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Fort Vancouver Regional Libraries

9/30/2011

Imagined Ink Entry

Daddy's Girl

"I brought you flowers, Daddy," Jane said tenderly.

Her father made no reply. It had been a little over a year since he had spoken; he obviously wasn't inclined to start talking now. Jane, however, was immune to his deep silence, for throughout the months she had adjusted and became accustomed to his infinite stillness.

"They're the blue ones, you know, the ones Mommy used to grow in front of the house," she said quietly. "You always loved those flowers," she added. Jane hesitated before setting the vivid flowers down before him.

Her father was unaffected.

The warm spring sun was beginning to set on the park where she sat with him, matching his silence. Jane was twenty-four years old, but she always felt as if she were still only a little girl whenever she was with her father. And he seemed as if he was still in his prime, able to carry her in his arms the way he used to.

Those times had faded now. Very little was left of him besides her memories of who he once was. He was a shadow, and the sun was setting.

Jane swept aside a few locks of her long blond hair which had fallen into her face. In doing this she subtly wiped away hidden tears.

“Father,” she began before halting. “Jack has asked me to marry him.” Jane bit her lip.

Silence was his reply.

“We’ve known each other since high school,” she continued, “and I know you’ve always liked him. We’ll be very happy together.”

Silence.

“Are you happy?” she wavered.

Still, soft silence.

Jane took a deep breath and averted her eyes from him. Emotions burned inside of her, yet it seemed like there was nothing for her to say. She watched the sun lowering itself for awhile. When half of it had disappeared, she turned her attentions back to her father.

“I miss you, Daddy,” she whispered. All of her frustrations melted at the sight of him again. He seemed so close to her, but at the same time he may as well have been as far away as the setting sun. “Maybe- maybe I’ll bring Jack to visit you soon,” she told him with the slightest of smiles.

His silence was now calming to her. That never changed about him; the things he did which irritated her the most always made her feel safe at other times. So once more they sat in tranquil silence.

The sun was almost completely set when Jane finally rose to her feet. It was getting late, and her mother expected her to stop by the house for her final night in town. Tomorrow she would leave her hometown and return to college and to life and to Jack.

“I feel terrible leaving you here so soon, but you know how Mommy is about punctuality, though,” Jane told her father. She stared at him for a little while before turning to leave, but she had only taken a few steps away from him when she turned back impulsively.

“Do you love me?” she burst out.

Her father made no answer even though she stared at him with moist eyes. In her head she pretended to hear him replying, but she knew it wasn't true. He had said nothing, and he never would.

“Goodbye, Daddy,” Jane said gently. She knew he loved her; she didn't have to hear it. Somehow satisfied with his silence she turned and walked away.

It hurt to leave. It always did. However, the sun had set, and Jane knew that visiting hours at the cemetery were now over.