

# Remember when it Rained

by Angie

*"In the darkness I remain..."*

- Josh Groban

Diana waited in the tunnels near her loft entry, and gave Vincent a small, battery-powered mp3 player when he arrived. It was loaded, she said, with every song she could remember and find about rain.

"Rain?" he had queried her.

She gave him a half smile. "April showers bring more than flowers," she commented quietly.

Vincent nodded, thanked her, then watched silently as she turned and walked away.

She knew too much about him, he thought ruefully, but that was hardly surprising. They had been friends now for over 20 years.

He regarded the tiny device, almost lost in his hand. It had been a long time, but his memories did not fade, nor did his love. What could this little thing do to console him, as the years rolled on, leaving him still - always - alone?

Nevertheless, he was drawn to the music chamber, the one that had let the rain in that night. It seemed the best place to listen to music and he knew he would not be interrupted, as was too likely in his chamber. His visits to this place were sacrosanct. Everyone knew it. His being here told them he wanted to be alone.

Yes, that memory came back rich and lovely. It hadn't been their anniversary, but it was a precious night, one he inevitably drew on, especially on this day.

He looked around the chamber, gathered some pillows from a nook where he kept them, and sat down where he had that night, so long ago, with Catherine at his side, both of them listening to the music from the bandshell above, captivated. And then it had begun to rain.

He put the ear buds in his ears and turned on the little device, needing no instruction since they were now common in the tunnels. He had been given one by his son, one with classical music. Diana's taste did not run in that direction, but he had always been fascinated with the songs she chose when he visited.

As the music began, he closed his eyes, relaxing against the wall.

The songs were an eclectic mix and he smiled as he listened. Some he knew, others not, but they were indeed all about rain - although one seemed to be more of an allegory about war. He listened uncritically until the last one, which made him sit up and open his eyes.

He didn't know the singer, but the voice was spectacular, and the words tore through him. Had Diana put this one last deliberately? He heard it through once and then hit the necessary buttons to repeat it, noticing as he did, the name of both the singer and the song. It was fairly recent.

The voice echoed as it sang, and Vincent felt as if it was being sung to him.

*"Wash away the thoughts inside  
That keep my mind away from you  
No more love and no more pride  
And thoughts are all I have to do*

*Oooooo, remember when it rained  
I felt the ground and looked up high and called your name."  
Oooooo, remember when it rained  
In the darkness I remain*

*Tears of hope run down my skin  
Tears for you that will not dry  
They magnify the one within  
And let the outside slowly die*

*Oooooo, remember when it rained  
I felt the ground and looked up high and called your name  
Oooooo, remember when it rained  
In the water I remain"*

Vincent closed his eyes and let himself feel the pain of Catherine's loss. Why else was he here, alone, on this day? But the song would not let him descend into self-pity. It was triumphant, the echoes sounded strong and unflinching - almost proud. Accepting - yes, the singer accepted the challenge of sorrow and did not let it defeat him.

The song lifted Vincent out of himself, made him remember every detail of that night they had sat here, listening ... and then been startled by a thunderclap and lightning, visible even from their hidden spot. And the sounds of people running away.

The song made him realize that the singer knew what it was like to lose a loved one. For himself, indeed, only darkness remained. There was the dark and empty spot in his heart, in the tunnels, in his life. The rain - the sorrow - didn't leave him. Rain was running down through the grate now, although not as hard as it had that night. He felt the drops that splashed off the grating onto his face and let them collect and run down him, as they had that night too. They gave him the tears he couldn't shed.

And Catherine had stood, just there, soaking up the rain as if it were a benediction and he had looked up at her, struck dumb by her beauty and her joy as she turned around, looked up and put her hands behind her head, laughing like a child. Then she had looked at him, inviting him to join in her happiness, which he had with a smile, perhaps even join her in her rain dance, which he had not.



And he had called her name only in his mind.

Then she had thrown herself on him and they had lain in the rain together, and he had felt her joy and hugged her lightly, wanting that moment to last forever.

They were both soaked by the time they made their way back to her threshold, she more than he, with her light dress. Yet she had not shivered, or even seemed uncomfortable. He could tell she was still happy, energized, full of love for him - and it warmed him too.

*"Running down... "*

*Ahhhhh ah ah ahhhh ah na na*

*Na na na na na na na na*

*Ohhhh oh ah ohhhh ah na na*

*Running downwwwn..." \**

Vincent played the song again, and let it wash away all his sorrow this time, for now. It would return, he knew, but thanks to this song, it did not inundate him, or disable him and it often did, even now. He could think, enjoy his memory, let it sooth, rather than scour him.

Gentle as rain, he felt his heart beat to the song, uplift him.

"Oh Catherine," he whispered to the air. A little magic made it seem as if she was there again, the slight weight of her body on his, her heart speaking to his through their bond.

He let the memory come, give him solace, give him love once again.

When the music finished, he turned off the player, closed his eyes, and sighed.

He heard her voice, from another memorable time.

*"Listen! You can hear it if you try... the music..."*

"Yes... I hear it, Catherine. Always," he whispered to the chamber.

END

*\* Josh Groban, 'Remember When it Rained' (2003)*