

Vignettes – Passion

by Angie

9. Song of Orpheus

I hold onto Vincent as if he is a lifeline. He is - in all the ways that matter. I need to do this, to reassure myself, after what Father told me. I can't believe he said such a thing about Vincent. And why should my love hurt him? And why did he feel he had to tell me that Vincent is only partly a man?

I was furious, but a busy New York subway entrance was not the place to face Father down.

Vincent IS different, there is no denying that, but he is different in ways that transcend the way he looks. He's the most compassionate and caring man I have ever known. Whatever made him what he is, I know that his passion for what he believes goes very deep. He truly feels for people.

Father did not say what he thought the rest of Vincent is, but I deeply resent the implication. Does he say that to Vincent too? Has this man I love already been made too aware of what Father thinks he is - or is not?

I put my head on Vincent's chest. He will feel my anger, but I don't care. It's possible that he already knows what Father told me.

I'm glad I could help Father be reunited with Margaret - and that they had seven days to enjoy each other's company. Despite his obvious dislike of me - no doubt because he thought me a woman of privilege like Margaret, and subject to her character flaws, I was able to extract him from jail and help save Margaret from that smirking leech. Of course Father said he was grateful - but he just had to let me know that he still had doubts.

The man is impossible! I sympathize with his grief at this time, but he will have to accept that Vincent and I are not going to give up our friendship - not for him or anyone.

Vincent has changed since I first met him. He is more inclined to let me see his emotions now. Tonight they are running high, I can tell, so possibly he will not notice mine. He is just a little envious that Father and Margaret had seven days together - his last words confirm it.

It's true that our passion must be measured in minutes, hours at best, but every moment we have is precious.

I am encouraged that Vincent does want to see more of me. I will have to make the effort to make more time. I cannot let my work diminish what we have. It is too precious.

Holding Catherine in my arms like this, I feel as if the world has stopped and this moment will last forever. There can be no doubt - I love her. I know she loves me too. I can feel it through our bond.

Tonight, her emotions are strong and somewhat confused. I can feel anger and I wonder at that. I know it is not for me, so at what - or whom - is it directed? I don't doubt she is not happy with the justice system she is sworn to defend, but that cannot be what is upsetting her. That anger is different. A person, then. I can only think one - Father!

Father returned to the tunnels, after Catherine freed him, in a thoughtful mood. I saw his face before he realized Margaret was waiting for him. He was unhappy, but more than that. When he looked at me, he

had a look that I used to see when he caught me at some mischief as a child. As if he could not believe I had done such a thing and was disappointed. It was speculative, as if he was measuring me against other children who are ... wholly human.

I can only think of one reason for him to look at me that way, and it explains the anger I can feel in Catherine. He must have said something to her about me. I can imagine what.

Father is overprotective. He has never accepted that I might be able to have what other men take for granted. His dire warnings and doubts are a part of who I am now. They have made me very careful, as he well knows. But his words to Catherine must have been about our love - and she has not accepted it, so I must not either.

Why does he insist on this point of view? What does he imagine will happen? Lisa was a long time ago. I am not a teenager now. I resent this attitude of his, even as I realize he may think he knows something I do not.

But with Catherine held close to me like this, so precious, so wonderful, I cannot worry about what Father supposes. I can feel her deep enjoyment of our time together - time which is never long enough.

I never thought I could envy another's love, but the seven days Father spent with Margaret were almost frantic, as they tried to make up for the lost years. Their passion was evident in every look they gave each other, in the way they held hands, hugged. Such a precious few days, yet filled with joy and love.

Will Catherine and I ever have more than a few minutes or hours together at any one time? How long can we curb our passion? Can our love survive on such lean offerings?

We must not complain. We are healthy and there is no danger here on her balcony, the bridge between our worlds. Here we can talk about anything, and here our passion has an outlet.

I cannot think beyond this, now, but I know I will when I am back in my chamber. Catherine will too, I am sure, when her anger subsides.

Someday, we will discover where our passion will take us. I believe that. I must. The alternative is unthinkable.

END