

Dreams

by Angie

*"Have you any dreams you'd like to sell?"
- Fleetwood Mac*

Devin had read the letter from his father, briefly describing the loss of Catherine, and then given it to Charles without comment. His friend's reaction, was in character. With tears running down his face, the big man had simply said, "You have to go back, Devin."

Devin had nodded, puzzled. "You don't want to come," he stated. Charles was never vague about such things.

"No. Catherine saved my life. I want to remember her as she was. I can't ..." He stopped, unable to continue.

Devin merely nodded, moved to give the big man a hug, then considered what he would need for a trip back to New York from their Appalachian cabin. Charles could look after himself for the short time he would be away. They were well-supplied and the cabin on its few acres was private and warm, with telephone and electricity.

"I will write a letter, Dev," Charles said, obviously having been thinking too. He sat down at their desk and painstakingly wrote a letter for the Mirror Pool ceremony the letter stated would occur in a few days.

Devin gave Charles privacy, but every time he looked at him, Charles face was scrunched in sorrow and concentration. No doubt there would be more than a few tears marking the letter. The big man finished, put it in an envelope and handed it gravely to Devin.

Devin then sat down to write his own, his eyes burning as he wrote, the first letter he had ever contributed to such a ceremony. It was cathartic and made him think about his own life, as much as Catherine's. She had been a special woman. How was Vincent coping? Father had not said, merely that the ceremony had been delayed as Vincent sought and found his son, their son, his and Catherine's. That alone made Devin raise his eyebrows. Why had no one written to him about this?

He left the next day, driving their old van with its tinted windows down the winding roads until he could reach a major highway and head north. This late in the year, they were lucky; there had not been much snow and a road trip was possible. He hoped the weather held. The roads were quiet and often he saw no other cars for long distances. Once he got to New York, a Helper with tunnel access would park the van.

Devin had not been on the highway long when he turned on the radio, unwilling to let the silence bore him into highway hypnosis. AM radio was as banal as ever and he tuned it out, while being grateful for the sound of human voices in his subconscious.

However, as he approached New York, a song played that made him suddenly pay attention, and threw him back to his early years as a teenager, after he had left the tunnels. He turned up the volume of the quiet song, remembering.

"Now here you go again, you say you want your freedom..."

Freedom. He had indeed wanted that, at 14, full of himself and determined to 'make it', to do what he liked, without strictures from Father. Those were hard years, those first ones away from the tunnels, ones where he'd had countless jobs, most illegal for a boy his age, but as long as he worked, he got paid – and they were instructive.

He had been, he had to admit it, homesick on occasion for that 'hole in the ground'. He missed the community, Vincent, and even Father. His chosen life did not allow for friends, and any teamwork was by necessity, not choice. He had few possessions, basically the clothes he wore and a money belt where he kept what he earned and didn't have to spend to survive. He lived in men's shelters, moving often, always afraid some Helper would spot him. He eventually made enough money to take a bus and leave New York for other places, and could then be less vigilant.

There was one particularly tough period in the south, where he'd had some regrets and introspection forced upon him. But he had not returned to the tunnels. That would have been admitting defeat.

That was when he'd first heard the song, Fleetwood Mac's '*Dreams*', and it had put into words what his brain had not wanted to admit. It had become a personal theme for him.

*"It's only right that you should play the way you feel it
But listen carefully to the sound of your loneliness"*

The song reminded him of all the good times with Vincent, their adventures in the tunnels, their deep friendship. As the song said, the rhythm of the tunnels was a palpable thing, almost like a heartbeat – even when it was driving him mad with its restrictions.

*"Like a heartbeat drives you mad
In the stillness of remembering what you had
And what you lost and what you had and what you lost"*

But he had conquered that period, found better and better jobs, travelled to other countries with other dreaming young men, made good money. But he had never had long-lasting friendships, male or female, deliberately. He was not the type to settle down. He envied Vincent his relationship with Catherine, even while knowing it was not something he wanted for himself.

His two trips to the tunnels had been revelations. He had discovered all that he loved – and hated – about them. The old man had not changed markedly, but the admission that he was his natural father had given Devin something he had not known he lacked – roots, a parent. Would he have originally left the tunnels had he known? He didn't have an answer to that - it was too long ago. He made a point of having no regrets, while never burning bridges - but he couldn't prevent himself from speculating.

The song played on and Devin drove, remembering.

