



# **Tax Break**

**A Short Story**

by

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## TAX BREAK

Trevor realized his year didn't begin in January, it began with the annual trek to have his taxes done at his sister-in-law's accounting firm. But as he drove into the parking lot each spring, he experienced the satisfied feeling of a job well done. Sure, he dreaded the next few hours, but Carol had not only given him his first landscaping job, her location on a main thoroughfare had given him priceless free advertising.

Bright blue expanding file in hand, he headed for her office. Carol should be proud of him, he'd filed each month's receipts which meant his bookkeeping was not quite as haphazard as usual. He knew he should invest in a software program, but he doubted he'd use it. He preferred using the computer for the landscaping plans he visualized for a job, not to track every penny he spent or earned.

To his surprise, Carol met him at the door.

"Trevor!"

Her cheerful greeting and quick hug startled him, but she was already

stepping back to reveal another woman. When Trevor saw the welcoming smile, bright yellow blouse, and dark brown hair, he thought of sunflowers.

He'd always liked sunflowers.

"Meet Bethany, my new partner." Carol turned to Bethany, "Don't be intimidated by his frown, he despises tax time." She pointed at his file. "Mainly, because he keeps such messy records."

Frown? The unexpected desire to create a good first impression had Trevor smoothing his face into a smile as he shook Bethany's hand. "I doubt if Carol will find as much to criticize this year."

"Oh, I won't find any thing to criticize." She paused for effect, "Bethany's your new tax accountant."

It took him a moment to absorb Carol's announcement, but he kept the dismay from his face. He worried about how Bethany would take his hit or miss bookkeeping, as well as how much it was going to cost him. With his business showing a profit, he'd planned on thanking Carol for the free ride and offering to pay for her services, but he'd hoped for the family plan.

Carol, who stood behind Bethany, wiggled her fingers to get his attention. Then she mouthed "she's single" and walked away.

Trevor had a feeling this was Carol's matchmaking coup. Her many unsuccessful attempts to match him with various women during the five years since his divorce faded into oblivion. One look at Bethany, on the other hand, had him thinking of romantic dinners for two.

"Ah, last year's tax records." Bethany's comment interrupted his mental happy dance mid-step. His heart sank. What woman who played with the logic

of numbers would be interested in a guy who played with dirt and trees? He told himself to stop daydreaming. It was tax time, not date time. Handing him off to her partner was probably Carol's way of ensuring he paid for services rendered.

“Sorted by month.” He offered Bethany the binder.

She took it and smiled. “Why don't you come to my office and we'll take a look?”

In her office, she motioned him to sit while she closed the door. He liked the way her flyaway curls framed her face, encouraging him to think the tailored slacks and businesslike demeanor hid a creative soul.

“Okay, confession time,” she said as she turned around.

Was she going to admit she'd seen his picture in Carol's office, fallen for him, and asked Carol for his account? Since he didn't watch chick flicks, he wondered where that scenario came from.

“I asked Carol for your account because I want to work out a deal. My services for your services.”

“Ahhhh.” He drew the word out, enjoying her blushing reaction. “My services for your services, hmmm.” It was difficult to keep a serious expression on his face when he wanted to laugh. He hadn't had this much fun with a woman in too long.

Bethany grinned. “Okay, go ahead and laugh.”

He did, his pleasure growing when Bethany joined him. A few moments later they fell into a companionable silence which he ended by saying, “Why don't you tell me what you need.”

“I bought a ‘fixer upper’ a few weeks ago. Right now, the yard is a mess, but it’s the perfect setting for an English garden.” Her voice grew a little dreamy before she snapped back to attention. “Truth is, I haven’t the faintest idea how to create one.”

“Which is where I come in?” Trevor relaxed into his chair. “You’ll take over doing my taxes in exchange for an English garden?”

She smiled her relief. “Yes.”

As Trevor extended his hand to shake on the deal, he didn’t admit he knew little about English gardens. Had no idea if included sunflowers. But he could learn. And he was sure he

could add a sunflower or two.

He also knew he’d enjoy the process because it meant spending time with Bethany. And perhaps that romantic dinner for two.

The End

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

I won my first writing contest with a short story about my puppy when I was 12 years old. Encouraged by winning a pen set, I decided to become a writer. Over the years I've written everything from novels to aviation handbooks.

In 2003, Kensington published my first two historical romances. Three more novels followed. When I realized I was doing all the promotion, I decided to start my own micro publishing company. Saderra Publishing was born.

If you enjoyed "Tax Break" you may enjoy my other works. I've published historical and contemporary romance novels, novellas, and short stories, I also have a book of humorous essays and two writing skills books on dialogue.

Visit my website at [www.gingerhanson.com](http://www.gingerhanson.com), or like me at [Facebook](#), or check out the scoop on Tassanoxie at [Miss Mabel Talks Tassanoxie](#) If you're a writer, you might find my blog [Just Ginger](#) an aid on this journey we call writing.

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