

Becoming the Ocean

by Michaela Buzsaki Struchova



Catherine was sitting on her balcony that evening. She was trying to focus on the book of classical poetry in her hands. Her mind stubbornly refused to focus on the words on the paper, though. Why hadn't he come? She had been tapping on the pipe for almost an hour in the basement of her apartment building, but to no avail. Growing fear was nagging at her more insistently, despite her desperate effort to fight it.

What if it's true and that's why he doesn't want to come?

Frustrated, she glanced at the headline on the front of the New York Day newspaper.

SUBWAY SLASHER - PSYCHOPATH OR SAVIOR?

No, it couldn't be! The Vincent she knew was a kind, gentle and usually non-violent person, who struck only in self-defence or protecting someone in need. How well did she truly know him, though? The heart was telling her one thing, but it conflicted with her reason. The claw marks on the photos of the victims she saw earlier that day spoke more than clearly, and yet...

She sighed and tried focusing on the book again. However, her eyelids were getting heavier, and the book in her hands slowly slipped into her lap. Not even a minute later, still sitting on the wrought-iron chair, Catherine fell asleep.

The first thing she saw when opening her eyes was Vincent sitting on the ledge of the balcony half-wall.

“You came!” Catherine exclaimed with a beaming smile, immediately rose from her chair and embraced him tightly as if she hadn’t seen him for years. “You have no idea how much I needed to see you!”

Her smile faded, though when she noticed that Vincent not only didn’t say anything but didn’t even return her embrace - something was amiss. She pulled back from him, looking curiously into his eyes.

“Vincent... What’s wrong?” she asked.

That was when she noticed how cold and dark Vincent’s eyes were - nothing like his usual warm, gentle look. The next moment, they turned almost black and with a snarl, he exposed his fangs.

Catherine’s eyes widened in shock, and fear gripped her just a second before Vincent did - he grabbed at her arms and his snarls gained on intensity.

“No!” she cried with sudden terror. But it seemed that Vincent didn’t or couldn’t hear her, for the snarls turned into roars. He didn’t let her go; his grasp got even tighter, almost painful.

With force, he pushed her back to her chair, and the last thing Catherine saw before she screamed was Vincent’s large fangs showing in full view. His roar was deafening, and she screamed in horror when he approached her and...

Catherine woke up with a muted scream, but opening her eyes, she realised it was only a dream. A nightmare, a mere product of her too vivid imagination. Or was it foreboding?

She looked up when something warm reached her cheeks - the sun was rising. Without realising it, Catherine had slept the whole night in the chair on her balcony. She stood up, shivering, and wrapped herself tighter in her night robe. It was still cold that time of year, especially at night. Her neck was stiff and the shivering didn’t stop. Grabbing the book of poetry on the little table, she walked to the French door and entered her apartment, closing the door behind her. The newspaper with the disturbing headline remained forgotten on the balcony table.

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It was already late evening when Catherine entered the intricate web of tunnels below her apartment building. After her conversation with the cleaning lady saved by the slasher, she couldn’t stand by anymore. The lady’s description of her saviour resembled Vincent too much - the knowledge of it frightened Catherine even more.

Her heart was telling her to trust Vincent, to believe in the goodness she saw in him from the beginning, the goodness and his correct judgement of each situation. And yet, the circumstances surrounding the subway attacks had an overwhelming feel to them, confusing her even more. She still knew him so little... There was no more time to waste - the conversation was inevitable.

When Catherine started roaming the tunnels, the corridors seemed familiar to her. Only after a few minutes of walking, though, she couldn't recognise the tunnels and open spaces anymore. Her confusion, combined with the dire need to find Vincent, was slowly replaced by panic, rising within her with each step into the unknown. She still wanted to meet him, but the way resembled the current situation between them - complicated and uncertain; a wasteland, full of cracks from draught, only waiting to shift beneath her feet and swallow her.

Vincent, please... I need to talk to you...

After walking further for about an hour, fatigue suddenly came over her, and unable to move on (she had no idea where), Catherine sat down on the dusty, cold ground and leaned against the rocky tunnel wall. Closing her eyes, she exhaled loudly, and although she refused to give up, despair grabbed her with its feisty fingers. She was in such a hurry when she set out for the journey that she forgot to take a warmer jacket, and now, the cold and damp underground was making her shiver.

