

Another Someday

by Angie

*Someday I'll find you,
Moonlight behind you,
True to the dream I am dreaming."*

- Noel Coward

Vincent stood at the entrance to the culvert, looking up at a crescent moon, deep in thought. The moon always reminded him of Devin, now more than ever. It was a relief to have quiet at last.

The tunnels had been in a minor uproar from the sudden re-appearance of Devin after so long, and his equally sudden – but less secretive – departure. He had stayed with them only three days and nights, but those had been enough to make it clear he could never live with them again. He was too well-travelled, too much a man of the world above – a world his tunnel family had rejected. Nevertheless, the return of the prodigal son had brought back many memories to those who remembered Devin as a boy. He had also, naturally, attracted a lot of attention from their young women – but they had been disappointed.

Perhaps it had all been too much for him, Vincent thought. His brother did not enjoy a lot of attention, although he was obviously something of a showman and enjoyed playing roles, if even some of his stories could be believed. Those stories – at least the more repeatable ones - would be retold for many weeks.

Vincent, whose dreams still transported him to places he would never see, was perhaps the only one who felt jealous of his brother. He knew his brother understood, although nothing was said. Devin had privately told him many stories he told no one else – both because he knew Vincent would not repeat them. Father's blood pressure would skyrocket if he had heard them, just as it had on their first meeting after so long.

Vincent had sensed the affection his brother held for him. That warmed him in a place that had been hollow for over 20 years. The revelation that Devin was Father's son had given that closeness another dimension. Vincent considered himself Father's adopted son, so he and Devin were brothers in a very real sense, just as they had always pretended they were.

On his last night in the tunnels, Devin had sat on the edge the bed they had once shared, uncharacteristically quiet. Then he had looked at Vincent, his face sombre.

"Do you know why I left?"

Vincent had replied with the facts everyone knew.

"You had a terrible quarrel with Father about our fight and the ride on the carousel - and he took away your knife."

"Yeah, but that wasn't all."

"No. You were ashamed too – so ashamed you did not want to face me."

"How did you know that?"

Vincent wordlessly turned and looked up at the pipe conduit carved high in the rock of the opposite wall. Devin looked too, and his mouth twitched.

"Ah. You heard us arguing – the way we used to listen to the council meetings of the adults, hiding up there."

"I just climbed part way up the ladder, but I could hear everything. I knew Father would blame you and I was afraid you would tell Father that you opened the carousel for me. I felt guilty for having wanted it so much – and for enjoying it."

"Why shouldn't you have wanted it? We all enjoyed it! Father was over-protective – probably still is. So you heard what I said ... in anger. I've lived with that ever since. I've honestly never thought of you as a freak, Vincent – not then, not now. It sure shocked the old man speechless, though."

Vincent's voice became almost a whisper. "I feared for you that night when you did not return. What hurt was that you never said goodbye. I searched too, but I knew we would not find you. Deep inside, I knew you were gone, not lost or dead. I missed you – more than you can know."

Devin regarded his brother, and spoke quietly. "I shouldn't have left then, but I was afraid of myself, what I might do. After all, I'd already tried to blame you and hurt you - and I knew you wouldn't have told Father. I found out who did. I felt trapped. I had to leave, but then I couldn't return. It really did get easier to stay away, but I couldn't forget this place. I missed you too, wondered how you were, what life was like for you.

Devin smiled ruefully then. "We had fun, though, didn't we?"

"Yes. Father only knows what we got caught at."

They had laughed and hugged. Devin knew he would always be welcome now, and that was important. When he left the next morning through Catherine's threshold, Vincent knew he would come again ... sometime.

Devin had also disclosed how he had left the tunnels without being seen, all those years ago. He had done it before and counted on Vincent to say nothing. Father hadn't known about that either.

It was odd that Devin had chosen to return to them via the Park culvert entrance. He certainly knew many others he could have used. Had Devin really thought he could pry open that solid door? Perhaps he had counted on being seen or heard by a sentry. He had not known about the outside lever, of course. Mouse had installed that, thereby eliminating the need to have a permanent sentry nearby to let people in. They now had a patrol post, behind the wall of the T-junction.

If Catherine had not told him of Devin's previous visit, Vincent would not have been waiting and his brother might have left without anyone the wiser. That was too awful to think about.

The coincidence of Devin working in Catherine's office did not escape him either. It almost seemed as if the Fates were meddling in the lives of those around him. His own life had changed with Catherine, of course, but the change was mostly internal. He now understood a great deal more about the world he hid from. Perhaps that was why the Fates meddled.

Devin had been gone a week, to no one knew where, when word came. Catherine had brought down a postcard and started the pipes chattering again. He had agreed to keep in better contact with his family through her – perhaps even by telephone. Vincent suspected Devin would not maintain a regular correspondence, but the intent was appreciated.

Alaska! Devin had mailed the card from Anchorage. He had said little, even in the miniscule amount of space allowed. He had sounded happy and had sent his love to Father. That had made Father smile. Unfortunately, no one could reply because his brother had no permanent address. At least he was on the same continent – for now.

What was it like to travel with only what could be carried in suitcase? Vincent knew he would find that life difficult. He loved to return to his chamber and his eclectic collection of books and memorabilia. Those items were more than reminders of a world he would never see. They were reminders of the richness of his own world, which allowed him to live the life he did. Each item was precious to him, the subject of dreams, stories he told no one. He and Devin were alike. They both dreamed dreams – but Devin had been able to live his.

Catherine was large in Vincent's life now, and Devin had accepted that as only a brother could. His brother had always been realistic and accepting. Vincent had missed having someone to talk to late at night, until Catherine had welcomed him onto her balcony. She and Devin were much alike – they did not judge and they felt deeply.

Vincent regarded the moon. It was an immense comfort to know his brother was probably also seeing that moon, wherever he was. Devin would return, he was sure, and probably when least expected.

Turmoil seemed to dog Devin – that much had been obvious from his tales. Perhaps neither of them was fated to have a simple, uneventful life. They had both taken a giant first step down that path, although decades apart. There was no going back – but there were no regrets for either of them.

At least they now had stories to tell each other.