

Promises I Made and Meant and Broke

Promises I Made and Meant and Broke begins with the narrator caught in the aftermath of Lark's tragic passing. The narrator, still reeling from the emotional upheaval, is visited by an ambulance driver, someone who had been familiar from past encounters. This brief, almost comforting moment of recognition is short-lived as the police arrive, immediately casting suspicion on the narrator and questioning his involvement in the events surrounding Lark's death. The interrogation grows intense as they demand details about his relationship with Lark, asking about the timeline of the events and any prior disputes that may have led to this tragedy. Remaining calm amidst the accusatory atmosphere, the narrator insists on his happiness with Lark, providing an alibi that revolves around searching for a lost dog. The conversation shifts when the mention of Kellan arises, a man with ties to the dark past, and Werryck's name also surfaces, prompting further suspicion from the detectives. The mention of these figures stirs the tension even more, as the detectives suspect there's something being withheld from them.

As the investigation concludes for the night, the lead investigator leaves a warning for the narrator, suggesting that he may be harboring a fugitive in Kellan, and implying that this will have serious legal consequences. After the investigator departs, Maudie, a loyal friend, offers her solace and a place for the narrator to stay, trying to shield him from the crushing weight of the aftermath. However, despite her comfort and the kindness of other friends, the narrator finds himself spiraling into deep isolation, unable to escape the suffocating grip of grief. His troubled nights are filled with images of Lark and the feeling that no matter how much time passes, he can't shake the sorrow that fills the house, where every object speaks to her absence. In an attempt to focus on something tangible, the narrator finds a bloodied dog, Vixen, and nurses her back to health. Yet, despite the brief distraction that Vixen offers, the narrator's sorrow remains unchanged, and he withdraws further from those who try to offer help, unable to face the overwhelming emotions that engulf him.

The house, filled with Lark's belongings, becomes both a sanctuary and a reminder of everything that has been lost. The personal items left behind serve as a painful testament to the life they shared, and yet, the narrator can't seem to find comfort in them. It becomes clear that no matter how hard he tries to hold on to the memory of Lark, her absence is a constant, gnawing presence. At one point, the narrator finds himself in the attic, where remnants of Kellan's life are uncovered. This discovery brings forth a flood of painful memories, resurfacing unresolved issues from the past. Despite the internal chaos, the narrator tries to soothe himself with the use of a mask and regulator, a symbolic gesture that yields no real peace. As the seasons shift from summer to fall, the narrator withdraws even further, seeking solace in a nearby woodlot where nature offers a brief reprieve from his emotional distress. Despite the temporary calm, the memories of Lark continue to haunt him, and one day, a vivid recollection of a boat trip they had taken together resurfaces in his mind. This triggers an urgent need to visit the boat shed, where the boat, once an emblem of their adventures, now stands abandoned and gathering dust. The sight of the boat acts as a poignant reminder of a time lost to the passage of time, a symbol of promises made, memories shared, and the weight of loss that the narrator is still struggling to bear. The journey to the boat shed marks a turning point in the narrator's emotional journey, as the boat—once a source of connection and hope—now serves as a stark reminder of the promises that were made, the ones that were meant to be kept, and ultimately, those that were broken.