

*Heritage* excerpt

She held out her left hand to him. "Circumstances have changed."

He studied her bare hand for a moment. "I hope that had nothing to do with me."

She shook her head. "Christopher's family had a little problem with me being Ojibwa."

He pulled his brow down. "Why should that matter?"

*Exactly.* But it did. She waved her hand in dismissal. "It's a long story. And believe me rather boring. So does seven work for you?"

"I still don't know if it's a good idea."

"Why?"

He rubbed the back of his neck, and his pained expression said he was trying to find the words to say what he wanted to say as kindly as possible.

The stunned look he had given her when she had said she didn't attend church flashed before her. Was he that prejudiced that he couldn't even have dinner with someone who didn't believe as he did? "Is this because I don't hold the same religious beliefs as you?"

"Well, there is that, too."

"Too? So you want nothing to do with me because I'm not religious like you. Christopher doesn't want me because I'm part Native American. My stepfathers didn't want me because I wasn't theirs. Can't anyone accept me just as I am? Do I always have to change and be someone else to please others?"

"It's not like that."

She moved toward the door, but Will was standing in her way. "Let me go."