When she suddenly heard the soft sound of footsteps, she knew who they belonged to even without opening her eyes. Still, her head immediately turned in the sound's direction, and the sight next to her made her gasp.

"Vincent..." She whispered incredulously, yet relieved.

Without a word, he quickly knelt to her and carefully wrapped a warm blanket around her shoulders.

"We can't stay here; you need to warm up," he said quietly, and his eyes were averting her curious look more than she would have liked.

Vincent helped her get up. Then, walking in front of her, he lead her to the safety and warmth of his chamber.

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Not a word was spoken between them on the way. Catherine was too tired and cold to talk while walking; Vincent was deep in his thoughts, knowing why she came and what she wanted to know, but waiting for a more private and comfortable environment.

When they entered the space Catherine had fond memories of, Vincent finally looked at her. The sadness in his eyes made her heart almost stop.

"I'll make you some tea to warm up," he stated listlessly. "Sit down, please." He pointed at his bed.

Catherine walked over to the bed she had spent ten days in and sat down. So many memories filled her head all at once, bombarding her from everywhere she looked: Vincent sitting next to

her and reading to her; the smell of the simple but delicious food he had fed her with; the warm feel of the cup of herb tea he had served her several times a day; the pleasant, comforting scent of his clothes and his own specific, masculine scent when he had leant over her to pull her pillows into a more comfortable position...

She shut her eyes for a moment and sighed. When she opened them again, Vincent was pouring hot water into a vintage teapot with a gentle, floral decor. Catherine's eyes were following his arms. His graceful moves beguiled her senses, but something in the back of her mind was telling her to remain vigilant. I don't want to feel like this... I'm not afraid of him! she almost screamed.

As if Vincent had heard her, he turned around with a cup of tea in his hand. One look at her confirmed what he felt coming through their bond. I frighten her...

He walked the few steps over to her, passing her the tea, lowering his eyes.

"It will warm and pick you up." His gravelly voice was almost inaudible.

"Thank you," Catherine whispered, her widened eyes fixed on his face, waiting for more words.

Vincent retreated again, widening her personal space probably more than she subconsciously desired. Finally, he stopped and observed her face from a distance. When Catherine met his eyes, she shivered involuntarily - it was as if she was looking through thick glass, protecting whatever was behind it.

"I felt your nearness," he finally spoke again. "And your anxiety... On my way to you, I met one of our children, a boy called Kipper. He told me he saw you wondering in the tunnels."

"But I haven't..." Catherine started, confused, pulling tighter the hand-sewn shawl that was now around her shoulders.

"You haven't seen him, I know; he was hiding."

A hint of a smile changed Vincent's distant expression for a brief moment. However, it vanished as soon as it appeared.

"It's a good thing we found you, Catherine."

Her confusion was palpable. "I thought I'd remember... I must have gotten turned around somehow. Everything seems so different... strange..."

"The ways change, Catherine. For every safe road, there are a hundred paths that lead only to darkness."

A sudden shiver made the cup in her hands shake on its saucer. Without proper thinking, she put it aside on the bed and got up, trying to cover the anxiety that still had a grip on her. But her widened eyes and folded arms in a protective posture spoke too clearly to Vincent to ignore it, even if he hadn't felt it already. Unconsciously confirming the fact, she didn't move further.

"I had to come. I had to see you. I was afraid..." Her voice was hesitant.

"I know," Vincent replied softly with an almost inaudible, sad sigh, lowering his eyes. His straight posture hadn't changed in an attempt to maintain some distance - not only the physical one.

"You didn't come. I called." Catherine's eyes were desperate, trying to break through the barrier between them, demanding an explanation. "I banged on the pipes... but you never came..."

"I could feel your fear, Catherine," he explained. "Even now... I frighten you."

Finally, she dared to step closer to him, her eyes full of determination.

"You taught me to face my fears always, Vincent. Tell me..."

His restraint weakened after her words. "What shall I tell you? That I am not this... shadow, this man-monster that you hunt? Must you hear the words before you trust?" His voice stressed every word, attempting to convey the truth to her. "It is not me."

Suddenly, the familiar warmth returned into his deep blue eyes. His features softened as he made a couple of steps towards the confused woman in front of him, speaking gently.

"Catherine... I would never hurt you..."

Involuntarily, she stepped back, and her eyes widened even more. Utterly devastated, Vincent could feel her heart racing. He stepped back, observing her for a moment before walking past her to the other side of his chamber.

