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Judith Nolan



“I love you because no two snowflakes are alike, and it is possible, if you stand tippy-toe, to walk between the raindrops.”

Nikki Giovanni



Vincent opened the doors leading to the balcony of his family’s apartment. As with Catherine’s old place, it too overlooked Central Park. But this apartment occupied the entire top floor of Elliot’s Burch’s latest building project, offering sweeping views out over the city. It has been designed with his good friend in mind.

The balcony gave easy access to the roof, and its numerous avenues of escape, if they should ever be needed. The sub-basement possessed a carefully concealed entrance to the world Below. It seemed as if Elliot had thought of everything, in his thorough designing of the place. It had been his wedding anniversary gift for them.

But it was none of these thoughtful considerations that had attracted Vincent’s attention to the world beyond the cosy warmth of the penthouse. Closing the doors at his back, he pulled his cloak closer around him. The chill of the tunnels was nothing compared to the

cold air of a New York City night.

He inhaled the sharp taste of the stillness, savouring it. Somewhere in the darkness, a clock struck the midnight hour, declaring yet another Halloween weekend would soon begin.

Vincent shook his head. So many years had passed since their very first one, the beginning of everything that had come to be. The night when he'd walked the city's streets as other men, with a beautiful companion on his arm, and no one had looked twice. Well, not at him. Catherine had been a vision of loveliness that night, as she had every Samhain night since.

They'd eaten hot dogs, then bought ice cream from the various stalls. Afterwards, they had taken a long carriage ride through the park. It had been a night he knew he would never forget. He wished then that it could have gone on, forever.

Now, the thought of venturing down into the busy streets once more, sent his pulse racing with anticipation. Sleep had been elusive, as he waited in the darkness, contemplating his one night of unique freedom.

Vincent leaned on the balcony railing, looking down into the park, far below.

“When anything is possible and nothing is quite as it seems...” he whispered Brigit's words from so long ago.

“Vincent, what on earth are you doing out here? It's freezing. Come back inside.”

“I couldn't sleep.”

Vincent turned to consider his wife. Huddled into a thick winter coat, Catherine turned the collar up against the cold, as she moved to his side.

“Nor could I...” she admitted, honestly. “It was on that long-ago night that you truly saw my city for the first time. It was one of the happiest nights of my life. I wanted to show you everything. I wished it would never end.”

“It was a magical night.” Vincent nodded, as he turned his face up to the dark sky.

“There are no stars tonight. It feels like rain.”

Catherine followed his gaze. “If I didn’t know better, I would swear it’s going to snow soon. It’s certainly cold enough.”

“In October?” Vincent queried, with raised brows. “Is it even possible?”

“Over these last years, I have come to believe in all the impossibilities of life. I discount nothing.” Catherine reached to take his arm between her hands, leaning her cheek against his shoulder. “A Halloween snow storm seems such a small miracle. It will make the city truly beautiful. A winter playground, just for us.”

“For us...” Vincent drew her closer, tucking her beneath the warm shelter of his great cloak. “Will you walk the streets with me, alone once more, beloved?”

It was their one night to be alone, a date they made long ago when they became parents for the first time. There would be the usual family gathering of children and grandchildren in the halls, Below. Father would tell his time-honoured stories, and then another chaperoned generation of eager tunnel children would go trick or treating, while their elders indulged themselves in the Great Hall with a convivial party that would last into the small hours.

Somewhere within all this bonhomie and party fever, Vincent and Catherine would slip away to walk the city, and marvel anew at its many beauties. They would walk until dawn, ending their journey as always, on the park bench beneath the 59th Street Bridge.

There they would exchange whispered vows for the year ahead, and their shared kiss would be as sweetly romantic as the first time. Afterwards, they would walk home arm in arm, through the dawn. No longer was there any need to part, one from the other.

“You know I would go anywhere with you, my love. Always...” Catherine pressed a kiss to his wrist, where it rested beneath his chin. “We could go into the park and make snow angels, if the snow is deep enough. I haven’t done that for years.”

“Snow angels...I would like that.” Vincent smiled. “But, you know our children will shake their heads at such foolishness. We are too old for such things.”

Catherine waved a dismissing hand. “If we tell them. We are allowed some secrets.” She chuckled, threading her fingers through the still-tawny fall of her husband’s mane. “Besides, what do we have to lose, beyond our dignity?”

“Have I told you lately, how much I love you, Mrs Wells?”

“Not since this morning, when you woke me with your kiss...” Catherine turned her face up to his, standing on tiptoe, eager to renew shimmering links of their shared connection once more...

*"Snow was falling,
so much like stars filling the dark trees
that one could easily imagine
its reason for being was nothing more
than prettiness."*

Mary Oliver

