

Vignettes – Webs

by Angie

9. Song of Orpheus

Catherine looked over the park from her balcony, and felt the pull of the tunnels as never before.

Vincent had just left her. He had been sad for Father and Margaret, but had also spoken wistfully of the seven days they had had together.

Nothing was impossible, Catherine had told him, finally, and he had been silent.

She knew that her life and job above did not leave a great deal of time for relationships, even ordinary friendships. She was tied down in a way she had not considered when she joined the DA's office.

But her connection to Vincent was strong and becoming more so. She told him that too. They would never be separated as Father and Margaret had.

There was so much they had to learn about each other. Each moment they had together was a step in that direction. She knew Vincent had doubts and did not want to influence her life above. But, she decided, it was too late for that now. He was an integral part of her world, even if unseen by anyone in it. She held him in her heart and knew that he wanted her in his life, however much he might try to pretend otherwise.

No, their love wasn't hopeless, just challenged by circumstances neither of them could control. In a sense, they were restricted, but there was so much more to their friendship than she could have ever imagined when she had woken up below, in Vincent's bed.

That silken bond of love that bound them together was important. And if it became tangled on occasion, she would do her utmost to see that it did not strangle their love. She must keep her mind clear, aware - traits she had learned as a lawyer.

No knowledge was ever useless, she reminded herself. Every new thing she learned about Vincent strengthened her love for him.

They were truly never apart - and she was so very grateful for that silken bond.

The tangled webs that ruled the world above had snared Father, Vincent mused, when he returned to his chamber. He had no doubt that, at the root of it all, money was to blame. The world above put great store on it. He remembered lines from George Orwell's poem.

*The lord of all, the money-god,
Who rules us blood and hand and brain, ...*

*Who chills our anger, curbs our hope,
And buys our lives and pays with toys,
Who claims as tribute broken faith,
Accepted insults, muted joys;*

Father had lost Margaret, not least because he had been impoverished by the McCarthy trials. And Margaret herself had been the target of “*jealous, watchful care*” from a man who wanted only her money.

Vincent had difficulty understanding the power of money, although he could see the results everywhere above - both its excess and its lack. They had some money below, but they did not need it in everyday life, as did Catherine and others above. It's lack did not map the pattern of their days. Why did it so obsess people in the world above? Why did they always want more beyond their needs?

Yet, despite the pull of money and the web of murder and greed, courage and love had won out. Father and Margaret had been reunited at last, thanks to Catherine. Their love had stood the test of a long separation, and been renewed.

As for himself, he was heartened by their love, which gave him more hope for his own love for Catherine. Yes, there was no denying it. Father, since he had found and lost Margaret, had a more benign view of Catherine.

That was encouraging, and enough for the present.

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