



*We Have Always Withheld  
the Truth from Each Other*

*by Barbara Anderson*



*Dearest Catherine,*

*Tonight, at the park gate, you said, "We've never withheld the truth from each other." Your words continue to echo within the deepest reaches of my soul, haunting me, accusing me, convicting me.*

*I now realize the most terrible of truths, the truth: that we have always withheld the truth from each other. At least, I have always withheld the truth from you.*

*I remember in those first terrible/sweet days together, when you were frightened and healing. Your face was bandaged, and you asked me to be truthful. I promised that I would never withhold the truth from you.*

*But even then, I was withholding the truth, the truth of what I was ... what I am... what I will ALWAYS BE.*

*I justified the deception by telling myself that you had already been through too much, and I didn't want to frighten you further. As long as you couldn't see me with your waking eyes, I realized that I could pretend that I was just like any other man, and I began to wish that somehow it could be true. In those precious days of grace, as we were getting to know each other, I began to dream, that even for someone like me, love might be possible.*

*I know now how much you love me. I can see it in your eyes, I can hear it in your voice, I can feel it so completely from you every moment of every day. Even in your sleep I am aware of how that love warms you.*

*You can't begin to know how the sweetness of your love has filled every broken part of me.*

*But I have no right accepting it from you, because even though I have withheld the truth of what I am from you, I can never keep it from myself.*

*Our dream has been the most beautiful dream I've ever known. But no matter how beautiful it is, it can never change the truth of what I am, and that I was never meant to give love or receive it. I ache to know that our dream is a dream that can never be.*

*There is one truth that I cannot reveal to you, and that is the truth of how completely, how deeply I love you. How I have longed to tell you, to whisper those hallowed words in your ear, to shout them from the rooftops. But I know that if I ever said the words, they would only bind you more completely to me than you already are. I won't be the one to rob you of the life you were meant to have, Catherine.*

*The best thing I can do to show you my love, is to let you go, but I don't have the strength to do it.*

*My weakness, and my selfishness shame me. You deserve better.*

*At the very least, you deserve to know the truth.*

*Forgive me,*

*Vincent*



*Dear Vincent,*

*You left me standing there at the portal alone ... again. You closed the door to me, but even worse, you closed yourself to me.*

*I believe that if you knew the pain it causes, you wouldn't do it... but it's not the first time.*

*What is it, Vincent? Who has hurt you so deeply that you shrink from my touch, from my love? Was it Lisa? You told me she left, because you loved her. Why? How could she? What happened? I find it impossible to understand that your love could ever drive anyone away.*

*I promise you, Vincent, that I would never, could never, shrink from your love. I would welcome it, and cherish it, gratefully... always.*

*How can I convince you of that? How can I reach into your heart and heal this pain? This wound that is so deep and so wide that it keeps us from fully realizing what I know we both dream of? Sometimes, you become so lost in it, that I cannot reach you.*

*You looked so vulnerable, so lost, so alone, standing there in the tunnel, trying to tell me, needing to tell me, but too afraid to fully explain ... unable to even look at me. Your fear and your pain filled that space and nearly sucked the oxygen from the tunnel.*

*What is it that you're so afraid of, Vincent? Do you believe you might tell me something that would frighten me, or change the way I feel about you? How can I convince you that there is nothing in this world that could ever do that?*

*I love you. I LOVE YOU, Vincent, and all that you are. How can you think, after all this time that you are not worthy of that love? After everything you have done for me. After all you have risked for me. After all you have been to me? How?*

*Please forgive me if I have ever given you a reason to doubt. I know there have been times that I have.*

*Tonight, I said that "We have never withheld the truth from each other." That was unfair of me to say. I'm sorry. I'm sitting here at my dressing table, as I have so many times in the past year, looking at a stack of letters filled with all the 'truths' that I have withheld from you.*

*I've poured my heart out to you in these letters, from the very beginning. In them I tell you everything ... everything I wish I could say to you directly, everything I wish we could be to each other. But whenever I try to explain to you the depth of my feelings, something stops me.*

*It's fear. Pure, unadulterated, stark staring, FEAR.*

*My instincts scream to me, to keep these feelings from you, at least as much as I can, considering the bond we share. I'm so afraid that if I were ever to speak of how deeply I love you, that it would destroy the beautiful, fragile dream we have built together, and you would send me away.*

*I don't know if I could survive it if you did. I'm not sure if my heart could even continue to beat if I ever lost you, Vincent. The thought alone fills me with such pain that I can barely breathe. I know in the deepest part of who I am, that we are meant to be together... truly and completely together. Perhaps it was always meant to be so.*

*Do you believe in soulmates, Vincent? Because I have come to believe that you are mine.*

*At the moment, I can't see how we will ever find our way.*

*Though you have never said the words, I know that you love me. You say it, every time you whisper my name, every time you hold me in your arms, every time you climb to my balcony, every time you risk your life to save mine.*

*Whatever it is you are keeping from me, I want to hear it. But it's your truth to tell. I'll be here waiting for you, whenever you're ready.*

*Please, please, trust me with your truth.*

*Always your,*

*Catherine*



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