

“It had just better be there,” Bobbie complained, stepping over a patch of ice. It was after four o’clock and good old Red Whitman would have already made his mail run. Yeah, he took that whole, “Neither snow, nor rain, nor heat, nor gloom of night” crap seriously. Thankfully, her neighbor, Mike, had shoveled her driveway, so at least she didn’t have to trudge through a bunch of snow to get to her mailbox.

She pulled her coat closer around her. Damn, it was too cold to be out—even for this short of a walk. Stupid negative sixty-degree windchill factors sucked the big one—HARD! And it didn’t look like it would be warming up anytime soon.

She hunkered down into the scarf wrapped around her head. “Move to Iowa, they said,” she muttered into the wooly fabric. “It’s like living in Mayberry, they said.” Ha! Mayberry her freaking ass. Never had she seen an episode of Andy Griffith where Ms. Crump had to put on four layers of clothes just to go a hundred feet out her front door—NEVER.

And if it wasn't for the fact she had been waiting to receive her final divorce papers, she wouldn't be venturing out at all. Hmmm... Just one more thing to blame on Mark. If he hadn't tried to delay the inevitable, she would have been walking down her driveway last month to get them in a balmy fifty degrees—balmy being a relative term when you considered what she was in now—to finally hold the lease to her new life in her hands. Anyhow, her attorney had mailed it out three days ago, so surely it would be here today.

Bobbie shoved her hands deeper in her pockets. She was wearing gloves, but the biting cold was permeating the leather. She stopped at the end of her driveway and looked across at her mailbox on the other side of the road—ah, the joys of country living—then checked both ways before heading across. Yeah, even though the road had been plowed, there wasn't much of a possibility anyone would be out this way.

But, hey, you never knew.

She stepped gingerly, making sure to watch out for ruts in the old road. Some of them had filled and frozen over,

looking like miniature ice ponds. And it was a good thing, since she ended up having to sidestep around a particularly large one before getting to her mailbox.

She stood there for a second and took a deep breath. This was it—hopefully. She grabbed the handle to the little door.

“Please be in there.” She tugged, but the door didn’t budge. “You have got to be kidding me!”

It was frozen shut.

Bobbie banged on the sides and pulled and pulled—and then pulled some more. Nothing. She was about to give the thick post a swift kick when the realization hit her.

“Wait, if I can’t get it open, neither could Red.”

Well, shit.

The walk back up to the house seemed to take a lot longer—mostly due to her disappointment—but she was glad to step into her heated entryway.

“I guess even Red has his limits,” she said, shrugging out of her coat. “I guess I can’t blame—”

Knock-knock.

Bobbie turned toward her front door and frowned. Who could that possibly be? She walked over and peeked out the peephole.

“I’ll be damned,” she murmured and opened the door.
“Red!”

“Hello, Ms. Simpson. Sorry for being late.” He handed out her stack of mail—the stack with a big manilla envelop sitting on top with Martin and Kline Attorneys at Law emboldened across the top. “Darn cold had all the mailboxes frozen shut and I’ve had to hand deliver to everybody on my route. Thankfully, you’re next to the last.”

“I can’t believe you would go to all this trouble,” she said taking her mail. But she was ever so happy he had.

“Glad to do it,” he said. “Especially today.” He looked down at the envelop from her lawyer and then back up at her, giving her a wink. “Some things are just too important to make folks wait.”

She pressed the stack of mail to her chest. “You’ve just my day.” She couldn’t help the smile breaking out over her face—nor the impulsive kiss she planted on her mailman’s cheek.

“Um, uh, I...” Poor guy’s face matched his name. “Well, I best better be going,” he said, backing away from her. “Mrs. Whitman’s expecting me to be on time for supper.”

Bobbie watched him walk out to his vehicle and waited for him to get in before closing her door. She leaned back against the old painted wood and sighed.

“Okay, Ms. Bobbie Hartman.” She would need to let everyone know she’d taken back her maiden name. “Let’s do things right this time.”