*"Oh, thunder only happens when it's raining
Players only love you when they're playing"*

Say women they will come and they will go

When the rain washes you clean, you'll know, you'll know"

He reached New York early in the morning, having decided to drive through the night rather than stop in a motel. He wasn't tired and he had to admit he was eager to see Vincent, to hear the news; what had not been in the letter, but tantalized by its absence.

The Helper was awake, fortunately, and quietly took the van keys and opened up the tunnel entry. Devin found a pipe and a piece of rod just inside the entry and quickly tapped out a short message – his name and where he was. He started the long walk to the home tunnels, the song still humming silently in his head.

"Now here I go again, I see the crystal visions

I keep my visions to myself"

Before he reached the Whispering Gallery bridge, Vincent met him, embraced him without a word and held him at arms length to look at him.

"Are you well, Devin. How is Charles?"

"We're both fine, brother. How's the old man? I got his letter, but it seems to have omitted a lot of news."

Vincent didn't reply right away, and Devin noticed that his expression was neutral. He looked tired and possibly sleepless too. He seemed to be considering how to answer, which was also unusual. His voice when he did answer, at last, sounded forced.

"Father, as you know, likes to be the prime storyteller, but this one is mine. I'll tell you everything."

Devin said nothing as they walked to the home tunnels. Not surprisingly, Vincent led him directly to Father's chamber. The old man was still in his dressing gown and pyjamas, drinking tea and working away at some toast and jam. He looked up when Devin appeared in the doorway, preceding Vincent.

"Devin!"

"Don't get up, Pop." Devin moved to him and bent over to give him a hug. They remained thus for a while, Vincent looking on.

"Join me for some breakfast," Father invited, as Devin pulled away.

Devin nodded and sat on the other side of the table, while his father poured tea into two more cups; he'd been expecting them. Well, of course. The tunnel pipes were efficient.

Vincent sat down beside him, saying nothing. Devin shifted in his chair a little and took a sip of tea he really didn't want. He decided to be blunt.

"What happened?"

Father frowned and seemed about to say something. Vincent waved a hand however, then sighed. Without further ado, he recited the tale, curtly and flatly.

"Catherine was kidnapped by a man named Gabriel, who had corrupted the New York District Attorney. I spent months looking for her. Gabriel murdered her and took our child. I tried to find him, and finally did so with the help of a police investigator. I rescued our son and Gabriel was killed."

Devin found himself momentarily at a loss for words. He looked between Father and Vincent, seeing nothing to help him there. Both looked stony-faced and tense.

"Why didn't you tell me?" he asked finally, it being the only safe, but obvious question.

"What could you have done?" Vincent responded bluntly. "Gabriel was very dangerous. He sent a killer here to our home. I killed him, but not before he killed two of our sentries. It brought me no closer to my son and we were all in danger. Without Diana's help, there would have been no hope. She found out where Gabriel lived and I let myself be captured so that I could rescue my son."

Devin was sure there was a still great deal more to this story, but decided to stick to essentials.

"Why did this man want Catherine?"

Vincent looked down. "At first, just because she had some information he wanted. But when he captured her, he discovered she was pregnant with my child. He had seen me before because I almost rescued Catherine not long after he kidnapped her. He wanted my child."

"And you couldn't find her?"

"No. Our bond had been severed. I didn't know she had been pregnant until she told me as she died in my arms. I had followed a heartbeat – which apparently was that of our child. I was too late to save her."

"We plan to have the Mirror Pool ceremony the day after tomorrow, early in the afternoon," Father broke in. "Thank you for coming, Devin."

"Charles insisted on it. He gave me a letter to burn."

"How is Charles?"

Devin didn't argue the change of topic. "Happy. Our cabin looks over a wooded area with a large clearing. He sits for hours in the window, watching animals walk through that open space. He's healthy, has learned to cook, and reads. He's also taught himself to paint in watercolours. He's pretty good, if I'm any judge."

"And you, Devin, how are you faring? Have you any plans?" Father looked at him expectantly.

Devin took a few moments to reply, wryly remembering the words to the song, and in no doubt at all about why he was being asked. He might as well be 14 again, as far as Father was concerned.

"Now here you go again, you say you want your freedom

Well, who am I to keep you down?"

"These days I keep my visions to myself," he replied, smiling slightly at his use of yet another line of the song. "Charles and I get along very well, and I enjoy his company. I've never had much time for friendship since I left here. He's intelligent, and eager to learn. I find I like being his mentor – the first time I've ever been one. He's a loyal, honest, affectionate man. I think he's made me a better person."

