

FOR JUST ONE NIGHT

SANDY P SHELTON

(from ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE THREE)

"Be still, Jake, I'll be finished in a minute."

Catherine found it difficult to squat as she completed the final touches on her son's Halloween costume. Leaning back, she smiled at her handiwork. He looked so cute in the pirate's outfit she had made herself waving the toy sword Vincent had made for him.

Jacob pranced about their chamber playing pirate as Vincent entered. "Ahoy there, matey," Vincent playfully joined in.

"Look Daddy, pirate."

Vincent laughed then bent down to get a closer look at the tiny eyepatch and the rest of his make-up.

"You look just like Captain Bligh. Jacob, be very careful with that sword, you might hurt someone."

"Yes. Party Daddy. Go to party now?"

Vincent looked over at Catherine and smiled proudly. "Yes, Jacob, we're ready." He reached out his hand to help her rise to her feet.

Catherine took his strong hand and let him lift her. Lately, getting up and down had become a chore for her. She was about five and a half months pregnant now and all she could fit into was her big bulky sweaters and sweatpants.

Later in Father's study, Vincent and Catherine sat snuggled up close on the steps watching the children as they listened to "*The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*" for yet another year. The little faces stared up at Father completely mesmerized by the story. Catherine reached over and pulled Vincent's hand into her own and leaned into him a little more. He looked over at her and smiled, fatherly pride gleaming in his eyes.

After the traditional storytelling, the crowd moved into the Great Hall for the rest of the party. The adults helped with the treats and party games as laughter and squeals filled the air. Catherine couldn't help but think how much more fun Jacob was having here than he would

have had had he gone trick-or-treating Above.

As the party began to wind down, Vincent and Catherine left Jacob in his grandfather's care and walked back to the basement entrance. They stood for a moment holding hands.

"Are you nervous about tonight, Vincent?"

"No. I'm looking forward to it. For just one night, Catherine, I can be a part of your world, meet your friends, walk through the streets of this amazing city without care, and stand by your side. Besides, I'm looking forward to finally meeting Joe."

"Yes, ever since Jenny told everyone that you were coming to her party, Joe's bugged me no end about it. I think he's just as anxious to meet you, but I'm more concerned about Jenny and Nancy. I just may have to beat them off you tonight."

Vincent blushed shyly. "Catherine, I'm looking forward to being the lucky man honored by your attentions tonight."

She laughed. "You just want to stake out your territory like all men do. I guess you're entitled to this one night."

She kissed his hands then turned to climb up the ladder. As she did, she felt his hands around her waist. As usual, since her pregnancy, he was there in case she slipped and fell. She was getting spoiled and she was loving every moment of it.

An hour later, Catherine stood in front of her mirror admiring her costume. It was a long medieval cream-colored gown that did a great job of hiding most of her now obvious pregnancy. Smiling, she rubbed her hand gently over the precious bulge and remembered that moment a few weeks ago when Vincent first noticed his child's growth.

She had been in the bathroom brushing her hair before going to bed and Vincent was sitting on their bed removing his boots and socks as he waited for her. She walked out of the bathroom in the pink gown she had recently purchased still brushing her hair when she noticed Vincent's expression. He was staring at her stomach with the most touching look of total wonderment on his face.

"Vincent, what is it?"

Tears were forming in his eyes. "Our child, Catherine, I can see it."

Confused, she looked down at her stomach. "What?"

His arms reached for her. "Come here."

Still confused, she obediently moved into his arms. Ever so gently, he rubbed his hand over the slight bulge she hadn't even noticed before. She could see a tear slide down his cheek as

he looked up at her smiling.

"The baby, Catherine, look how it's grown." Again he looked back at the slight bulge with admiring eyes.

Then she felt her own tears trail down. He looked so endearing, touching her stomach with such child-like innocence. It was then she was struck with the enormity of his loss. He had been denied all of these precious moments while she carried Jacob as she had been denied his comfort.

Vincent leaned forward and gently pressed his lips to her stomach then whispered, "I love you, little one. I hope you can feel that, even now."

That was more than Catherine could endure and she burst into tears.

He gently guided her onto his lap and cradled her in his arms as they both cried out.

"Catherine, there are no words to express what your love has given me or what your having this child means to me. Finally we are experiencing all the joys life has to offer. Our dream has become real."

She raised her head and looked into his tear-filled eyes. "You deserve it all, Vincent. There is no one in the world I'd rather have as the father of my children. "No one!" She ran her fingers through his hair then leaned down and kissed her.