Catherine gasped when she turned around to look at him again. All at once, she felt a heavy boulder sitting on her chest. A bitter memory appeared in her mind - the moment when she threw the headlight at Vincent when seeing his face for the first time. My God, all I do is hurting him... I hurt him so bad...

"No, Vincent, no... " The anguish was tearing her apart. "I'm sorry... didn't mean..."

"... to pull away? I know," he stated, feeling as if a knife had just cut through his heart.

He turned away from her again and walked on. However, he stopped after a few steps, raising his hand in frustration, striking at something imaginary in the air. As quick as the frustration came, it disappeared, and a lowered hand and a resigned sigh were all that remained.

"I know your heart, Catherine," he said with a pained voice, his eyes focusing on her from across the chamber, "but sometimes the words that are not spoken are the truest words of all... however much they hurt."

Catherine felt colder with each passing word. "What are you saying?" she asked fearfully.

"We both know what these hands can do, have done. Catherine... If your heart doesn't trust, then no words I speak would help."

Damn, why does truth have to hurt so much? Catherine was unable to reply. Her tongue was bound by invisible chains, her heart tormented by doubts.

Resigned, Vincent picked up his cloak from the chair, swinging it over his arm. "It's time for you to go home," he stated, expecting no reply or opposition.

And there was none. The still widened, scared eyes of the woman he loved so deeply were burning into his, her internal battle between her heart and mind so clearly reflected in them. She remained silent. He walked past her and stopped at the entrance to the chamber. Turning around to look at her, he waited.

Catherine realised any resistance was pointless. If she was not able to open her heart fully and listen to it, there was nothing more Vincent could have done. He was right - this wasn't a matter of whether he did it or not; it was a matter of trust.

Without a word, though hanging her head low, she followed him out of the chamber.

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The same chill of the tunnels, the same walk, the same silence... There is only so much tension, that can be between two people who are at the crossroads between absolute connection or complete separation. Nothing can prepare them for that moment, and nothing can make the decision for either of them.

Catherine found herself desperately wishing for Vincent to talk while they were making their way to the threshold leading to her world. But the man in front of her leading the way just kept on walking wordlessly, looking straight ahead. It seemed as if he was indifferent to whatever was happening behind him. Yet Catherine knew that was not the case, not for the man who was so sensitive to everything around him, especially her. And it was she who caused him deep pain now...

Finally, they stopped at the threshold, both staring into the milky-white stream of light shining down to the basement from above. Catherine dared to look at his face, silently begging Vincent for eye contact so she could feel their connection again. Say something, Vincent, anything... please...

He heard her unspoken plea in his heart, but couldn't give her what she wanted. Not there, not at that moment, not with her being full of confusion, fear and opposing feelings. Forgive me, Catherine, but I cannot fight this battle for you...

It was a terrible struggle for him to not put his arms around her and offer her the consolation she was hoping for. His face was seemingly emotionless, but his eyes betrayed him. Those eyes, that Catherine looked into for the first time, and which burned a deep mark into her heart and soul for life. It was those eyes that now, on such a different occasion, were filled with sadness and pain too deep to speak about out loud. Oh, God, what have I done?...

Vincent's loud sigh broke the unbearable silence between them. He glanced at her one last time, then bowed his head, and with a heavy step, he walked away into the safety of the tunnels.

For a long while, Catherine's eyes stared at the hole in the wall where his cloaked figure had disappeared before, unable to move. Her heart was crying for running after him, asking for forgiveness, but her mind was still struggling with doubts.

"Dammit!" She couldn't help but swear.

Frustrated, she turned on her heel to walk back up to her apartment. Only once she started climbing the ladder she noticed that the shawl Vincent gave her in his chamber was still around her shoulders...

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His chamber felt colder that day. It unexpectedly warmed up Above that day, but it took a little longer for the warmer air to reach the Tunnels. Vincent usually kept the fire in his brazier all day long in winter months, but his recent apathy distracted him from his usual habits well into the late afternoon. Fire, as well as food, were secondary the day after his tense conversation with Catherine. His mind was numbed by melancholy, and try as he might, he was unable to get his head straight.

“William made a special effort with dinner tonight,” Father tried to cheer his son up as they were sitting together at the chessboard in Vincent’s chamber.

“I have no doubts the result will be mouthwatering,” the younger man replied absently, staring at his Queen. His eyes had been fixed on the figure for a great while now.