Vincent studied his brother, amazed. He had known that Devin's rescue of Charles was motivated by his anger at injustice, just as Catherine's was in her work. She had taken on Charles' legal status and filed the paperwork that made Devin his legal guardian, at his request. And then they had left. Truly, he had not expected Devin to stay with the disabled man. When he looked at Father, he looked equally taken aback.

Devin, catching the look between Vincent and his Father, chuckled.

"I know, you can't believe this is me. I think it's because I've never been needed by anyone as much as I am by Charles. It's ... satisfying, because he asks for nothing, expects nothing. I just want to give him the best life possible. He gives me much more than I give him. He gets joy out of simple things – sunrises, sunsets, the flash of a rabbit's cotton tail. He makes me see what I have missed for so long, because I seldom stayed long anywhere, and I was always busy trying to make it. He's teaching me to live as part of the world, right where we are, rather than seeking out some new adventure."

"I see," Father said finally. "Well, I must get dressed and begin the day's work."

Vincent stood up and put his hand on Devin's shoulder.

"Come and meet Jacob," he suggested.

Devin nodded and followed him back to his chamber. Vincent went directly to an old wooden cradle and looked down at the baby sleeping there. For the first time since he had arrived, Devin saw Vincent's face soften and relax. He had not realized how emotionless his brother's face had become until he saw the difference now. He moved to stand beside Vincent and regarded the child. He was not sure what he had expected, but the tiny boy, who bore none of his father's features, except his blue eyes and blonde hair, was a surprise.

"He's beautiful," Devin commented.

Vincent looked at him, his eyes full. "That's what Catherine told me too."

Devin moved to hug his brother and they embraced for some time. Devin stroked the large back and Vincent sagged into his arms, relaxing. Having done this often with Charles, Devin merely held on tighter.

"Some days, I don't know how I can continue," Vincent murmured into Devin's shoulder.

"Then I look at our son, and I know I must, for him. He cannot be left an orphan while I have breath in my body."

Devin pulled back a little, and looked at his brother, whose mouth drooped in the deep sadness that obviously defined his life.

"I can't imagine what it must be like to lose someone so close," Devin finally admitted. "But Jacob is the future. You must show him more than sadness. He will need you to."

"He already does," Vincent admitted. "We have a bond, different to the one I had with Catherine, because he's a baby, but it grows almost daily. He knows me, and he feels what I feel. I found him because he was in distress with Gabriel. It's very difficult to block my despair, Devin, but I must find a way."

Devin nodded. This was far outside his expertise, but he could offer himself as someone Vincent could talk to. He suspected that had been lacking in his brother's life. He seemed to be holding a lot inside.

And talk is what they did, spending the rest of the day doing it, initially in Vincent's chamber. They weren't interrupted – itself an indication of the way things were.

Then the sentries reported a vicious rain storm Above, and Devin coaxed Vincent to see it with him. The tunnels sometimes felt claustrophobic to Devin, so a trip up to fresh air was welcome. Consequently, they went to the Park culvert and stood looking through the curtain of rain, which was so heavy it blocked all but dim shadows of the trees nearby. They might have been the only people in the world.

The song came back to him again and he quoted it softly.

"Thunder only happens when it's raining"

When the rain washes you clean, you'll know, you'll know."

Vincent's sharp ears heard him and he was immediately curious, as he was about any quotation he didn't know.

"What was that, Devin?"

"An old song by Fleetwood Mac," Devin answered ruefully. "The one that gave me solace often during my years away - when even I felt lonely."

He quoted the lyrics, then hummed the tune.

"Do you suppose you could get that song for me?" Vincent asked.

Devin nodded. "I'm sure I can. Do you have a cassette tape player?"

"Yes. Catherine gave us one. It probably needs batteries. The children often use it."

"I'll go above tomorrow and find it for you."

"Thank you."

The next day, Devin walked into a music shop and easily found the *'Rumors'* album with the song, but that wasn't exactly what he wanted. He talked to the technician in the shop and had him copy the song onto a new tape, as often as would fit, paying extra for secrecy and silence. Vincent could now play it over and over – as he himself had in his car, when it was released on 8-track. He bought the album as well, just in case other songs interested his brother. Finally, he bought a pair of headphones, out of deference to other tunnel-dwellers, just in case there were none. He also bought enough batteries to last months.