She remembered how quickly those innocent kisses turned into passion. They each kissed the other's tears away slowly. When Vincent's mouth moved down her throat, she tossed her head backward and felt his tongue dip between her breasts. She remembered how quick and strong her arousal had been as she frantically pulled the straps of her gown off her shoulders and guided his mouth to her aching flesh. A loud groan escaped her as she felt his erection already straining beneath her.

Vincent lowered her anxious body to the mattress and helped her out of her gown. Catherine could feel his hands trembling as they moved over her body igniting her need even further. She watched as he quickly undressed and positioned himself over her and she prepared herself for his entry.

Suddenly, he froze. Looking up at him in confusion, she could see the fear in his eyes as they focused on her stomach.

"Catherine, I'm afraid I'll hurt the baby."

"It's all right, Vincent, we just have to take it easy, that's all." Her hands tried to pull him down to her, but he still hesitated.

"I don't think I can."

"Please, Vincent, please. I need you." She could feel his inner torment.

He threw his head back and breathed deeply for a moment. "Vincent?"

Once more he looked into her eyes searching for an answer and then suddenly the spark returned. He lowered his hips, but held the upper part of his body at arm's length, precariously balancing himself above her as not to press the full weight of his body on her.

Catherine let her hands wander down to his buttocks as she opened herself up to him realizing what he had in mind. Slowly and carefully he entered and they moved as one.

He was so fearful of increasing the pace, that Catherine had to grasp at him in frustration and plead, "Please Vincent, harder."

Their shared need overwhelmed them both and Vincent could no longer hold back. A few deep thrusts brought them to climax quickly. He very carefully slid from her and moved over to lie by her side.

"Catherine, are you all right? I didn't hurt you, did I?"

Sighing deeply from sheer contentment, she answered, "No love. I promise you, I'll let you know if you do. Besides, I'm sure you could sense it."

She watched him as he propped up on one elbow and tenderly caressed the slight bulge with delight. "How big do you think you'll get with our child?" His question reeked of total innocence and amazement.

"With Jake, I looked and felt like a blimp. My feet swelled, my back hurt, and I was constantly going to the bathroom." When he frowned at her description of her discomfort she added, "It was worth it though, when I felt him move for the first time. I used to think he was going to kick his way out. It's an incredible feeling, you know, feeling that movement and knowing there's a brand new life inside of you."

He looked at her with a touch of sadness for what he'd lost. "Do you think it will be soon?"

"What?"

"The movements, kicks."

Her hands closed around his. "It won't be much longer and I promise you as soon as it happens, I'll share it with you. I'm looking forward to that moment as much as you are."

Catherine's mind snapped back to the present when she dropped her hair brush. After she retrieved it, she sat on the bed and again let her hands glide soothingly over her swollen

middle as the baby kicked strongly.

Her mind drifted back to that night a couple of weeks ago when she first felt their child's movements. She had been below for the weekend and they were enjoying a concert in their favorite spot under the front row when she felt a slight flutter. At first, she wasn't really sure what it was and just rubbed the spot gently. Moments later, however, she was rewarded with a very strong movement. Joy filled her as her eyes burned with tears.

"Catherine, what is it? Are you all right?"

Laughing joyously, she turned to him. "Vincent, the baby. I think it moved. No, I'm sure it moved!"

"Catherine?"

His look of wonder touched her and she quickly grabbed his hand and guided it to the spot. They both held their breaths and waited and soon she felt it again.

"There, did you feel it?" Her question did not need an answer, she could see it in his eyes.

His eyes met hers and in them were tears of joy. He smiled proudly and they both began to laugh. "Oh Catherine. . . it's such a miracle. Our baby is alive! Alive and strong inside of you!" He leaned down and rested his ear against her stomach.

Her fingers entwined themselves in his hair. "Can you hear it? Or better yet, can you sense it through the bond?"

Raising his head, he moved his face close to hers. "I can sense a heartbeat. I can sense life and there's also a vague feeling of a consciousness forming, a mind developing, growing. I can't describe it, but I feel the connection."

"Oh Vincent, I can feel it too. I can't tell you how wonderful it is to share these things with my baby's father."

Vincent began to openly cry as he lowered his head back down to her stomach. "I love you, Catherine. You are my life."

Her own tears flowed now as she remembered that special night. Once more she rubbed gently over the mound and was rewarded with yet another strong movement. "Are you practicing for the ballet already?" She laughed then said, "I'd better get moving or your father and I will be late for the party."

