

Beauty and the Beast Tidbits (100 words)

by Judith



His Friend

“For Catherine...” Mouse pushed a small package into Vincent’s hands.

“What is it?” Vincent stared at the cloth-wrapped gift.

“Christmas present.” The tinker bobbed his head. “Not open here. Open it Up Top. Go now.” He flapped one hand encouragingly.

“Very well, Mouse.” Vincent hesitated. “Um, but, is it--?”

“Not taken. Made.” Mouse frowned. “Mouse-made. Okay, good, Vincent?”

Vincent weighed the gift thoughtfully. “Okay, Mouse. Then I’m sure Catherine will love it.”

“Okay, good. Okay, fine!” Mouse beamed. Then he scowled. “You still here. Dark up there now.”

“Thank you, Mouse.” Vincent gripped his shoulder and the tinker blushed.

The Angel

Catherine frowned at the angel in her hand; then at the bare top of her newly-purchased Christmas tree. “The store should’ve included a ladder.”

Now she was stuck on how to get it up there. She sighed, stretching as far as she could, but it wasn’t quite enough.

“I should’ve been born taller,” she complained, settling back onto her heels.

She tried again, going right up onto tip-toe, but it was still no use. In that instant a large, strong hand reached over her shoulder, taking and placing the angel exactly where it should be.

“Vincent...” Catherine breathed happily, turning...

His Gift

“What is it?” Catherine balanced the gift on her palms.

“Open it and see,” Vincent smiled.

“Another Mouse special?” Carefully Catherine untied the ribbon securing the worn velvet wrapping.

Vincent nodded. “Yes, but he’s promised it’s okay this time.”

“Oh, Vincent...” Catherine’s scepticism changed to wonder as the velvet revealed its secret. “It’s magical...”

A small, golden flower held the tiny ivory figure of a little girl dancing with silver ballet shoes delicately pointed, her smile filled with innocent joy.

Catherine swallowed tightly. “Thank you, Mouse. And thank you, Vincent.”

“Merry Christmas, Catherine.” Vincent leaned closer to kiss her cheek.

Their Confessions

“I used to sit high above, looking out over those lights, and wonder.” Vincent swept a hand in a wide arc, indicating the city before them. “Who lives behind them?”

“Yes...” Catherine leaned on her balcony wall, looking into the depths of Central Park. “And I used to wonder who walked down there at night. Who had the courage?” Her gaze moved sideways. “I never dreamed...” She smiled. “And yet, here we are.”

“There are no words...” Vincent said simply.

“Then no words are needed...” Catherine moved closer, wrapping her hands around his arm, resting her cheek against his shoulder.

Her Gift

“I wanted to keep this until later.” Catherine stepped back onto her balcony. “But you have your obligations Below on Christmas Day, and I must host a dinner with my father. Therefore...” She proffered a wrapped parcel.

“The best gift you could give me, would be spending the day with you.” Vincent clasped her fingers close around the present.

“I know...” Catherine’s bottom lip trembled. “Me, too.” She delivered the gift into his hands. “But until that day arrives...”

“Thank you, Catherine,” Vincent said softly, before unwrapping it carefully. “Great Expectations...” He opened the book wonderingly. “And a first edition...”

Merry Christmas

“You gave me your copy, that first night.” Catherine stepped closer. “I found this in an old bookstore. I knew it was meant for you.”

“I wish...” Vincent gazed out into the night. “It will be dawn soon. I should go.” He brought his eyes back to hers, but didn’t move.

“Please stay, Vincent...” Catherine entreated, her hand on his arm. “Stay for that one, precious day. We can do it. I will go down and send a message to Father.”

“A day that has never been...” Vincent mused.

“It will be magical...” Catherine touched his lips. “Merry Christmas, Vincent...”

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