He presented the tape to Vincent the next day, and his brother loaded it into the boom box, replaced the batteries ... but then hesitated to push the 'play' button. He looked at the headphones, but was clearly not keen on using them.

"Let's go to the Chamber of the Falls," Vincent suggested, so they carried the player there and made themselves comfortable. The song played from the speakers, with the sound of the waterfall in the background, but somehow it wasn't diminished, but rather enhanced.

When Devin looked at Vincent after the first play, his eyes were closed and his face relaxed.

"It's beautiful," he whispered. "How did you know I would need this"? He was being rhetorical of course, because he knew Devin had no such design.

There being no answer to that, Devin said the only thing he could. "I needed it too, brother, for many of those early years. It was always there waiting for me. Now you have it too."

They let it play one, repeat, repeat again.

The day of the Mirror Pool ceremony, Devin dropped in on Vincent in the morning, to find him laying on his bed, the headphones on, eyes closed, but clearly not asleep. He didn't disturb him, but when Vincent didn't appear for lunch, Devin loaded a tray with his own and Vincent's meal and carried it to his brother's chamber.

Vincent was sitting at his table writing in his journal. Devin hesitated, then announced himself before moving in further.

Vincent turned and smiled at him – which so surprised Devin, he almost dropped the tray.

"Come in, Devin."

Devin placed the tray on a patch of table that was less cluttered and fairly flat with books, and

sat down beside Vincent.

"You didn't come to lunch, so I brought it to you."

"Thank you – and thank you also for the song, Devin. I had not realized how simple life can be when it's put into song. Of course, poetry often does that too."

They ate their lunch in companionable silence.

"Don't forget the ceremony in a little while," Devin reminded him.

Vincent started. Clearly, he had lost track of both the time and the day. He shook his head in disgust.

"Thank you for the reminder. I have been distracted lately, and Jacob has been a bit fretful. But see, today he is quiet, perhaps because I am. I was rejoicing in this, forgetting my obligations."

"I think I can face the ceremony now, Devin. I have you to thank for that. I've written letters to burn for myself and Jacob, and my journal is no longer being neglected."

Devin nodded. "It will be hard on everyone, but the letter burning is a great idea. How did that come about?"

Vincent got a wry look. "We had the plague in the tunnels and one of our children, one Catherine and I had rescued, died. I had rescued a sailor from the harbour, not realizing he was infected. A lot of people got sick before Father was able to get it under control. The brother of the child who died wanted to write a letter for the Mirror Pool ceremony, so we all decided to do it, and burn them. It became a tradition – a lovely one."

A voice called from the doorway, and both men looked around.

"Diana! Come in," Vincent called.

The woman who entered was unexpected, and Devin was momentarily speechless. Fortunately, Vincent took over.

"This is my brother Devin, Diana."

She approached him and gave him a smile.

"Pleased to meet you," she said.

The call to assemble at the Mirror Pool sounded over the pipes, and Vincent went to gather his son from his cradle.

"You're the investigator who helped Vincent find Jacob?" Devin asked, hardly believing this tall, stunning redhead worked for the police. "Did you know Catherine?"

"Yes ... and no ... although I feel I knew her. And the investigation certainly went in a direction I had never imagined."

She looked over at Vincent, a look Devin had no trouble interpreting.

'*Oho*,' he thought, but said nothing. Vincent, when he returned holding Jacob, seemed oblivious.

"We must go," he said and led the way to the Mirror Pool.

The ceremony was sombre, but it was daytime Above, so the Pool glittered with the sunlight shining down the chimney.

'*Crystal visions*,' Devin thought, and watched Vincent, and then noticed that Diana was watching him too.

After they all quietly added their letters to the burning brazier, they stepped back and Father moved to stand in front of them, his back to the Mirror Pool. He spoke into the hush.

"We are here, my friends and family, to pay tribute to a woman we all knew, and all cherished, each in our own way.

"Catherine was a woman of the world Above, but she shared herself and her generosity with all of us. She loved Vincent, and when she disappeared, now nine months ago, Vincent searched for her. He was unable to locate her until just before her death, but in time he found what he searched for - his and Catherine's son, baby Jacob. We have much to be thankful for, even as we mourn.

"There is not much more to be said. We must all remember Catherine in our own way, and in our own time. As long as we do so, she will always be in our hearts. Her son is her legacy, as is the love that Vincent holds for her.