Father raised his grey eyes to look at the man sitting opposite him. “Vincent, you have to give her time,” he changed the topic gently. “I told you; people up in her world live with that fear every day. They are bound to it by the way they live.”

Vincent finally lifted his piercing blue eyes from the chess figure and looked at his parent.

“I know, Father, that’s all I’ve been doing for days now. I know that it is her heart that has to find the truth and decide, but...” His gravelly voice faded.

“But what?” his parent enquired with interest.

His son abandoned their game, stood up briskly and started pacing. Suddenly, he was afraid to face the possible truth.

“What if she can’t fight her fear?” he breathed painfully.

Father sighed and leaned against the back of his chair. He wasn’t excited about the deep bond his son developed with the woman from Above, but his kind heart prevented him from not feeling sympathy for both young people.

“Then you will have to learn to live your life as before, without her in it,” he stated the naked truth. “No matter how painful that might be.”

Vincent noticed a shadow of some unknown sorrow pass briefly in the older man’s eyes. He exhaled loudly, intending to reply, but words got stuck in his throat.

“How can I ever forget?? I will always feel her!” he questioned the possibility after a while with a strained voice.

“You won’t forget,” Father replied truthfully. “But with time, you will learn that your life still has a meaning, even without her in it.”

The hurtful look in his son’s eyes stung him at heart. *Trust me, Vincent, I know how you feel...*

But at that moment, the lion-man’s distress reached its peak. He grabbed for his cloak and almost ran out of the chamber, leaving his parent to the cold air and sorrowful brooding.

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Catherine was tossing and turning in her bed. It was past midnight, but sleep stubbornly evaded her, reluctant to grant her stressed brain the much-needed rest. Too many confused thoughts, too many emotions were occupying it. On top of that, the air in her apartment felt stifling. She wasn't sure whether it was because of her agitation or the sudden warmer winter weather that hit New York that day.

She got up and walked over to the balcony door. Catherine opened it and closed her eyes, letting the fresh air hit her face. She breathed a sigh of relief. But it was only temporary, for the balcony reminded her of Vincent again.

Returning to the main problem that prevented her from sleeping, she made her way back to the bed, leaving the balcony door half-open. After she laid down and covered herself more out of habit than necessity, she sighed. Stop thinking, Cathy! Let your heart find the truth... Physically and mentally exhausted, she closed her eyes. The curtains were dancing in the winter breeze, casting mysterious shadows on the walls and ceiling, and Catherine finally drifted into the land of dreams.

Darkness... Dreary, heavy blackness all around... A sudden shadow of a dark, hooded figure, turning slowly towards her, changing into flashes of Vincent, roaring at his enemy.

There... the hooded, faceless figure again. Another look at Vincent, this time, speaking peacefully.

"It is not me..."

The hooded figure in the dark again.

The face of the cleaning lady with haunted, widened eyes.

"A terrible angel..."

The face of Jace, after hearing herself speak.

"You've done anything?"

"Not as much as we'd like to..."

The hooded figure, approaching her slowly...

"Not as much as we'd like to..."

... coming to the light, revealing the figure's face...

"Not as much as we'd like to..."

Catherine sat up on her bed, waking up immediately, a bead of sweat running down her neck. Her breathing was heavy, the shock from the realisation obvious.

"You fool..."

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The balcony door in Catherine's bedroom was open again a day later, when she was sitting in her living room early morning, scribbling down some information she was gathering from the pile of law books on her desk. The sun has not even risen yet, but she needed to find a way to prosecute this man...

In the back of her mind, she registered the news on the radio about the latest "rescue" act of the subway slasher last night; with each passing incident, he was becoming a bigger hero to the people travelling by subway every night.

Catherine automatically reached for her coffee cup, only to realise it was empty. Annoyed, she decided to ignore it and continued copying some lines from the book at her hand. She was so engrossed in her work that she almost missed the husky voice speaking from behind the opened balcony door.

"Catherine!"

Her head jerked in that direction, and her heartbeat fastened with light speed. She stood up and walked across the room to the balcony door with only a slight hesitation. When she joined him outside on the balcony, the light and relief in her eyes spoke for her.

"I thought I might never see you again..."

"You have enough fear in your world," Vincent said quietly, with a trace of sadness in his voice, "I could never bring you more."

Unable to physically stay away from him, Catherine eagerly took his hands in hers. "Vincent... Forgive me for doubting you!"

