," he laughed. "I spend enough time with those bozos."

"Then, please stay."

"It'll be my pleasure."

Somehow, she had the feeling the pleasure would be hers too.

\* \* \*

Dinner with Zoe had been a long time coming, but the wait had been worth it.

Ethan held her elbow to stop her from slipping on the icy sidewalk, as she climbed into the back of the waiting limo. He sat beside her on the long, leather seat and snuggled her close, with his arm across her shoulder. Then the driver shut the door, cocooning them in their own dimly-lit, private world.

The evening had gone even better than he'd hoped. They'd talked almost non-stop, discussing and debating all kinds of stuff. And they'd laughed a lot. They'd pretty much closed down Grey's; the restaurant had been almost empty by the time they'd left. Ethan had insisted on paying the bill. No way would he let Jackass the Third pay for them both, even if it would have served him right for the way he'd treated Zoe.

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He'd agreed to share her ride home, since his teammates had left earlier and, as she'd pointed out, they were going to the same address. Not that he'd been about to turn down the extra time alone with her.

Strangely, he felt nervous. What would happen once they got home? Had he done enough to convince her to go out with him again? Fulton had helped Ethan's cause, for sure. Watching the two of them side-by-side must have shown Zoe that not all hockey players were complete jerks. But enjoying one dinner didn't mean she'd risk anything more with him.

"I'm glad someone else is doing the driving," she said, with a laugh. "I'm so stuffed, I couldn't concentrate on the road. I can't remember when I've eaten so much."

"Me too."

"Ah, but you didn't have two desserts. It was generous of you to give me yours."

"Not really. I try to limit the sweet things I eat during the season. It takes careful monitoring to keep myself in peak condition."

"You definitely do a great job." Her smile had a sultry note that teased his already semi-aroused body and heightened his urge to kiss her.

He was deliberately holding back on that score. Unless, she made the first move.

Desperate to get his mind off what her lips would taste like, he blurted out, "So do you want to try another date? We have the game against Philly tomorrow night

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and then back-to-back, home and home games over the weekend against Minnesota. But then we've got a few days off. How about Tuesday night?"

She tilted her head, studying his face. Her hesitation seemed to last ages, yet was probably only a few seconds. Long enough for Ethan to curse himself silently for pushing too hard, too fast.

"I'd like that," she said finally.

Relief, as strong as when the Cats' scored a last-second goal to win a game, rushed through him. "Great. What would you like to do -- dinner, a movie, something else?"

"Dinner, somewhere less fancy, would be lovely. Unless you have a better idea."

"Anything that includes you suits me fine."

The unintentional husky note in his voice caused her to turn her head to look at him square on.

Their gazes met and held. The invitation in her eyes surprised him.

Her lips parted slightly, drawing his attention back to them.

Desire shot through him. This time, it was he who hesitated, not wanting to spoil the moment by doing the wrong thing.

Zoe lifted her head, until her mouth was almost touching his. "Despite the inauspicious start, this really has been the perfect date," she murmured.

"Just wait until next time," he said softly, before he kissed her.

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Welcome to the world of the New Jersey Ice Cats!

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[A Perfect Selection](#) (Anthology of short stories)

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## A Perfect Distraction

### A face-off—head vs. heart

For Jake Badoletti, this year is all about his career. He has a rare second chance to make the most of being a pro hockey player, so no parties, no scandals. Too bad he's met a woman who could sideline those plans. Maggie Goodman is not his usual type—right down to being a single mom. Still, the sizzling connection with this gorgeous brunette can't be ignored.

With a little juggling and a lot of focus, Jake manages to have the game *and* Maggie. Then his performance on the ice suffers and a scandal erupts. Now he can't afford the distraction of Maggie...even if she is perfect for him.

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## **A Perfect Trade A win-win negotiation?**

Truman "Tru" Jelinek's life is pretty much off the rails. With his professional hockey career on thin ice, and his personal life falling apart, he's ready to implement some serious changes. Helping Jenny Martin—the only girl he's ever loved—make her dreams a reality is a good place to start.

There's just one problem: Jenny doesn't want his help. She barely wants to speak to him. But Tru is prepared to negotiate a deal that even Jenny can't refuse. As trading favors turns into sharing passion, he has to face the truth that when it comes to Jenny, the game is far from over.

## **A Perfect Catch He's the perfect catch...for now!**

When it comes to romance, Tracy Hayden is *not* looking for a rematch. She's had epic passion—and problems!—with professional hockey player Ike Jelinek. Brilliant on skates and magic in bed, his too-traditional-for-her views were like a bucket of ice water on their affair.

Then an injury takes Ike out of the game, and everything changes. Suddenly he needs her services-providing business—even though he once claimed it was their biggest problem. Tracy's determined to be professional, despite the sizzling attraction between them that won't go away. Maybe they need a second fling to fix that!



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### **A Perfect Compromise Theirs is a game of give-and-take...**

Schoolteacher Issy Brandine has a plan to build a stable, secure future for herself. No settling for second-best. Anything more than a sultry Caribbean fling with hotshot hockey star Jean Baptiste Larocque isn't part of the plan. A New Jersey Ice Cat with the ultimate hockey trophy in his sights won't fit into her low-key lifestyle. Except a surprise pregnancy changes everything.

Issy knows her child deserves more than a part-time dad. With JB's eyes on the championship that will redeem his career, compromise is out of the question. But love—and the baby between them—might prove that nothing is impossible.

### **A Perfect Strategy Is there really life after hockey?**

If there's one thing Scotty Matthews knows, it's hockey. Unfortunately, the former New Jersey Ice Cats captain isn't proving successful at life after hockey. His wife's left him and he's lost his post-ice job as a media commentator. All he's got now is a big empty show house.

If there's one thing Sapphire Houlihan knows, it's that she never wants to be tied down to anyone or anything ever again. Unfortunately for her, a wonderful one-weekend distraction with Scotty turns into something much more complicated... Because he's a guy who wants way more than one weekend.

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*Can the wrong guy make things right?*

Zoe Coombs' perfect Valentine's date has turned into a disaster. Stood up at the best restaurant in town, with her ex-fiancé and his latest fling two tables over. Perhaps she should have accepted Ethan Blackmore's invitation instead, even if she won't chance her heart on another hockey player. But when the sexy, Ice Cats' defenseman comes to her rescue, she wonders if he's worth the risk, after all.

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