"At this time, I cannot think of a better tribute to Catherine than an extract from *The Lover's Tale*, by Alfred Lord Tennyson

*"Love's arms were wreathed about the neck of Hope,
And Hope kiss'd Love, and Love drew in her breath
In that close kiss and drank her whisper'd tales.
They said that Love would die when Hope was gone.
And Love mourn'd long, and sorrow'd after Hope;
At last she sought out Memory, and they trod
The same old paths where Love had walked with Hope,
And Memory fed the soul of Love with tears."*

Devin felt tears running down his face, and he noticed many others were also silently weeping. Vincent had his head slightly bowed, his son was touching his father's face, as if puzzled by the tears. Diana he noticed, had her head bowed. But then she had never met Catherine. Memory would not help her as it would the rest of them.

There was silence for several minutes, then Father looked over at William. The big cook cleared his throat and announced that they was some wine and snacks in the dining room, if anyone wished to indulge.

That brightened up the atmosphere a little and the group gradually filed out of the chamber and made their way to the dining hall.

Vincent caught Devin's shoulder though, and beckoned him to come. They made their way back to Vincent's chamber. Diana followed them, but excused herself by saying she had work to do, and left them. Devin, watched her go, puzzled. Vincent put little Jacob back in his cradle, then hesitated.

"He needs a bath - and so do I," he remarked, the first words he had uttered since before the ceremony.

"I wouldn't mind one myself," Devin admitted. A soak in the bathing chamber Vincent shared with Father was always a treat.

Vincent nodded and the three of them were relaxing in the warm waters minutes later. The baby was happily gurgling and splashing on the upper step, while the two men sat lower, the

water almost reaching their necks.

Devin looked at his brother. "She loves you."

Vincent sighed and looked over at him. "I know, Devin. There is nothing I can do about that. Diana saved my life, my son's, and this world, when she killed Gabriel, but I do not love her. I cannot."

"Cannot, or will not?"

Vincent sighed again. "Gratitude is a poor substitute for love, Devin. Not every new woman who enters my life is destined to become my soulmate."

Still feeling the effects of that old pop song, Devin quoted it quietly.

*"In the stillness of remembering what you had
And what you lost and what you had and what you lost"*

Vincent nodded. "Yes. That song makes it so much easier to accept what I thought I never could. What I thought I would never survive. My loss ... of Catherine."

Devin nodded. "It has that effect, even on me, although for different reasons."

Baby Jacob behind them suddenly got fretful and Vincent turned to him. They bathed him together, then left him wrapped in a towel on the floor while they bathed themselves. Drying was a longer process, but required no dialogue. They returned to Vincent's chamber and Jacob was inserted into a onesie and placed in his cradle. Vincent kissed his son, then moved to get into his night clothes. It wasn't late, but he had no desire to put on heavy clothing again. He was relaxed.

Devin merely wrapped himself in two old towels and sat as close to the brazier as he could. He didn't want to leave, just yet. He felt there was more to say, that Vincent wasn't quite finished.

Vincent looked over at his brother and handed him a long robe. Devin gratefully put it on. He spoke softly, the baby now being asleep.

"Devin, I appreciate everyone's concern, but ... it is hard to bear. They regard me as a paradox. What will I do now? What did I do before Catherine? I existed, I survived, I worked. Now I have my son. What more do I need? He is Catherine's and he needs me as much as I need him.

Devin nodded, but vocalized the obvious.

"You are not what you were before Catherine, Vincent. You found love, lost it, have a son you fathered. Those things change a person. They only want you to be happy."

Vincent looked down at his hands. He spoke softly but emphatically. "I have NOT lost Catherine. I will never lose her. She is in my heart, still, even though I will never see her again. And what is happiness, Devin? I was happy with her, happier perhaps than I have ever been. I have those memories still."

Devin suspected he was avoiding thinking about what most men would, at this stage. So he was blunt.

"Don't you want to love, to make love, again, Vincent"?

"I barely remember what happened to create Jacob, and that much not until after Catherine died. I carry my guilt over not realizing what she wanted to tell me that last time I saw her, Devin. I cannot ... do that again. Possibly, it is part of my difference, that dampening of the

bond we had. I cannot know. I do not wish to be intimate.

"It might be rough, this self-imposed celibacy, Vincent."