"Catherine... You're right to be afraid," he generously tried to wave off her mistrust from before.

"My heart knows how gentle you are," Catherine said with deep conviction.

Touched by her renewed faith in him, he was still cautious. "Even the gentlest man has a demon locked inside of him."

"Not you!" Her eyes admitted no other truth. "Not a demon..."

Vincent couldn't help but smile a little. However, he quickly came to the reason for his early-morning visit.

"We've seen your vigilante," he started. "He has a secret door from your subways to the older tunnels, the secret tunnels."

"Vincent, if you could show me, I'll go to the police; they'll stake it out!"

He couldn't get swept by her enthusiasm, though. He walked over to the balcony half-wall, leaning against it and looking out into the city lights.

"Catherine, there are a thousand miles of tunnels beneath this city, all of them connected. If the police find his door, they'll search through all of them."

She understood his worry immediately. There had to be another way...

"Then, we'll do it another way, from Above, not Below. I promise you, Vincent, I won't betray your world..." Her eyes were pinned to his face, willing him to show her the way.

Vincent contemplated for a moment, the expression on his face one of incomprehension.

“They hunt for this man as they might hunt for me if they dreamed of my existence. You have your laws and court to tell right from wrong, the police to protect you. We have only ourselves... By what right do I condemn him? Am I so very different?”

Catherine broke the eloquent pause when she put her hand on his arm, making him look at her. “Yes, Vincent... you are.”

The resolve and reflection of her absolute trust in him again undid him. He leaned against the half-wall again and bowed his head in resignation. “Bring me a map...”

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The night was slowly coming to its end when a few boys ran into Father’s study.

“Did you find him?” the patriarch asked.

“No, we didn’t,” Kipper, the youngest of the children replied. “The Abyss is very deep. We searched in the lower tunnels; some of them end at the Abyss in its lower levels. But it can go much deeper; there’s no way anybody could reach the bottom.”

“You’ve done your best, boys,” Vincent said when he joined them only moments later. “Now go to sleep, it’s almost a new day already. But thank you for your help,” he added gratefully.

“No worries, Vincent, anytime. Sometimes it comes handy when we get lost down there,” Zach, the oldest boy, teased his mentor. “Does it mean we don’t need to come to the class this morning?” He raised his eyebrows with hope.

Father felt the urge to laugh, but he controlled himself and let his son handle the situation.

“No, you don’t have to, Zach,” Vincent fulfilled the boy’s secret dream with an amused smile. “But only today.”

“Thanks!” The excitement in the children’s eyes was contagious as they ran out of the chamber one by one.

Vincent shook his head and chuckled. He walked over to his parent, who was sitting at one of his desks with a book in his hands.

“And I always thought they love literature classes with you,” Father remarked with a lighthearted tone in his voice.

“They do, but every child loves a little escape from duties every now and then,” his son replied.

“As you surely remember, Father.” Suggestively, he raised his thick eyebrows in a teasing manner.

Father couldn’t contain the laugh this time. “Yes, I’m afraid I rather do. Remind me never to embarrass myself again by telling others the adventures of my schoolboy days.”

Vincent’s deep chuckle ended the light-hearted part of the conversation.

“Are you sure there is no one else who knows the entry to our part of the Tunnels?” Father asked with concern.

"I am. Jace was the only one who managed to find his way to such a distance," the younger man replied. "But I put extra sentry men on duty tonight, to be on the safe side."

Father nodded, relieved. For a moment, he observed his son with curious eyes. Then he dared a question.

"And... Catherine? Is everything... all right between the two of you?"

Vincent's smile answered for him, but he spoke anyway. "Yes, everything is... all right," he said softly, and Father noticed the little twinkle that had returned to his son's striking blue eyes.

"Good, I'm... glad," Father replied, with a shocking realisation that he truly meant it.

The warmth in his parent's eyes made Vincent lean over to him and kiss the older man's forehead. "Thank you, Father," he whispered before he turned on his heel and walked away.

The man who remained sitting in his vintage chair couldn't help but smile.

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It's not dawn yet; I still have time.

Vincent was silently making his way to Catherine's balcony in the shadows away from the street lamps. His mind was finally getting back into a state of peace, and yet, he was still a bit nervous.

Catherine said she trusts me; there is no more fear in her...

Old habits die hard, though, and he had to stop thinking negatively again. A lifetime of conviction that no woman could ever desire his presence was difficult to chase away.

