

# Happy Birthday, Father

Judith Nolan



“Are we there yet?” Father worried.

“Soon...” Vincent soothed, his guiding hand on the blindfold hiding the surprise birthday party from his parent’s view.

“I remember saying, no party.” Father’s ears pricked at the sounds of breathing in his chamber. “I can hear people.”

“You actually said, ‘don’t bother me with trifles’,” Vincent countered.

“Semantics,” Father grumbled half-heartedly. “I don’t need reminding I’m ninety-three.”

“We didn’t bother you.” Vincent leaned closer. “Please act surprised. For the children.”

“For the children...” Father nodded.

The babble of voices suddenly shouting ‘*Surprise!*’ made an old man very happy. Who didn’t enjoy a party?

# Memories

Judith Nolan



“If you could change one past decision you made, Jacob. What would it be?”

“I would have stood aside. Allowed Vincent to love you, Catherine. Without fear or reservation. There was so much wasted time.”

“You did what you thought was best for us. As any parent would.”

“I should have trusted my son’s instincts over my own. He knew from the beginning you meant us no harm. I am so sorry, my dear. Please forgive an old man his folly.”

“There is nothing to forgive. Well, maybe, since that’s now six games I’ve won. I believe that’s check-mate.”

“Again...?”

# To Life...

## Judith Nolan



*“You've gotta dance like there's nobody watching,*

*Love like you'll never be hurt,*

*Sing like there's nobody listening,*

*And live like it's heaven on earth."*

*~ William W. Purkey*

Jacob read the quotation slowly. *Have I danced like no-one was watching?* Beneath the desk his arthritic toes tapped out a jig. Once he'd loved to dance. *Now...* he sighed over the creaking of his ancient bones.

*Love like I've never been hurt?* Margaret, his old heart whispered. He'd forgiven her long ago. The flooding memories were bitter-sweet.

*Sing like there's nobody listening...* People often said he shouldn't sing. He laughed, before warbling a cautious note. They were all right, of course!

*And live like it's heaven on earth...* every day. Until his eyes finally closed and he found Margaret waiting for him...

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