

Softly does it

by Angie



Catherine was rooting around in an unsorted box of yarns that had come from Above recently. It had obviously not been needed for their previous project, making scarves, so had been shoved to the wall and more or less forgotten. She wanted something to do, as she still had some time off from work. Mary was there, but merely waved and greeted her, knowing that the younger woman would ask her if she needed help.

Catherine was not familiar with a lot of yarn, having never taken up knitting or crocheting until meeting Vincent and spending more time in the tunnels. Nevertheless, she was learning to recognize types. It was fun seeing what yarns showed up, or what Mary had sorted, and trying to decide what to do with it. She was not a great crafter, so tended to do simple things, but she enjoyed the stress relief it offered, especially after days in the DA's office, which never seemed to get any less harried.

Her hand touched something in a bag that felt pillowy. Curious, she winkled it out of the box. She noticed she left the box nearly empty – it was a huge bag. As she brought it into the light, her mouth fell open.

"Good lord," she exclaimed. Mary, attracted by the enormous bag, came over to her, and her eyebrows went up too. Catherine opened the bag and lifted out a line of soft chenille loops. She did recognize chenille when she saw it – it had been a 'thing' a few years ago – and didn't everyone have a chenille robe? She certainly did and gladly used it in the tunnels.

"What on earth do you make with this?" she asked Mary, fingering it. "And how? I don't think you can knit with this – or crochet."

It was a lovely medium blue and very thick. There was also a great deal of it, in what had once been a vacuum storage bag. There was no label or anything else in the bag to give a clue as to how it should be used.

Mary shook her head in wonder. "I don't know. I've never seen anything like it."

"Well, perhaps I should try. I was a Girl Scout, maybe I can figure something out. I guess it's fingers only - the loops are sure large enough."

Mary smiled at her. "Take it all, Catherine, and if you do find a way to use it, let me know."

Catherine smiled back. She loved a challenge and this stuff would at least be soft to play with, although she wondered how tough it was and whether it would stand much revising, if she made a mistake.

She carried the bag to Vincent's chamber and sat in his big chair, where the light was best. Perhaps a throw would be best, she thought, and she found an end and pulled out enough length to make that possible. Now she would just need to work on the width.

She began to weave one loop through another in a chain, which turned out to be easy as long as she didn't pull them too hard. She had only worked a few loops, though, when she stopped, and berated herself for her stupidity. She must consider how to do the next row and if she used all the loops, that would be impossible. So she undid them and worked alternate loops, chaining each one in logical order and repeating the sequence. By the end of the row, she realized she 'had' it. Waiting were the extra loops for the second row. She figured out how to turn the row neatly, then completed the next row and stopped to examine her work.

"Wow!" she whispered. It looked like chain links, or weaving. The technique reminded her of something, likely some craft from long ago. No matter, she had done it, and felt a charge of pride. She wasn't *just* a good lawyer after all.

Catherine sat working the loops until she had used up the first of the skeins, and then realized she would need more and tied the next one on. It went quickly and she had soon produced something rectangular that was growing into a lap blanket, something she often wished she had here below, because of the chilly drafts. Another ball was added and she had made a sensible size for herself.

An added advantage was that the blanket warmed her legs as she was working on it, so obviously even light as it was, it was warm too.

Looking in the bag, there was enough for at least two or three more – or something else entirely. A shawl for Mary perhaps? Yes, that was only fair.

She was smiling happily and humming while working on the next project, when Vincent walked in soft-footed as usual, and this time unnoticed. He immediately stopped, taken with the sight of his love surrounded by fluffy stuff he had never seen before. He so rarely caught her unawares that he held his breath. She was obviously enjoying what she was doing.

"Catherine?" he said softly, at last.

She looked over at him and her smile broadened. "I found something to play with that's even softer than you," she remarked, working her eyebrows suggestively.

Vincent got her meaning immediately and blushed, but that didn't stop him from going over to see what she was doing. He felt the yarn and it was indeed soft ... as soft as ... dare he?

"Catherine, it's almost as soft as your ..."

"Don't say it Vincent," she begged, interrupting him. "I want to finish this without mistakes. You can tell me later, Love, although I'm sure I could guess."

"*Harrumph*, that's hardly fair," Vincent opined.

"I'll make it up to you, I promise," Catherine whispered.

And with that he had to be content – because she always kept *those* promises.