"I do not think so. Diana does not interest me ... that way." He sighed deeply, struggling to make his brother understand.

"I knew from the moment I found Catherine, that she was ... special. The bond was there from the beginning. I always felt her presence, wherever she was, even though she did not understand what that meant, not at first.

"I do not have that sense of Diana. I do not know when she is coming to visit, or what she feels. I feel no more sense of her than I do of you, or anyone else in my life. My 'gift', as Father calls it, only works when I am close to her, as with everyone else. Without that extra closeness, Devin, we can only be friends, no matter what she may wish."

"Have you told her?"

"No, but I do not encourage closeness, and I have visited her rarely, only to invite her here. She will always be welcome here."

"*And have you any dreams you'd like to sell?*" Devin quoted, from the song.

"My dreams have value only to me. I wish for my son to grow up strong. That is all."

"But what about dreams for yourself, Vincent? Don't you have any?"

"I do not enjoy my dreams, Devin, but I have accepted them. My '*dreams of loneliness*', are not something I can share."

Devin nodded, but said no more. Clearly, there was nothing more to discuss, as far as Vincent was concerned. But someone else did need to understand.

"I'd better get dressed," he said, as Vincent moved to the table, clearly wishing to write in his journal. Devin couldn't have had a more obvious dismissal.

That night, Devin got directions to Diana's from Mouse and rang her front doorbell. She answered quickly and let him in. Not so busy, then, he mused, as the elevator clunked and ground its way to the top.

She opened the gate for him and beckoned him inside. He looked around quickly, saw a neat, clean and comfortable living space; an old couch, a battered chest, a table, and a computer with a noticeboard nearby, on which were scattered a few photos. Nothing that marked her as a detective, or revealed her personality. There were no knickknacks, no books, but there was a boombox and some scattered tapes. He wondered what she listened to.

"Welcome," she said to him, not missing at all that he was examining her place. "To what do I owe the honour of this visit?"

Devin looked at her and smiled. "The honour is mine, Diana. Vincent told me he owes his life and that of his son and the tunnel world to you. I'm not a regular visitor, but I'm grateful. For Vincent's sake."

"Would you like a beer?" Diana asked.

He nodded and followed her to the kitchen, then took the beer from her, popping it open. Then he stood, uncertain how to begin.

"Out with it," she suggested.

He looked at her in surprise and she gave him a wry grin.

"I have a little empathetic talent myself," she confessed. "It helps me with my work – not so much with men."

Devin sighed and leaned against the window.

"You and Vincent are more alike than different," he stated.

"But, that is where it ends," she finished for him. "Did you think I didn't realize? It's hard to accept, knowing what he had with Catherine, what he still has, after her death."

"I saw the way you looked at him," Devin responded bluntly.

Diana blushed slightly and dropped her eyes.

"I can't explain the attraction, Devin. It's just there, as he is there. I helped him, kept his secrets, because I knew I had to, that there really was no choice. I didn't expect to find him so ... attractive. No wonder Catherine loved him."

Devin nodded. He remembered Lisa, who had played on Vincent's emotions, and apparently had done more than that before she left. Other women in the tunnel world treated him like a brother, a friend, no matter how much they may have wished otherwise. Vincent made his own friends, and everyone respected that.

How to explain? He thought of the song again. Would it help?

"Do you remember Fleetwood Mac's '*Dreams*'?"

Diana started at the non sequitur, but nodded. "Think I have it here someplace." She went over to the cabinet and rooted through a disarray of tapes, grunting when she finally located it.

"Here," she wave it at him, and inserted it into the boombox. The mellow tune and sultry voice filled the apartment.

Diana returned to him and looked at him questioningly.

Devin gave it to her straight. "Vincent has been listening to this, avidly. I heard it on the radio on my way to New York, and bought him the tape. He and I listened to it once in the Chamber of the Falls, and he has played it for himself since then. It helped him, as it once helped me when I was lonely."

Diana said nothing for long moments, listening.

"It's only right that you should play the way you feel it/ But listen carefully to the sound of your loneliness....," she whispered.

'Say women they will come and they will go '

"That's it, isn't it?" she commented, looking at Devin. "He'll never be mine."

Devin nodded. "I'm sorry. Vincent is stubborn, but this is something else. He needs that connection, that bond, as he calls it. It's either there, or it isn't, according to him. There have been other women in his life, but only one made it into his heart."

They talked of other things then, and eventually ended up sitting on her couch, drinking the rest of her beer.

