

Yule Reflections

by Angie

Haply, I think on thee ...

- William Shakespeare

The Yule celebration below had been a success, but tiring. The next few days were, by tradition and common agreement, a time for rest. William would prepare one official meal a day, a noontime buffet, until the New Year's Eve celebration.

Breakfast and supper would be ad hoc - although William would make sure there was enough food; cooking was his pleasure. For everyone else, it would be time to spend time on hobbies or other projects long delayed. It was a time for reflection and peace.

Vincent and Catherine were reclining on a large semi-circular couch in front of their bedroom fireplace in their brownstone. Vincent was against the chair back and Catherine was bracketed by his legs, her head on his chest and her behind nudging his groin. His arms were around her and their hands were clasped. Both were wearing loose pyjamas and very relaxed, yet were not yet ready for sleep.

This had become a ritual, a replacement for those hours they had spent on Catherine's balcony talking, reading and enjoying each other's company, in what seemed now like another world and time.

The only sound in the room was the crackling of the fire. Neither had spoken for some while and were basking in the joint pleasure they could feel along their bond.

"Is this what is meant by 'snogging'? Catherine whispered dreamily, at last.

Vincent hugged her closer and chuckled.

"Possibly, my love - but no one could have dreamed of anyone like me doing it."

"Which only goes to show that truth is better than fiction," Catherine retorted.

"'Stranger than fiction' as you know quite well," Vincent replied, kissing the top of her head.

"There's not much that's strange in most fiction, if you ask me," she replied. "Good authors merely relate what we already know intuitively. 'Shakespeare knew everything'. You told me that - remember?"

"Yes. He was versed in love. Perhaps Hamlet said it best."

'Nature is fine in love;
and where 'tis fine
It sends some precious instance of itself
After the thing it loves.'

"Shakespeare implied more than words could exist. We have our bond, Catherine."

"Yes, odd how a man from the 16th Century could be so aware of ... nuance. It wasn't a period known for such things. I remember a part of one of his poems that could have been written for you, my love."

'His qualities were beauteous as his form,
For maiden-tongued he was, and thereof free;
Yet, if men moved him, was he such a storm
As oft 'twixt May and April is to see.'

"'A Lover's Complaint'," Vincent whispered. "A sad poem about a lover's regret. Almost we came to that, Catherine."

Catherine turned to face him and raised a hand to stroke his face. He closed his eyes and sighed. Her voice was low and husky with passion.

"Vincent, I would never have given you up, never. Even if you had not been ill and needed my help, or afterwards had kept me at arm's length."

"That you could consider such a ... bleak prospect, makes me ashamed," he replied looking into her eyes. "Our love has become so much more than even I could imagine. There truly are no words - even in Shakespeare."

"Perhaps, but in mine there are. I love you. I always will."

"And I love you, Catherine. I think I loved you from the first moment you spoke to me. I just could not believe it - nor conceive it would ever be returned."

"And now?" she asked, because she loved to hear him say it.

"Now I will believe that there are unicorns..."

"Shakespeare again?"

"Yes."

"I have the best quote of all ..

'My bounty is as boundless as the sea,
My love as deep; the more I give to thee,
The more I have, for both are infinite.'

"Ah, Romeo and Juliet."

"Yes. And now?"

"Such is my love, to thee I so belong."

There was no need to say more. He gathered her in his arms and carried her to their bed. Their bond flared with passion as they consummated their love - as if for the first time, as if for eternity, always.

END