

[Back To Index](#)

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## **Interlude on Bospin**

by [Cheree Cargill](#)

The nightgown was surprisingly feminine, a soft whispery white, floating around her slim body from shoulders to bare feet. Did she ever wear any other color? Han wondered as he stood just inside the door of Leia's apartment. She waited hesitantly, shyly, across the room from him, one hand picking nervously at the folds of the material. Her dark, waist-length hair hung loose about her, making her seem younger and more vulnerable than she ever had before.

His heart pounding suddenly, Han crossed the room quickly and gathered her in his arms, pressing his lips into hers. For an instant, he felt her tense, then with a soft little moan, she melted against him, giving herself fully to the kiss. She felt his full lips part against hers and his tongue gently pushed its way between her teeth, probing against her own.

After a moment, he moved his lips down her throat, leaving a trail of soft, lingering kisses. Gasping, she leaned her head back, exposing her throat to his mouth. His heady masculine odor engulfed her. an honest, clean scent smelling faintly of sweat and traiga oil, his clothing tinged with the spicy fragrance of Chewbacca's fur.

He straightened and brought his lips back to hers for a long, deep kiss. When at last he pulled away, his eyes continued to go over her face hungrily. "I need you, Leia," he whispered huskily. "Don't be the princess tonight or the commander or the senator ... just be a woman tonight."

She could feel the insistence in his body, but brought a hand softly up to his cheek, her brown eyes intent upon his fevered hazel ones. "Han ... do you really want me or am I just another of your port ladies? A night's love and tomorrow you're gone?"

He blinked and drew away a little, surprised. He was used to the idea of easy love, with no strings attached. He had not stopped to consciously think that Leia might be different, although he should have known her well enough by now. "I can't promise anything," he said after a moment, softly, seriously. "I only know that I've wanted you since the first time I saw you."

She still searched his face, trying to decide on his sincerity. "Do you love me, Han?" she asked. When he did not answer, she ducked her head in embarrassment. "I'm sorry. That wasn't a fair question. You haven't offered me anything more than a night's company and I shouldn't ask for more." She looked back into his face and smiled. "It's been a long time since I was just a woman. It's hard being a symbol all the time ... the Lady in White. Always being strong and visible. ..never allowing myself the luxury of a night's love."

In answer, he swung her up in his arms and carried her into the sleeping compartment. The blankets on the bed were already turned back, ready, and he wondered if she had anticipated him or if she had merely been on the verge of going to bed when he had let himself into her rooms. She certainly had not seemed surprised to see him.

Placing her gently on the bed, he unbuckled his blaster and laid it on the floor beside the bed, within easy reach should he need it. Then he shrugged out of his jacket and pulled his white shirt over his head. She watched him silently, smiling, her eyes going appraisingly over his body. Amused, he stood for a moment, hands on his slim hips, and let her look at him. Her eyes played over his powerful arms and shoulders, over his broad chest, down his stomach to the dark snug jeans. Abruptly she flicked her gaze back to his eyes, realizing the appreciative expression he had seen on her face, and looked away, blushing.

Han only laughed and sat down on the bed to pull his boots off. Leia looked back up to surreptitiously watch the ripple of the muscles in his back and reached up to trail her fingers lightly down his spine. She hesitated, puzzled then horrified by a series of narrow white scars crisscrossing his back. He had been whipped sometime in the past and soundly. Typically, he had never mentioned it and she bit back her words now.

Oblivious to her scrutiny, Han lay back beside her, still clad in his jeans, and took her in his arms for a leisurely kiss. After a time, his hands found purpose in their caresses and one moved down to cup her breast. She shivered but did not pull away and, encouraged, he pulled at the little tie holding the bodice of her gown closed and slipped his hand inside. She caught her breath against his lips as she felt his warm, callused palm slide over her skin, gently massaging. After a few minutes, he withdrew his hand and moved it slowly down the silky material covering her leg, then slipped it down the curve of her hip and pressed her more firmly against him. His jeans were beginning to feel awfully confining.

"Wait," she said and got up to wave the lights out and let the gown fall in a pool around her feet. He took the opportunity to divest himself of his tight jeans, the sudden freedom causing him to utter a little groan of relief, then smiling he accepted her back into his arms.

