

IT FITS!

by Amber James

Catherine was so angry and frustrated, Vincent was, as usual, resigned to the facts.

"I'm sorry Catherine ... but"

"I know... you warned me... you said you thought it'd be too big!"

"And it is....," he replied sadly.

"There must be a way, Vincent... there has to be!"

He sighed saying nothing, but the resignation in his eyes said it all.

"I'm not giving up Vincent... not yet... come on we've got to try again!"

Settling himself back into position, Vincent began to push gently, but firmly. Catherine pushed back, silently praying that, this time, he would manage to get it in. Her hopes were dashed.

"No!" she insisted. "I won't accept that it's impossible."

Reaching out, Vincent stroked the sweat dampened hair back from her face. "Catherine, you are exhausted. You have put so much effort into this... all to no avail."

"So have you... and I'm not giving up! There has to be a way... Perhaps if we tried a different position... it might help... what do you think?"

"I will try anything... you know I will... but I fear it will not be possible."

Despite them changing positions, more than once, nothing was achieved. Catherine was getting desperate. "We need some sort of... er... lubricant Vincent."

"What do you suggest... this is all very new to me."

She thought for a moment or two. "I know... petroleum jelly... do you have any?"

"I believe Father has some... should I go and ask?"

"Yes please... but for God's sake don't tell him what we want it for."

Vincent just smiled and gave her that 'As if I would' look. Replacing the clothing he had removed only half an hour earlier, he disappeared through the doorway. A few minutes later he returned brandishing the jar.

Catherine beamed then took the jar from him. "This should help," she stated.

"I hope so!" Vincent enthused, as he began to remove the clothing he had been forced to replace for his journey to Father's chamber. Leaving Catherine to apply the lubricant as liberally as she felt was necessary, he waited. After all, she had far more experience than he had in these matters, in fact this was something he had never done before.

She worked quickly and expertly. "Right... now if you position yourself just there..."

He did as he was asked.

"And I get here...Are you ready?" Catherine was treated to a twinkle of hope from the blue eyes and a nod which told her he wanted to accomplish this as much as she did.

"OK," she said, readying herself for the force she expected. "Now!" With a slow, but steady determination he pushed. Catherine gasped as, suddenly, the tip slid inside. "YES!" She shouted. "It's in... only just, but it's definitely in!"

"Oh yes.. .definitely." Vincent replied, delighted at their success.

"Now we've got to get the rest in, " she agonized, sweat pouring from her.

"This is taking far too much out of you... do you truly believe it will be worth all this effort?"

"Vincent, I promise you it will... and I'm OK," she assured him, a little out of breath. He raised a questioning eyebrow. "All right." She conceded "We'll take a break... but don't you dare let it slip out."

"I won't."

Once Catherine had regained her breath, she was impatient to continue. "Now I've got my breath back... we can try again." She braced herself, "Now Vincent!" One hard push, and it slid home. "WOW!" Catherine exclaimed "It's in... we've done it!"

"It would appear that we have." Vincent replied in delight.

"I knew we could."

"I am sorry I doubted Catherine... now what do we do?" Giving him a puzzled glance, she whispered "You really haven't done this before, have you?"

"No." He looked a little embarrassed by the admission.

"Right... now when we move... whatever happens... don't let it slip out. I don't think I could go through that again... not if I'm going to have enough energy left to continue."

I understand... I never believed this was possible... that this was an experience we would ever share. This gift is so wonderful... I would do nothing to spoil it. So what do we do next... tell me."

Catherine sighed, not expecting to have to give such detailed instructions. Surely he'd seen pictures in books, even if he'd had no first hand experience. But now she knew she would have to guide him every step of the way.

"Well.... now we've got the base of the Christmas tree into the stand, we have to get the tree upright, the lights on, then the decorations. I still can't believe you've never had a proper Christmas tree Below."

"I can assure you we have not... Catherine this will be a wonderful surprise for everyone. Your generosity leaves me stunned as always."

The following morning, the gasps of amazement and the look of wonder on the children's faces was more than payment enough. Vincent and Catherine were very satisfied, and no-one ever knew of their struggle the night before.

END