



The Promise of You

by Daniel Martine

Carolyn: How long have we known each other now, Bobby? Twenty...twenty five years? Since we were in Miss Moosebrugger's first grade class together. Remember? We saw each other nearly every day all the way up through high school. And if we didn't see each other for some reason, we'd talk on the phone. For hours. You were my bestest friend, Bobby. The best ever.

[Beat]

And you were definitely my first ever boyfriend. You gave me my first kiss. We were twelve and we thought it would be forever. And even when we occasionally dated other people during high school, I always knew you were the One. Even when you broke up with me after our Senior Prom. It was just supposed to be that way. Everyone thought so..."it was written in the stars", you said. Carolyn finally stands.

[She paces as she reminisces.]

Remember the night you said that? At Epton's Pond? That was the night we first made love together. The moon was gi-normous and so blue...and it was so peaceful and isolated...

[Chuckles at the memory.]

...except for that obnoxiously loud bullfrog. Remember him? But what I remember most about that night was the quiet, the stillness, the feeling that...that we were the only people left on earth...

The stars were out and it seemed like they were winking directly at us, twinkling because we were so perfect together. And that's when you said our love was "written in the stars". It was the most beautiful thing I'd ever heard. Her voice catches in her throat as she remembers that beautiful moment.

Still is. But somehow it all changed when we graduated. You went away to college, and I went to a school close to home. And suddenly, we hardly saw each other anymore. I called, and wanted to visit you, but you were always so busy with school and other things, I guess. I tried to understand, but it was hard, Bobby. It's hard to love somebody so long and so much, and then, all of sudden that person you love with all your heart is not there anymore. It was kind of like you died and I didn't get invited to the funeral.

[Carolyn stops pacing for a moment. A pregnant pause.]

Then, one day, out of the blue, five years later, you call to tell me that you're getting married. Married. And you wanted to invite me to the wedding, because I was your "best" friend, and you wanted to share "your happiness" with me. And silly me...I went.

[Beat]

Watching you marry a complete stranger was the most difficult thing I've ever had to do. It was like getting slammed in the gut with a sledgehammer. I could barely breathe watching you walk down that aisle with her.

[Carolyn stops talking for a moment, to compose herself.]

Eventually...years actually...I got over it, sort of.

Time heals all wounds, they say. So, over time, I had boyfriends ...lovers...even a couple of longish relationships. But I never felt about them the way I felt about you, Bobby. Not even close. Because lurking in the background, like an invisible 900 pound gorilla, was the promise of you. The promise that our love was truly written in the stars, just like you said. Stupid me...I believed you.

[Carolyn begins pacing again.]

Well, we're all grown up now, and I realize that things people say to each other when they're young and in love, no matter how heartfelt, are sometimes just fairy tales. Beautiful lies.

[Carolyn stops dead in her tracks now. She looks Bobby straight in the eye.]

But here's the thing, Bobby. Time doesn't heal all wounds. Not really. It only numbs them to the point that sometimes we can forget about them for awhile. That's all. And now, here you are again. In the flesh, all this time later. You've come back into my life, telling me you still love me...have always loved me. That we can finally be together like it says in the stars. Just like that! But the heart's a curious thing, Bobby. It's not just a collection of valves, and pumps, and hoses, pumping blood through our bodies. It's so much more than that. It's a repository for a lifetime of feelings...a memory bank of emotional traumas and triumphs buried deep inside of you. Out of sight, out of mind maybe, but never forgotten.

[Long beat.]

That's where our love is, Bobby. Buried deep. And the only thing it remembers now... is the promise of you.