Apprehensively, Vincent walked across the park toward Catherine's apartment building. This was not his usual route, but tonight he was determined to participate in her life in every way

possible including calling for her at her door.

The front of her building was imposing only in Vincent's eyes but he was determined to do this. He walked up to the doorman, but instead of the expected look of terror, he was greeted by a smile. "Sir, that's a great make-up job."

Vincent was momentarily stunned. "Thank you," was all he could manage. "I've come for Ms. Chandler."

"Oh yes, lucky man." He smiled and winked as he opened the door for the oddly quiet man.

Vincent couldn't begin to describe how strange he felt under these circumstances. '*So, this is what normal men do.*'

"Umm," he muttered as he stepped into the elevator. A bemused smile appeared on his face as he looked up at the elevator's ceiling.

Catherine was collecting her purse and cape when the doorbell rang. Her breath caught in her throat. "Vincent." She opened the door and had her remaining breath completely taken away.

He was magnificently dressed in his matching vest and slacks with his freshly polished high leather boots and white ruffled shirt. His dark cape draped across his shoulders enhanced with effect.

"Vincent," Catherine whispered breathlessly. "You look. . . wonderful."

He was a bit embarrassed at first by her obvious approval of his appearance. "Do I look all right?"

"My dear, you look gorgeous. Come in, let's do this right."

"By the way, Catherine, you look beautiful."

Playfully she answered, "I was beginning to wonder if you had noticed."

He rubbed her stomach tenderly. "I noticed. I see our child is active as usual. How do you bear it, isn't all this activity uncomfortable?"

"No, most of the time it isn't. To tell you the truth, it's reassuring. As long as she's moving, I know she's all right."

"How can you be so sure it's a girl?"

"Positive thinking Vincent, and besides, I don't like referring to our child as an it." She kissed him. "If we're going to get a taxi, we'd better get going."

They rode down in the elevator hand in hand and Catherine could feel his tension. She

squeezed slightly in an effort to reassure him.

"Are you still sure you want to do this?"

"Yes, Catherine. I want to know what your life above is like and I want to meet all the people you care about. This is the one night the walls no longer separate our worlds. We can truly be as one."

She felt a little better about it, but she couldn't help but notice the looks of panic as the taxi dodged in and out of traffic. Smiling, she did her best to stifle the urge to laugh.

With her arm in his, she guided him up to Jenny's apartment. They hesitated at the door.

"Vincent, so far no one has suspected anything and I have no reason to believe this will be any different. I know my friends will try to pry you away from me to find out all they can, so if you get into trouble, just get my attention and I'll rescue you for a change."

He released a deep breath. "With you by my side, Catherine, I can handle anything."

"You haven't met Jen!" She was aware of his confused look as she rang the doorbell. Thankfully, the door opened quickly before Vincent could escape in panic.

Laughter could be heard in the background as a woman dressed as a flapper with a mask opened the door.

"Cathy, is that you? Of course it is, you're the only pregnant friend I have. Come in, come in."

Catherine led Vincent inside and they both turned to Jenny. "Jenny ...," she started to introduce Vincent, but was interrupted.

"This has got to be Vincent."

Catherine noticed Jenny's appreciative stare. She took Jenny's arm and said jokingly, "Back off Jen, he's spoken for."

They both laughed and Vincent blushed. "I'm sorry, Vincent. Cathy always was protective of her men. They didn't deserve it, mind you, but you do. I'm pleased to finally meet the man that won Cathy's heart."

Vincent was touched by Jenny's obvious affection and friendship for Catherine.

"I'm pleased as well to finally meet Catherine's best friend." He took her hand in his gloved one and bowed slightly.

Catherine was relishing seeing Jenny so obviously flustered.

For the first time in ages, Jenny found herself speechless. He had to be the sexiest man she'd

ever met. "Cath, could I see you just a minute? We'll be right back Vincent, I promise." Pulling Catherine to one side she whispered, "God Cathy, he's wonderful. That voice, those eyes. He's a god. Where did you ever find him? And does he look that good without the make-up?"

Catherine smiled and looked over at Vincent who was waiting nervously for her return. "Better Jen, even better."

Noting Vincent's distress at her absence, she quickly guided Jenny back over to him but not before promising to give her all the details later.

"Vincent, I think it's time we mingled a bit. I'd like to introduce you to everyone. Will you excuse us, Jen?"

