

Out of the Darkness (Vincent's Letter to Catherine)

by Michaela Buzsaki Struchova

Dear Catherine,

Father (and you) said I should be resting, and I am trying, but sleep is still evading me. Vivid images and black shadows of what might have been are still haunting me, and I cannot help but think:

You, darkness... I used to love you more than all the fires that fence in the world... And after the horrific night three days ago, I still do, for out of that darkness, a light arose, allowing me to see and save the one I love the most in the whole world...

The darkness truly pulls in everything. People are often afraid of it, like you are, Catherine, for they think it will imprison them in its grasp and make them feel lost within it. But to me, the darkness gives me protection, comfort, the feeling of safety. Only in darkness, can we admire the moonlight or the twinkling stars. Only in darkness, can we see the candlelight dance, making the eyes of our beloved shine brighter than a diamond...

I know how you felt at death's door, Catherine; I stood at it with you that night. And no matter what I do or think, I cannot drive away the cold, that sudden excruciating feeling of loss when I thought you were crossing to the other side... The white light was calling you, reaching for you with its merciless hands. And yet, by some miracle, I managed to pull you back from it. Even the angels must have seen how much I need you here on Earth...

After running across the city, my legs were deserting me; I could barely breathe, for my lungs were burning as if on fire. But feeling you go was like a knife going through me - so sudden, so painful, so... unimaginable. There was nothing in the world that could have prevented me from trying to save you. We can listen to our reason, but the heart always knows differently - and mostly better. I followed my heart, along with my instinct, and the sweetest reward was holding you in my arms alive and safe again.

Catherine... How dear that name is to me... Every time my lips say it, it feels like praying. And praying I was on that night, more than ever before in my life, speaking your name in my mind to guide me to you. Could you hear it? I dare to hope you did, for just before you opened your eyes to me, when I finally held you in my arms, in my mind I heard an echo of your voice calling my name...

Was it our bond that had the power to bring you back to me? Or was it my despair and terror of losing you, forcing me to follow you even to the edge of doom? In the end, I believe it was all of those, but mostly, it was the thing that always brings us together, whatever happens and wherever we are - our love...

I am sitting here and writing these words, almost oblivious to the pain caused by my broken rib. A mere discomfort like that is the price I am more than happy to pay for knowing that you walk in this world alive and safe.

There is only one thing that burdens my heart. When I finally faced our enemy down at the lake, when he said those poisonous words to me and tried to convince me I was too late... You would say I did what I had to do, but, Catherine, for the first time in my life, I did not regret it... Thinking about it now, I feel shame and guilt. But not until I had returned from you, after it was over that night, have I started feeling remorse for what I did.

Does it make me less human in your eyes? Maybe I should not have mentioned it to you, but we never withheld the truth from each other, and I

always cherished your will to know my feelings and understand them. And so, it is with my never-fading trust in you that I share this thought with you, hoping that like so many times before, you will try to understand and not judge....

It is so peaceful tonight, and despite my remorse over what I did, a much stronger feeling prevails in my heart. You, Catherine, are the sole reason for the existence of that feeling. And as I am searching for the right words to express everything that it encompasses, as always before, I can think of no more perfect word than "blessed"... For love is a blessing, greater than any other we will ever know, and far more powerful than we might ever understand...

As always, my last thought before I fall asleep tonight will belong to you, Catherine. My heart is finally at peace, hoping that yours is, too, and that in our dreams, they will meet again as one...

Vincent