

The Toy Carousel

Episode expansion of: **Promises of Someday**

Judith Nolan



Brother Devin,

You left our home tonight, for the second time. But, this time, we were all there to bid farewell to Devin Wells. You are Father's son, and my true brother. I will miss you, and all your tales, tall and true. But, you said you need to seek a new adventure. I can understand that.

I sit here in my chamber now, alone, thankful for your return. When Catherine showed me the cover of the legal brief you prepared for her, we both laughed. You wrote, "Yes, I'm a fraud. But, I'm a good fraud." I felt I never truly knew you, until that moment.

You have always been honest with yourself, whatever mask you chose to wear. Twenty years ago, you knew you could no longer stay among us. I must salute the strength it took for you to leave us, behind. Leave me, behind.

I found your note, tonight, where you'd hidden it, all those years ago. In all those lost years, I never wished to look again at that toy carousel. So, after you left, your note went undiscovered. I regret that, now. But I was so sure that toy was the cause of your disappearance. I hated even the memory of it. And you seem to have forgotten the very existence of your message, since you never mentioned it when you returned to us. So, a tragic misunderstanding was compounded by time and circumstances.

All those years ago, your fate was unknown to us. We thought you'd died. You quoted Twain, saying, 'The reports of my death have been greatly exaggerated.' I am so grateful they were.

We all spent fruitless weeks and months looking for you. Father was deeply afraid you were lost in the maze, or had fallen into the Abyss. At times his deepening concern for you was almost too hard to watch.

In the end, we were forced to give up searching for you, ultimately finding no answers or any trace of you. Your disappearance left us all with more questions than answers.

Your coming back to us, to my mind, took more courage than it did to leave. You could have stayed away forever, knowing how much Father blamed you for Grace's death. It was a tragedy, and every time he looked at you growing into her very image, it hurt him deeply to know he could not save the woman he had loved. The very woman who gave him this new life, when he felt he'd lost everything. He blamed himself, more than anyone, but he could never express that pain.

Now, you know the truth about your father. And how sorry he is for not being able to share his grief with you. It would have comforted you both immensely.

We will remain here, waiting. For the next time you decide to return home. This time, you can be very sure of a warm welcome...

Always, Brother mine.

Always...

Vincent