"Sure. Vincent, I want you to enjoy yourself and I'll talk to you again later. It's a real pleasure to finally meet the man who tamed this woman."

"Jen!"

"Just kidding Cath. Why don't you introduce Vincent to Nancy. She's been dying to meet him."

"That's a good idea." Catherine still held onto Vincent's arm more for his reassurance than her own.

"Jenny's very nice, Catherine, and she seems very fond of you."

"I've known her and Nancy for years. All the way back to Radcliffe."

"I'm glad you have such friends, but I do sense her curiosity about me."

"Yeah, I could tell Jen wanted to see what was beneath that so-called make-up job."

Just then Nancy and her husband Paul made their way over. "Cathy, is that you?"

She laughed, "Yes, who else do you know that looks like a barrel?"

After a hug, Nancy commented, "I remember feeling that way, but you look great. You're absolutely glowing."

After a curious glance from Nancy in Vincent's direction, Catherine said, "I'm sorry. I'd like you to meet Vincent. Vincent, this is Nancy and Paul Tucker."

He bowed slightly. "Yes, Catherine has spoken of you often."

Nancy's eyes grew wide with wonder. "Yes, we've all been wanting to meet you for so long." She relaxed a little more then continued. "When Cathy told me about you the last time she visited, I could tell you were very special. You had to be for Cathy to stay interested for so long."

At that, Catherine had to protest. "Please Nance, no discussion of my romantic past, okay?"

Nancy picked up the message. "Okay, okay." She reached over, took Vincent's arm, and began to lead him away. "Excuse us a minute, I want a private moment with this heavenly man of yours."

Vincent shot Catherine a momentary look of panic as Nancy led him away. Paul took Cathy's arm and whispered, "Don't worry, she'll bring him back. At least I think she will."

Just beyond their earshot, Nancy began a more private conversation. "Vincent, I just wanted to tell you how glad I am Cathy found you. For so long, in college and after, she just drifted in and out of relationships looking for something. It was so sad to see her so unhappy and unfulfilled. But then she told me about you. I could tell she'd finally found the right man. A man that really understood her.

"I just wanted you to know that whatever your situation is, all Cathy's friends are behind you. All of us are so glad to see her so happy. She's been through a lot and she deserves the happiness you bring her. Little Jake is such a doll and I can't tell you the joy this pregnancy brings all of us. We wish you two the best."

Impulsively, she hugged him. "I'm sorry I've rattled on so, but Cathy means a lot to me and you are the man she loves. Just keep her happy."

Vincent felt that this woman understood their love and accepted it without question. He wondered if she would feel the same if she knew the truth about him.

"Nancy, it is Catherine that brings me true joy. Her love has been an impossible dream come true for me and I shall cherish her always."

Nancy felt a gentle touch on her shoulder and turned to see the subject of their conversation standing close behind her.

"May I have him back please?"

"I don't know, he's such a perfect gentleman I may want to keep him."

"Not without a fight, Nance, not without a fight." She laughed and retrieved Vincent's arm. "Come on dear, I see Rita and Joe over there, let's go over and say hello."

It wasn't hard to spot Joe Maxwell. He was dressed in a Mets baseball uniform complete with hat and glove hanging from his belt.

"Catherine, are you sure we're ready for this?"

She stopped and looked into eyes that suddenly showed fear. "It's all right, Vincent. If you'd like to leave, we can."

"No! This is my one chance to meet the people you share your life above with. Forgive my momentary fear." He looked around the crowded room at all the people in strange costumes and masks. "All of this can be a little overwhelming, I guess."

She slid her arm around his waist. "Personally, I think you're overwhelming them. Come on, Joe won't bite, I promise."

Joe and Rita had been standing across the room watching Cathy and her mystery man moving through the crowd. Joe turned to Rita, "Check out that mask will you. It looks like something out of 'Cats'. Where do you suppose he got it?"

Looking close Rita replied, "I don't know. Maybe he knows their make-up man. Maybe he's a member of the cast."

Joe gave her a cynical look. "Sure. Why do you suppose he's so secretive?"

Beginning to get annoyed with Joe's attitude, Rita snapped back. "Like I said, maybe he's a cast member of 'Cats' and doesn't want to be recognized."

"Umm. Maybe there's another reason he doesn't want to be recognized. Like he could be some big syndicate boss or something. My real guess is that he's married and doesn't want to get caught."

