

MACKENZIE'S LAST RUN

by Gayle Rosengren

EXCERPT

Tessa stiffened. Her heart fluttered. She'd thought of someplace where Mac might be hiding! It would be the perfect spot! Sheltered and totally private at this time of year. She was right. She knew she was right. He was there, just a few miles away. Close enough for him to run to, so he wouldn't have needed his bike.

She leaped out of bed and ran down the hall to tell Mom. Her mother's bedroom light was on, and she was dressed and sitting in her reading chair, but her head was slumped to one side. She was sleeping. Tessa hesitated. Mom would be so disappointed if her hunch turned out to be wrong... Maybe it was better not to get her hopes up. If Tessa was right, she would wake her up later with Mac standing beside her. And if Tessa was wrong, Mom would never have to know.

Tessa turned off the light and backed out of her mother's room. She'd go by herself. She'd take her bike and be there and back in half an hour. Maybe less. She just had to put her jeans and sweatshirt back on, and her socks and shoes, all of which took forever because her hands were all of a sudden shaking like mad.

It's no big deal, she told herself as she tiptoed down to the garage for her bike. But who was she kidding? It was a very big deal. She was going out alone in the middle of the night. Out in the country where anything, anyone, could be hiding in the darkness.