She snuggled against him, savoring the warmth and smell of his body in the darkness. He drew her hard against him and rolled her onto her back, his lips and tongue exploring her mouth, nuzzling her ear, travelling to the base of her throat. "Maker, I've wanted you so long," he breathed against her breast. She gave a deep sigh and slid her hands over his shoulders and back. Abruptly though, he paused and lifted his head. "Leia? This is gonna sound ... uh... I'm not ... uh... the first, am I?"

Taken by surprise, she laughed then caressed his face affectionately. "No, Han, I'm afraid not. There were a couple of others, but that was a long time ago ... on Alderaan... and they're both gone now..."

He could see the introspective look steal over her face and, to pull her away from it, said, "Nice men, no doubt?"

"No doubt," she answered softly, but not in the glib tone he wanted to hear. Stricken, he touched her cheek softly with his fingertips and her gaze focused back onto his face, so near her own.

"Leia, I'm sorry. I didn't mean to bring up--"

"Oh, Han, it's all right. But, please, tonight let's just think about us. I don't want to think about the past or future tonight."

He studied her face, barely lit from the silvery light filtering through the skylights above the bed, evidence that Cloud City did not sleep even though night had long since fallen on Bespin. Even now the repair crew was working under Chewie's supervision tracking down the problem with the hyperdrive. Han knew that he should be there but somehow felt that the Falcon could wait...for a little while.

The light suited her well and he thought how she would look bathed in the soft radiance of Corell's two moons. She was so beautiful, so fragile, a fairy princess come to him. Yet when he caressed her, it was the warm firm flesh of a woman that met his touch.

She slipped one arm up around his shoulders and drew him down to her, to a long hungry kiss. With a sigh, he sank against her, feeling his passion for her building again after the moment of disquiet. Okay, babe, he thought. You and me tonight.

In one corner of his mind, he determined to lead her gently into their lovemaking. Though she wasn't a virgin, she was inexperienced and he wanted to give her a beautiful night to remember...for them both to remember. She was eager and intuitive in returning his caresses, though, and twice surprised him with moves that sent a jolt of excitement through him.

At last he judged that it was time and gently moved to enter her, not wanting to hurt her, but, gasping, she arched her hips up, causing him to push in even further. Gritting his teeth to control himself, he thrust in all the way and shuddered at the explosion of sensation it sent through him. He slid his hand beneath her shoulders, drawing her close, his hips eased into their natural, insistent rhythm.

He had asked her to be just a woman night. That wasn't quite accurate--he wanted her to be his woman and not just tonight. He could easily visualize her in his arms tomorrow night and the night after that ... could see her at his side on the Falcon and on a thousand worlds. Roughly, he pushed down the intrusive reality -- that he would soon be gone, that he had responsibilities and ties he didn't want, that he was sought after by men who would take great delight in his long, painful death--

No! Tonight he would think only of Leia and her slender body in his arms, of the almost desperate way she held him. He had had more women than he could remember, in truth had even loved a few of them. But somehow Leia was different, special. Weighted down with responsibilities, she seemed mature beyond her years yet she had run full-tilt from his advances, flustered and speechless at his half-joking remarks.

"Sorry, sweetheart," he had said to her. "We don't have time for anything else." He wondered if she had felt the same surge of sexual excitement he had when he'd caught and held her protectively as the ship buffeted? After he'd left the cockpit, he'd had to stop for a second and shake off the need he felt for her. They hadn't had time then. But memory stayed with him of that pleasant sensation at the base of his gut and he found himself growing increasingly aware of her presence on the ship.

When he'd come back into the cockpit and found her struggling with the lever, he instinctively reached to help her. Despite her angry retort, the pleasant throbbing reasserted itself and he determined not to be rebuffed again.

Her lips had trembled against his and the taste of her mouth was sweet and musty. He could feel her heart pounding as he pulled her close and her arms went hesitantly around him.

Blast 3PO for breaking the moment! He should have spaced that damn droid when had the chance.

Leia was moving rhythmically beneath him now, eyes closed, lost in the ecstasy he'd built her to. He abandoned himself to the luxurious, insistent pressure he felt building up rapidly inside, giving himself over to the explosion of feeling he could not have stopped now had he tried. He clutched Leia against him and felt her nails bite into his back as she hovered on the knife edge of orgasm, feeling the sudden intensity in his thrusts, knowing it would be soon, soon...

