

Not Alone, Nor Need Be

by Angie

Vincent sat comfortably on his bed – the bed he thought he would never use again – and watched Catherine's face as she read the Wordsworth poem to him.

She had chosen it – who else had more right to read it? - yet, it spoke to him too, far too deeply to express.

He had almost lost Catherine because he had tried to be noble minded about her having a future without him. What he had not foreseen was the utter despair that decision had caused him – and then became compounded when he was captured. It was almost inevitable that he would fall afoul of something in that state of mind. It could have been worse – he could have been injured in any of several ways. He had almost no memory of those nights and he certainly was not thinking clearly or allowing his inbuilt senses to warn him.

He should not have gone above at all. Father could have told him that - and had on other occasions. Why did roaming the Park at night help his state of mind? He could have just as easily gone down to the nameless river and meditated, far more safely and to greater effect.

He was fortunate that Father had worried when he did not return that fateful night, and that he had asked for Catherine's help. And that Catherine had done her own sleuthing and discovered what had happened to him. The two scientists had been careless. What if they had not left evidence of his capture?

Yes, he was fortunate, in other ways too. It did not seem that Catherine would now go to Rhode Island, although he had not asked her. She would have been gone by now if not for her search for him. How would she explain that to her boss? He felt a moment's remorse at that thought, but could not be sorry about the reason for it.

Catherine read the poem and glanced over at Vincent over the book now and again. Always he was gazing at her with such an intensity that she felt it to her bones. He had never looked at her that way before. What was he thinking? What did he want? Would he ask for it?

When she finished, she sat silently, looking at him. His expression has not changed. If any other man had looked at her that way, she would have either run away as fast as she could, or be preparing herself for a passionate interlude.

She had a pretty good idea that he was doing some soul-searching, but wondered if he would share his thoughts with her. It was as if he meant to carve her into his brain forever. Of course, she was not going to Rhode Island now, and he must know that.

She took a deep breath and waited. One thing she had learned about Vincent was that he seldom acted or talked without consideration.

“Love, faithful love, recalled thee to my mind”, Vincent whispered

“How could I forget thee, Through what power”, she replied.

Vincent sighed, but did not drop his eyes from her face.

“Catherine ... I must apologize. I am not as strong as I thought I was. I could not let you go and I could not bring myself to admit it to myself, much less say so to you.”

Catherine smiled. “Vincent, until Father told me you were lost, I had thought I was strong too. I now know that there is no one I want to be separated from less than you. The thought that

you were in danger, that I might not be in time to save you, that I might never see you again – it was unbearable, Vincent. I would happily have killed both those men to save you. I almost did.”

“Can we survive without each other, Catherine?” Vincent asked.

Catherine considered her words carefully.

“Perhaps, but why should we? Neither of us is alone now. We have each other.”

“Yes,” Vincent sighed.

Catherine smiled at him. It was the response she'd hoped. It was enough - for now.

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