"Joe, please. You know Cathy better than that." Their conversation ceased as the couple in question approached them.

"Rita, you look great and Joe, you look so. . .you."

"Thanks, Radcliffe. I think."

"Vincent, I'd like you to meet two people I spend a lot of time with. This is Rita Escobar and this is my boss, he thinks, Joe Maxwell. Joe, Rita, this is Vincent." She held her breath.

Rita reached her hand out first. "Vincent, it's so nice to meet you."

Vincent took her hand. "The pleasure is mine."

A wink from Rita in Catherine's direction indicated her approval.

Not to be left out, Joe stuck his hand out. "So. you're Cathy's. . .mystery man."

"I'm not that much of a mystery, Joe. I just love Catherine."

His firm handshake and simple honest answer left Joe temporarily speechless. The silence was broken, however, as Nancy and Jenny descended on Catherine.

"Cathy, we've got a lot to catch up on. You don't mind, do you, Vincent?" Jenny asked,

knowing the answer.

Then Nancy added, "It's just girl talk. You know, swollen feet, backaches, that kind of thing."

Vincent nodded, but Catherine was reluctant to leave him alone with Joe. Sometimes Joe could be terribly blunt and his curiosity about Vincent could get out of hand.

"I'll be fine, Catherine," Vincent tried to reassure her. "Joe and I will keep each other company."

She couldn't help but imagine the two of them establishing their territory like a pair of stallions fighting for control of the herd, but she had to let Vincent find his own way.

"Okay, but Joe, don't bore him with shop talk."

"Sure, Radcliffe, that's the last thing on my mind right now," Joe said as he eyed Vincent cautiously.

Both men watched their common interest being pulled away by her friends. Joe spoke first.

"So, you're Cathy's great love, huh?"

Vincent just silently stared into Joe's dark eyes.

"Well, tell me a little about yourself. I mean Cathy doesn't tell us anything. Like you've got something to hide or something."

Feeling a little unsure of just how to handle Joe's questions but realizing the affection behind them, Vincent shifted uneasily and quickly glanced in Catherine's direction. She sat on the couch flanked by Nancy, Jenny, and Rita and they were laughing and rubbing her stomach. He felt reassured by the lightness of spirit that flowed through the bond. He looked back at Joe.

"I understand your concern and I appreciate your feelings for Catherine. I know how important you are to her, Joe. In fact, I feel as if I know you just from what she's told me about you."

Joe blushed. "I can just imagine what a slave driver she's made me out to be."

"Hardly. She just tells me of your dedication to your job and of your loyalty to her."

"I'm just concerned for her. She deserves the best, not some man who can't be seen with her."

On the other side of the room, Catherine watched the two men awkwardly trying to get to know each other. She was interrupted by Jenny. "I think it's a boy."

Nancy's opinion differed, "No, look at the way she's carrying it. it's a girl, Jen. What do you want this time, Cath?"

She looked back at her two friends. "Oh, I don't really care as long as it's healthy." She rubbed her hand lightly over her stomach and smiled. "But a girl would be nice this time."

Vincent watched her a moment then turned back to Joe. "I want the best for her as well, but most of all I want her to be happy with the choices she's made."

"All this secrecy takes a toll on her. She almost went to jail not long ago because you wouldn't testify for her. Why do you put her through that kind of stuff?"

Those words wounded him. "Believe me, Joe, it was not my choice. I was prepared to risk it all for her. It was Catherine who would have none of it." His voice had an edge to it that he hadn't intended.

Regaining his calm, he continued. "When we first met, we both tried to return to our separate lives. We fought our feelings for so long. The time came, however, when we were forced to either end it or commit completely to our love. I could have suffered her loss, if it meant her happiness. It was Catherine's choice and she decided to follow her heart, no matter what the sacrifice, and I am so grateful she did."

Joe studied the man before him and was assured of his sincerity. "To me, it looks like she's making all the sacrifices and you get. . . Well, you know. What does she get out of this relationship besides pregnancy?"

Meanwhile, back across the room, Catherine noticed the moment of tension pass between the two men. She started to get up and go to them, but was stopped by Jenny's hand on her arm.

"Cath, you've just got to tell us, where you found him. He's absolutely charming."

Nancy joined in, "Yeah, but I think sexy is a better word. I mean the man oozes sex appeal."

Even though Catherine had long considered Vincent sexy, the obvious impact he was having on the females in the room was something she had not been prepared for.