Release, when it came, left them both gasping and shaken, an inarticulate little cry escaped her lips. Han panted open-mouthed, sweat trickling down his face, before he finally gave a great sigh and felt the tension drain out of his body. It had been a long time since a session of love-making had left him so breathless.

Leia opened her eyes and smiled up at him, her eyes twinkling. "By the Maker! I thought all those stories I'd heard about you were exaggeration!"

He grinned crookedly. "Just part of the service, ma'am. Captain Solo always aims to please."

She grabbed double handfuls of his chestnut colored hair and gently shook it in mock ferocity. He leaned down and kissed her soundly then rolled off her with a sigh, closing his eyes in exhaustion.

She sat up for a moment to pull the blankets over his sweaty body. "Don't cool off too fast."

"Stars, Leia! I can't do it again \_yet!\_ Let me catch my breath first!"

"That's not what I meant," she answered in exasperation. "You'll catch pneumonia lying here like that. You need to cool off slowly."

"Yes, ma'am." Obliging, he drew the sheets up over his chest and blew out his breath, managing to slow down his rate of respiration.

Leia snuggled up to him and he put an arm around her, drawing her close. "I'm glad you came tonight, Han," she whispered.

"So am I," he answered, then began to laugh as the alternative meaning occurred to him. Almost at the same instant, she realized what she had said.

"Oh, shut up!"

"I didn't say anything!"

"But you were thinking it!"

Laughing, he hugged her. "Okay, okay... I'm sorry." They both settled down, then he asked, "Were you waiting for me tonight?"

"Well, sort of. I left my door unlocked but I really wasn't sure you'd come." She was silent then spoke in a softer voice. "I couldn't ask you to."

"Why not?" he asked, genuinely puzzled.

"I was afraid you'd laugh at me and never let me forget it. The Ice Goddess coming down to mingle with the poor mortals." She looked up at him, noting the startled look in his eyes. "I know you'd called me that. There's not much I miss in the command center."

"Leia--I'm sorry. I didn't mean--"

"I know. I really did come across that way on Hoth. But, I had to, Han! If I let myself ...my feelings show -- everytime we lost someone--"

"Shhh ... I know." He quieted her with a gentle kiss. "I'm proud of you, babe. There's not many that can do what you do. And I was sort of amazed that you didn't throw me out of here when I first slipped in."

"I wouldn't have. Ever since you kissed me on the ship, I realized how much I wanted you. I just couldn't figure out a way to let you know until tonight. I was afraid you were just teasing me."

"Do you still think so?" he asked softly.

"No... I don't think you could have made love to me like that if you didn't care about me a little. I know you've had a lot of women, Han... really exciting women... But ever since I first saw you on the Death Star--since you tried to save me when the garbage compactor was moving in ... well ... She looked intently at him, at the outline of his face in the darkness. "Han, I think I love--"

"No!" he said quickly, stilling her words with his fingers. "No commitments tonight. I said I couldn't promise anything and neither can you. You've got your rebellion to run and I've got to get Jabba off my back first. We don't even know what's going to happen tomorrow. I just want to hold you and love you tonight, babe. Words won't change what we feel about each other, so there's no use saying them."

"Oh, Han..." She sank down, into his strong, protective embrace.

"Shhh ... I know, babe. I know."

After a long time, her breathing evened out and she sleepily twisted in his arms until her back was against his chest and snuggled comfortably into him. He cuddled her closer, savoring her softness and the scent of her hair. How could he tell her that, as soon as the Falcon's hyperdrive was fixed, he planned to drop her at a safe port then lift ship for Tatooine to face down Jabba one way or the other? That he had to do this task before he dared even think about any future for them?

He couldn't place the nagging feeling of doom that accompanied the thought, couldn't place whether it was simply at the thought of losing her when he'd just found her or if it were something more, a deep cold dread that something was not right in City in the Clouds. He tried to shake the feeling away but couldn't. He curled around the sleeping woman and held her fiercely.

He was still holding her when dawn tinged the walls of their bedroom a soft rose-gold.

**End**

[Back To Index](#)