When he finally landed softly on the balcony floor, he noticed one of the French doors leading to her apartment were ajar. There was a mellow amber light filling the space inside. His sensitive nostrils recognised a pleasant smell of coffee.

"Catherine?" He knocked gently on the glass pane.

Within seconds, the woman he called opened the door fully to welcome him. In her eyes, he saw the relief and felt her heart tremble with joy - of seeing him again.

"Vincent!" Catherine exclaimed and embraced him with such enthusiasm that he had to back off a step. "I'm so glad you're all right... I was up all night," she whispered.

Nothing could have prepared him for such a welcome. He almost forgot to breathe at the feel of her soft body against his solid frame again. But the cut wound he sustained in the brief fight with Jace made him wince and gasp. Catherine pulled away from him and her eyes filled with worry.

"You're hurt!" she stated, and Vincent could feel her anxiety rising.

"Nothing serious," he tried to calm her down with a smile. "Only a small cut wound, Father tended to it. I guess I'm not used to opponents with... claws..."

The image of Vincent facing his physical self was strangely unsettling to both of them, and they just regarded each other for a beat.

It was Catherine who broke the silence then. "What happened?" she asked softly.

A deep sigh escaped her visitor's throat before he answered. "I chased him all the way to the Whispering Gallery. When he saw there was no way out, he tried to fight me. But then, some of the rotten slats on the bridge collapsed under my weight and I almost fell through. I was defenceless."

Vincent paused for a moment, acknowledging Catherine's widened eyes, imagining the scene. "He raised his hands to strike at me, but in the last moment, he looked into my eyes and... I could see his fight with himself, I could feel it... He dropped his hand and turned away. He reached for one of the ropes hanging nearby; he wanted to use it to swing to the other side of the Gallery. But the rope was old and tore under his weight. He fell into the Abyss."

Catherine sighed and nodded, processing the information. So Jace wasn't so tough in the end... She slowly disengaged herself from Vincent's arms, and they started walking across the balcony to the half-wall edge.

"So you never found a body?" she inquired, pulling her thick cardigan tighter. Winter had returned to New York once again.

"The children say that abyss goes down forever. Too deep and too dangerous for us to plumb." They stopped, and Vincent looked into her eyes. "He's dead, Catherine... and his shadow has lifted from your heart."

A bittersweet expression settled on her face. "The killings will stop, but they'll never know. Never know if he's dead or gone or just...waiting down there until he's needed again... like King Arthur." She smiled. "I think Jace would like that."

Vincent's didn't reply; his eyes focused on the purple and pink stripes of breaking dawn on the horizon. Catherine joined him for a moment.

"How can one man have so much courage and empathy and passion and so little mercy?" She was uncomprehending.

Finally, his face relaxed, and he looked at her again. "Perhaps he lost it somewhere. But he found it again in the end." A small smile accompanied his knowing reply.

Catherine smiled, and her eyes were unable to leave his. Suddenly, she felt her heartbeat in the throat, and her mouth felt dry.

"What is it, Catherine?" Vincent asked with concern.

"I... I was afraid," she replied faintly.

He sighed and lowered his eyes for a moment. The painful memory resurfaced in his heart and stung him again. "I know."

"No," Catherine halted him, shaking her head. "I mean, the other night, that you might never come back to me again. That was a much greater fear than the one before..."

Vincent's eyes filled with tenderness. "I will always come back to you, Catherine. As long as you want me to..."

The beaming smile on her face could have melted an iceberg at that moment.

“Forever,” she whispered, burning her wish into his eyes and heart.

When she leaned her head against his chest and embraced him, he looked into the sunrise ahead of him. He would have to leave soon to make it safely back to the Tunnels. But not before he pulled the woman in his arms closer and closed his eyes to savour the feeling of triumph - and love...

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FEAR

It is said that before entering the sea
a river trembles with fear.

She looks back at the path she has traveled,
from the peaks of the mountains,
the long winding road crossing forests and villages.

And in front of her,
she sees an ocean so vast,
that to enter there
seems nothing more than to disappear forever.

But there is no other way.
The river can not go back.

Nobody can go back,
To go back is impossible in existence.

The river needs to take the risk
of entering the ocean
because only then will fear disappear,
because that's where the river will know
it's not about disappearing into the ocean,
but of becoming the ocean.

- Khalil Gibran -