

No Quiet Find

by Angie

Vincent plodded into his chamber after a hard day fixing steam pipes three levels below the main tunnels. He was wet, scalded in various places, and very tired.

There was no way he could visit Catherine this night, even had she been home. He knew she was working late night again at the DA's office. He could feel her frustration, and sent his love along the bond. She would know he was tired and that was a relief to him. Their bond was not completely two way, but since she had saved his life more than once, it had been opening up for her. They rarely had to tell each other how they felt anymore.

This night, small talk of any kind was beyond him, but sleep was not likely either, for his muscles hurt and he felt every one of his burns. His fingers were numb with the strain of trying to manhandle hot pipes back into alignment, even with gloves on. His face had been scalded when one pipe slipped as he was placing it. The hair on his face had protected him somewhat, but he knew he would have dead skin peeling off in a few days, with itching that would need liberal applications of a cream Father got from Chinatown.

Vincent sighed.

Winterfest was coming soon, and he sincerely hoped there would be no more emergencies before all the preparations for that began, which was tiring just to think about, even with the whole community involved. Everyone pushed themselves too hard, but Vincent knew he did more than that. He had the strength and stamina others did not, but he did overdo it. Even Father had told him so.

So he undressed carefully, washed as well as he was able without using his bathing chamber, and put on his nightshirt, soft pyjama bottoms and socks. It felt wonderful to lay down at last, but his mind was not going to let him sleep just yet, as usual.

As often happened, one of Shakespeare's sonnets came to mind – there seemed to be one for every occasion. '*Shakespeare knew everything*' was not mere hyperbole.

This time, he thought of *Sonnet 27*, hoping that this time it would put his mind to rest and allow him to sleep ... and dream of Catherine.

Softly he recited it to himself....

*Weary with toil, I haste me to my bed,
The dear repose for limbs with travel tired,
But then begins a journey in my head
To work my mind when body's work's expired.*

Vincent sighed again. Travel, travail – not much difference in his world. One usually led to the other. But he had other travels in mind now.

*For then my thoughts, from far where I abide,
Intend a zealous pilgrimage to thee,*

Indeed, a pilgrimage to Catherine was the best balm he knew, even if only in his mind.

*And keep my drooping eyelids open wide,
Looking on darkness which the blind do see;*

Darkness did not mean he couldn't imagine light – the light of his love. And now the sonnet spoke for his heart as well.

*Save that my soul's imaginary sight
Presents thy shadow to my sightless view,
Which like a jewel hung in ghastly night
Makes black night beauteous and her old face new.*

Luckily, the darkness also hid that his chamber was anything but beauteous at the present time. He had not had time to tidy it in a week, and had been too tired the few times he had managed to inhabit it between repair jobs. It was much more pleasant to imagine Catherine's lovely face – and he was glad she had not been able to come below. She had never seen his chamber in this condition.

*Lo, thus, by day my limbs, by night my mind,
For thee and for myself no quiet find.*

The thoughts in his mind, however, assisted by the sonnet, now helped him find the quiet he needed.

Catherine was home and was also in bed now. She sent him her love and he knew their dreams would be complementary.

He closed his eyes, shut out the sounds of the pipes, pulled up the blankets to his neck and breathed a heavy, satisfied sigh.

END