

You Are My Sunshine

by Angie

Vincent followed the tinkling sound to his chamber and then stopped before going in. He could hear the tune now, and it was familiar. Then he remembered where he had heard it. He quickly turned around and walked swiftly to the Chamber of the Falls, then made his way to the ledge he and Catherine often sat and did so again, dejected.

"What can I do, Catherine?" he asked the air, knowing he wouldn't get an answer. "Everything seems to remind me of you ... of my loss."

The tune he'd heard, obviously from a music box of some kind, was "*You Are My Sunshine*", and he had heard it one evening in Catherine's apartment. She was smiling broadly when he had arrived on her balcony and he could feel her happiness like a tonic. She was watching an old western on TV. He had gone in and sat down beside her, wanting to get as close as possible, so as to share her happiness.

She had taken his hand and held it to her heart.

"It's Gene Autry, the singing cowboy," she told him. "I think he made that song famous. I remember it on a little coloured 45 rpm record we played when I was a child. I had a small pink record player. One of my cousins was addicted to this song and he always brought it with him when his family visited. I don't think I've heard it since, although I do remember reading someplace that it's the State Song of Louisiana. I think the man who wrote it came from there."

"Do you know the words?" Vincent asked hopefully. He had not really been paying attention, basking in her happiness rather than the music.

"I think I remember some of them let me think ,... yeah. The part I remember is the refrain and I guess everyone remembers that."

She began to sing it softly ...

"You are my sunshine, my only sunshine

You make me happy when skies are grey

You'll never know dear, how much I love you

Please don't take my sunshine away"

Vincent sighed. "You are my sunshine, Catherine. Please don't ever leave me without it."

"You know I won't, Vincent," she told him, kissing the hand she held.

He gathered her in his arms and they sat that way for some time.

It was one of the most enjoyable evenings they had ever had, free of worry, just each other and that old western.

Looking now at the great falls, Vincent felt as if his heart would break, not for the first time, but just as intensely. Catherine had indeed been his sunshine, not just his link with the daylight world, but the sunshine of his life when she was with him. And now she was gone and had left him in darkness – through no fault of her own or his. He didn't try to stifle a sob. No one could hear him in this place.

He looked up as it suddenly got much brighter around him. The sun in the world above was shining down on the upper part of the falls, beautiful in its intensity. Despite himself, it lifted his spirits.

He wasn't without sunshine! It was as if the world above had chosen to remind him that the sunshine came even to their dark world. It was as if Catherine had heard him and reminded him.

He closed his eyes, feeling suddenly much better.

"Thank you Catherine," he said softly. He wanted to believe she was with him still, somehow. It helped.

When he got back to his chamber, there was no one there, but there was a little music box shaped like a harp on his table. He wound the handle and this time he listened to the whole tune, marvelling at the old technology used in what was obviously a new kit. The children had obviously decided he needed it to cheer him up.

It did. The tune didn't make him sad now, just reminded him that there was more than one kind of sunshine – and there were many that still remained in his life.

He smiled gratefully.



"You Are My Sunshine", sung by Gene Autry

<https://youtu.be/1AhpWZjqMLI?si=N99VacTu2OzgBGeS>

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