Jenny added, "It's no wonder you got pregnant again so fast. How you manage to keep your hands off of him? Did you notice the way he moves and that voice. I think I would melt if he whispered sweet nothings in my ear with that voice. Cath, your sex life must be heavenly."

"First of all, I don't keep my hands off him. That's why I'm in this condition. Secondly, he doesn't whisper sweet nothings, he reads me very erotic poetry. Lastly, my sex life cannot be described in any terms. If not for my job and Jake, we'd probably be in bed all the time."

Nancy patted Catherine's belly. "It looks like that's what you've been doing, girl." They all roared in laughter again.

Vincent's attention was temporarily averted by the sound of Catherine's laughter. "I can't speak

for Catherine, but I give her all that I am. I give her my love, trust, and faithfulness. I love her, but I give her the freedom to make her own choices and that's important to her. It's hard to explain, but we complete each other. Joe, Catherine and I believe we are destined for each other and all the hardships we've had to endure have bound us even closer."

"Catherine has been the one to decide what form our relationship will take. She made the choice to continue seeing me and she decided when it was time to become intimate. Although she did not plan her first pregnancy, she rejoiced with me in the birth of our son. It was she who decided to have another child and to continue her work. These are all things I wanted, but it has always been Catherine's choice in the end."

"They're nice words, but know this, I care about her too. She's a very special lady and I wouldn't take too kindly to someone hurting her." Joe's eyes grew even darker as the depth of his feelings rose to the surface.

"That is something we share in common, Joe." They studied each other for a moment then Vincent added, "It's nice to know Catherine has such friends."

With that, Joe had to laugh. This man knew what to say and how to say it. No wonder Cathy was so attracted to him. He did have to admit that it was obvious how much this man loved her in return. It was in his words, his eyes, and the way he caressed her name when he spoke it.

"Okay, I guess we had to put the cards on the table."

"Yes."

"Friends?" Joe extended his hand.

"Friends." Vincent accepted the symbol of friendship.

Catherine spotted the gesture from across the room. She could also feel Vincent's ease through their bond. She decided the battle was over and now they needed a little time alone before she rescued Vincent.

Jenny leaned closer. "I've got to know. Is he as good as he looks?"

"What?"

Nancy leaned over too, "She means is he good in bed? Does he give you fireworks?"

The whole conversation was reminiscent of their college days when the three of them rated their men.

"Girls, he can give me fireworks by just looking at me!"

She couldn't help the longing look she gave him and at the same time noticed the crimson

blush that appeared on his face. She laughed then stood up.

"In fact, I don't think I can stand it any longer. I have this strong urge to touch him. Excuse me, ladies."

Vincent and Joe were talking about Catherine's pregnancy as she approached. "I agree, Vincent, she's working too hard. I've been after her to take it easy, but she's too stubborn."

As Catherine slid her arm through Vincent's, he said, "Yes, I am well aware of her strong will. And I agree that she overdoes it sometimes."

"Now boys, you're only saying that because I'm pregnant."

Joe looked back at her seriously. "That's right. You've been working way too hard, Radcliffe. In fact, I insist that you use up some of that personal leave time and take a couple weeks around Thanksgiving. You wouldn't mind, would you, Vincent?"

"Absolutely not!"

"Wait a minute, you two. Don't I have any say in this? Who's going to do all the work?"

Joe was adamant. "It'll get done. Besides, you and Vincent need to spend some free time with Jake. I insist, Cathy."

Not to look a gift horse in the mouth, she gave in. "Okay, you win." She hugged Joe as tightly as her protruding belly would allow and they both were delighted when the baby kicked soundly.

"Whoa there!"

She moved back slightly. "It's all right, Joe, it's just the baby kicking." He looked intrigued. "Would you like to feel it?"

Joe was embarrassed. "No, I don't think. . ."

Vincent insisted. "It's all right, Joe, I don't mind. I do it all the time."

Joe watched Vincent place a hand on Cathy's stomach and smile as the child apparently moved. Catherine then took Joe's hand and placed it over the stirring child. When the baby kicked, Joe's face lit up in awe.

"Well, I'll be damned. I think we've got a place kicker here."

The rest of the evening passed quickly and pleasantly. To Vincent's surprise, no one even suspected his appearance was anything other than an incredible make-up job. He chatted with

Catherine's friends and even began to feel at ease with Joe, even though he could not understand Joe's fascination with sports. But all in all, Catherine had been right. They were a lot alike in many ways. Especially when it came to their feelings for her.

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