Devin related some of his life of wandering '*south of Oz and north of Shangri-la*', pleased to have an audience. He seldom told these stories; Vincent was too fascinated, and Charles had little understanding of the world, having seen, or read about, so little of it. The old man was skeptical where he wasn't outright disapproving. Diana at least understood his need to travel, see new places - and enjoyed hearing about them.

Diana for her part, came to realize how much of the world she knew no better than Vincent - and a whole lot more she wished she knew less well, but to which her career had introduced her. She spoke of some of that to Devin, and he understood, the way no other man had, even

Vincent.

They talked long into the night, but near midnight Devin rose and stretched.

"I have to leave, Diana. I must return home tomorrow. I worry about Charles. But you're invited to visit us any time you wish. I love New York, but neither of us could live here again. Nor in the tunnels, come to that. We both need open air and sunshine."

He gave her their address and phone number, and she thanked him for the pleasant evening, and even promised to visit, sometime.

Devin gave her a smile that said he would expect her when he saw her, gave her a brotherly hug, and left down the clanking elevator.

On the way Devin gave himself a virtual pat on the back. This visit he had caused no strife, no '*thunder*' at all, and perhaps he had helped two people. Charles would enjoy hearing of it; he preferred stories about people to those about exotic places. Devin had to admit that people were what mattered most to him as well.

Diana didn't go to bed for a while, just sat thinking. What did she really want? Would Vincent have ever satisfied her completely, even if he were willing to go further? What would it be like living with a man who didn't love you, and could not be seen in daylight? How had Catherine handled the latter? She knew they had met on her balcony, often. He had told her that and that her apartment was now occupied by Catherine's friend Jenny. Peter Alcott had arranged the sale, as executor of her estate, knowing Catherine's wishes. Vincent had not returned there, he said. Jenny was apparently not yet a 'helper'.

So much had changed in the tunnel community. She had not realized the extent of it because she had not been a part of the earlier history, and her role, while important, had come of necessity. In that sense, she was a lot like Devin. He had been part of Vincent's early years, but had left for 20 years. It was true that you could not go home again. Devin had become a man of the world, while Vincent was still trapped below ground. Catherine had 'brought him into the light', he said – but that was more a state of mind, than reality.

Vincent obviously believed that true love only happened once. She was no judge. She had been very fond of Mark, her last boyfriend, but he had complained she kept too much of herself secret. She knew it, and could do nothing about it. She had said little to Vincent about herself either. Had he picked up on that? Probably. She had told Devin more than she had ever told anyone. Funny about that.

Diana sighed. She liked Devin and would like to see him again, and meet Charles. Could there be more, given their so-different lifestyles? Should she even give it a try? *Why put up barriers?* she asked herself, finally. Vincent had met Catherine, and somehow they had made it work.

She really had no idea what to do. The song's final words came back to her.

'You will know, you'll know ...'

It was all anyone could hope for, she decided. Nothing more. She sighed one last time and went to bed.

Down in the tunnel world, Devin smiled as he climbed into bed.

'It's only right that you should play the way you feel it,' he recited silently to himself.

Yeah, sometimes he got it right.

END

*Fleetwood Mac - Dreams
February 4, 1977*

[Verse 1]

*Now here you go again, you say you want your freedom
Well, who am I to keep you down?
It's only right that you should play the way you feel it
But listen carefully to the sound of your loneliness*

[Pre-Chorus]

*Like a heartbeat drives you mad
In the stillness of remembering what you had
And what you lost and what you had and what you lost*

[Chorus]

*Oh, thunder only happens when it's raining
Players only love you when they're playing
Say women they will come and they will go
When the rain washes you clean, you'll know, you'll know*

[Bridge]

[Verse 2]

*Now here I go again, I see the crystal visions
I keep my visions to myself
It's only me who wants to wrap around your dreams
And have you any dreams you'd like to sell?
Dreams of loneliness*

[Pre-Chorus]

*Like a heartbeat drives you mad
In the stillness of remembering what you had
And what you lost and what you had, oh, what you lost*

[Chorus]

*Thunder only happens when it's raining
Players only love you when they're playing
Women they will come and they will go
When the rain washes you clean, you'll know
Oh, thunder only happens when it's raining
Players only love you when they're playing
Say women they will come and they will go
When the rain washes you clean, you'll know, you'll know*

[Outro]

You will know, you'll know