



Something akin to a metronome swung languidly.

In the distance a faucet released an indolent drop of water pregnant in its stout shape. Vincent caught the fragrance of what was infiltrating the water supply and he shook his head, if he dwelt on that he'd certainly go mad, madder than he was tonight.

His nature required less sleep than his fellow Tunnel mates and so often Vincent was awake in the glory of the wee hours. At this time he was held by the grip of insomnia, something he thought had been caused by his recent "fixation".

You, you, you did this to me...Catherine....

He was left wanting, wishing only to grasp at the straws of their connection, yearning to forge through the pagan, angry waters of carnal desire, craving the burning of an erotic pinnacle. Was he a restless insomniac because of her or did the cloak of insomnia heave open his mind to admit these crippling emotions?

Vincent, feeling like a former child of God, previously led by 10 Commandments wanted some unseen pagan Goddess from a chariot of clouds in the night sky to point her mace downward to him, granting him pardon and mostly *permission*.

You, you, you, resolutely woman, resolutely leaving me hot and hard, his words rolled within his head before he uttered them.

You, you, you, divinely human, a young woman I cower to take to her bed, speaking those words forced him to face these feelings.

Vincent needed permission to wrap his arms around her shoulders and plunder her mouth with starved kisses. He wanted consent to peel away her clothing, holding her not under the spell of a blatant seduction but of the communion of a pair in love.

Day after day he conspired, plunging him deeper into this insomnia. In a slow circle he'd twist and spin, realizing the heat she'd bring to his hard cold existence, realizing the victory he'd find buried deep within her loving sensual hold. He sought their connection, deep within her flushed, hungry flesh while all those years of his "*aleness*" powered his sex's steely length.

Vincent sought her truth, desiring her truth mirrored his...that they would find a peace within each other that would swab away the filth of their meeting and gift them a future. He wanted her like a child wanted ice cream, like a traveler sought a peaceful hostel, like a criminal sought forgiveness.

Take her, his mind flashed and squelched the thundering voices inside, trade them for her rapturous cries, their urgent panting and cries of ecstasy.

Vincent drew out of his unpromising bed and briskly rubbed away the chill, he'd gladly trade his chamber's chill for the hospitality of her rumpled bed linens. He'd seek her out, he'd bring her flowers, a book of poetry and then he'd beg her to warm him with sweat born of their love's dance. He'd beg her to invite him into her and he'd willingly submit to her human touch. He prayed that she'd crush him with her sweet thighs while she rode his deep thrusts, over and over and over.

He danced on the promise of an awe-struck night within her arms, in her bed, behind those louvered doors. Would she weigh the evidence of his desire and grasp him gently or would she clench him heartily as her gentle palm cupped below? Could he wish to have her gentle lips laving stroke after stroke over his rippled, hard veined length? He'd only be too happy to return the tongue bath; his mind whirled in his imaginings as he suckled her swollen lips milking her sobbing demands.

Before the insomnia he had kept in step, towed the line of his monastic existence. His eyes could avert themselves only so many times before this daily insomnia caused to shift his beliefs. This restlessness had brought him off his knees where he worshiped a woman, now he rose to kiss, to lap and finally if his nerve rose to the occasion, to bite the object of his desire.

When the sinews were cut, the muscles would drop.

Was Vincent brave enough to give Catherine what she wanted? Did she know she wanted his brand of seduction? He weighed if she did though she spoke as she did. In his heart he sensed from his profane and demonic self she would turn them into something holy and divine.

Crossing the distance was easy, the choices were many... Roses ripe and red bundled into a generous bouquet, perhaps a bottle of wine ready for riding their lips. Vincent was caught up imagining her expression as he stood at her door, his frantic heart could have beat out his chest. Each step brought him closer to her as he measured verses. His mind whirled clever words as he weighed which ones to use. So self-absorbed he stood outside her door, his fist hanging expectantly above the panes of her French doors.

Rap, Rap of his knuckles then the sweeping sound of her feet on the floor, the creak of the hinge, "Vincent!" her excitement rang true, and her smile bathed him and baptized his coarse heart.

"I just wanted to check in...." Vincent's throat dried as Catherine widened the door's opening. Behind on the sofa sat Joe in flannel suit, a coffee mug at his lips as he re-read a portfolio. Then Vincent went wide eyed as he realized Catherine stood there in her work clothes, sleeves pushed back, bleary eyed.

"I'm sorry I didn't realize the hour" he stepped back out of the light's path and thrust the bouquet and the wine into her hands with a shake of his head. The air hung heavy with the scent of plodding lackluster brainstorming.

"I couldn't sleep" those words sounded stupid the second they left his lips, it was 12:30 at night.

Catherine's smile grew exponentially as she caught his offerings. She stepped toward him, reading the bottle as she inhaled the spice of the over-sized bouquet. Her aura abruptly sparkled with anticipation as she looked back toward Joe. He had been surprised by the odd arrival, before Catherine ran to the door but hadn't seen Vincent's face.

"I didn't realize you had guests." Vincent whispered as he stood nodding; suddenly having to scratch an itch on his collar. Catherine imagined he looked oh, about 16 and awkward.

"It's a wretched case, Joe and I shared a cab and we thought we'd bang this mess out" Catherine volunteered as she shrugged and closed door behind her. "I'll be home tomorrow night, Friday night" she whispered heatedly, "We have

to talk” her eyebrows danced at those last four words. Catherine gently placed her gifts on the small balcony table and turned to him.

“Talk? Talk, certainly” Vincent nodded, his lips twitching as he stepped backward into the cleansing night air. Her hands flattened on his heaving chest, her smile registered she was breathlessly taking in his scent. Their Bond shimmered between them. The shroud of his emotions hung hefty over his heart, worn like a uniform from some dysfunctional brotherhood.

“Tomorrow, just past sunset?” Vincent caught her hands gently and pressed a single kiss to her gathered fingertips.

Catherine’s eyes burned with answering desire, “Yes”.

With a swoosh of his smoky cloak Vincent was gone.

The insomnia, like a wire, had cut away his resolve.

Yes, he was back to his insomnia....