

In Others Words ...

by Angie

Poetry is when an emotion has found its thought and the thought has found words.

- Robert Frost

Vincent often used poetry to say what he could not – dared not - say, especially to Catherine. This anniversary, he decided, he must be more bold, say more, do more. But old habits were hard to break. He needed inspiration - and found it leafing through an old anthology of 19th Century poems.

He found a poem by a relatively obscure poet, one he had seldom read. The poem 'nailed it' – as Mouse would say.

A few nights later, the evening before their anniversary, Vincent and Catherine were sitting on a blanket on her balcony. It was chilly, but not yet uncomfortably so. They were relaxed, looking forward to a meal that William was preparing for them the following night, and anticipating their personal celebration that same evening.

“I have something to read to you, Catherine,” Vincent remarked, once they had settled and Catherine was leaning against his shoulder.

“Of course you do,” Catherine smiled up at him. This was their usual preamble and she loved it. She never failed to enjoy his taste in reading material.

Vincent felt her anticipation and lifted the small volume of poetry from the pocket of his cloak.

He looked up at the night sky, which was clear with a few stars twinkling. The moon was nowhere to be seen. It was a night for dreamers.

Opening the book, he began to read.

*“From the Desert I come to thee
On a stallion shod with fire;
And the winds are left behind
In the speed of my desire.
Under thy window I stand,
And the midnight hears my cry:
I love thee, I love but thee,
With a love that shall not die
Till the sun grows cold,
And the stars are old,
And the leaves of the Judgment Book Unfold!”*

Catherine stirred beside him and Vincent stopped reading. She said nothing, so he continued.

*Look from thy window and see
My passion and my pain;
I lie on the sands below,
And I faint in thy disdain.
Let the night-winds touch thy brow
With the heat of my burning sigh,
And melt thee to hear the vow
Of a love that shall not die
Till the sun grows cold,
And the stars are old,
And the leaves of the Judgment Book Unfold!*

Catherine now felt warm against him and Vincent sensed both her love for him ... and something like passion held in check. She had clearly not expected such a poem, but there was no doubt that she liked it.

*My steps are nightly driven,
By the fever in my breast,
To hear from thy lattice breathed
The word that shall give me rest.
Open the door of thy heart,
And open thy chamber door,
And my kisses shall teach thy lips
The love that shall fade no more
Till the sun grows cold,
And the stars are old,
And the leaves of the Judgment Book Unfold!*

Catherine sighed. "That was wonderful, Vincent."

She looked up at him and shifted a little to do so. What she saw must have pleased her, for she smiled.

Vincent hesitated only a moment, before bending down to touch his lips to hers. He moved slowly away, felt her excitement, and repeated the action, this time giving her a proper kiss.

Who'd have thought that a man born to Quakers would have such insight?

Vincent sighed and gathered Catherine closer. Tomorrow night there would be more fever to allay, and they would again explore their love, this time with the sense that others had been there before them and understood. He found comfort in that.

END

* BEDOUIN SONG

by: Bayard Taylor - Quaker, poet, literary critic, translator, diplomat, travel writer

Born in Pennsylvania January 11, 1825

Died in Berlin, German Empire, December 19, 1878