

# The Promise

Elliot ran the numbers again. They still added up. Dragging down the knot of his tie made no difference. The numbers didn't lie.

He whistled, then grinned. He'd just made his first, honest-to-God million! Like a rabbit pulled out of a hat, there they were. *Irrefutable*. He'd parlayed his mother's thousand bucks of seed money into a small fortune.

The hard-faced memory of his father leaned over his shoulder and sniggered, saying, *"I told ya, boy. You'll never amount to a hill of beans..."*

Elliot's eyes lifted to the cityscape framed in his office window. His gaze rose higher still...



# The Moment

Elliot watched Catherine walk into her building. The doorman assisted her entry. Elliot closed the limousine window.

Catherine had said, "Call me."

"It couldn't hurt..." Elliot stared at her business card, then at his car phone.

She was home alone, their mutual attraction obvious. He calculated the odds.

*Was it too much, too soon?*

The limo moved into traffic. Elliot watched the darkened cityscape. Time dragged before he finally reached for the phone and dialed.

*"This is Catherine Chandler. I'm not in right now. Please leave a message after the tone..."*

Elliot frowned. She was home. *Why wasn't Catherine answering?*



# **Their Friendship**

“We have come a very long way, you and I.”

“Too far to ever think of going back to the men we were, Vincent.”

“Elliot, the man you were was a tragically lost soul. I once said to Catherine that you were both good and bad, strong and weak. Capable of great deeds and great wrongs. Simply a human being. We are the same.”

“You never cease to amaze me, my friend. You have so much to complain about, and yet...”

“And yet, I have Catherine...”

“There’s the one difference between us. She loves you, and not me.”

“I know...”

