



### Season 3



Vincent sighed deeply as bittersweet memories swirled around him like the myriad of dust motes in the beam of light shining down from her apartment building above him.

If he closed his eyes he could almost hear the echoes of years now passed. 'Vincent,' she would say breathlessly. *'I've missed you so!'* as she threw herself into his open arms.

Three years had passed since Catherine's death, but from time to time he still found comfort standing here at the threshold beneath her building.

*How many times did I watch her descend those rungs?* he wondered.

He smiled wistfully, remembering how her face would radiate with joy as soon as she saw him standing there in the dim light. It still took his breath away to recall the wonder and miracle it was to feel her love pouring into his soul.

The Bond they had shared was like nothing he had ever known. Even the Bond he now shared with his son was different. And the empathic connection he shared with Diana was no more than what he shared with other members of his Tunnel family.

*How can I offer Diana anything,* he asked himself. *...when so much of my heart still belongs to you, Catherine?*

“Your heart was made to love and be loved, Vincent.”

The voice was soft, barely audible really, but he instantly recognized it.

Vincent looked toward the voice and focused on the ethereal image of the woman he had lost. “Catherine?” he asked in disbelief. He shook his head, convinced he must be hallucinating.

“There is room enough in your heart,” she continued. “...for the love you still have for me *and* the love you have for everyone else in your life... *including Diana.*”



Shaking his head he replied with conviction, “No, Catherine... I will never be able to love Diana the way I loved you... *I can't.*”

With a voice filled with compassion, she spoke again, “It’s true... you won’t. But consider all the people in your world who you love. Isn’t the love you feel for each of them different?

“What are you saying? What do you mean?”

“I’m saying that just because your love for Diana is different from the love we shared... doesn’t make it any less real... it doesn’t make it any less true.”

“I don’t have the strength,” he said dejectedly. “I *don’t* know how to do it.”

“You *have* the strength, Vincent... **you do**,” she insisted. “I know you. What you have endured has made you stronger... *better*.”

“No, Catherine... I lost you... I can’t bear the thought of losing anyone like that again.”

“You haven’t lost me, Vincent. I’m a part of you... You *must* know that... You can never truly lose me... not as long as you remember...”

“Remember?”

“*Remember love.*” She glowed with it, as she reminded him.

He was speechless. The beautiful sight of her still took his breath away, even though he knew he was probably dreaming.

“**Remember love**,” she repeated insistently. “Let the memory of the love we shared give you the courage to love again.”

“But Catherine, I...” Shaking his head, he tried to explain. “A part of me feels that...” His voice faltered.

“Tell me, Vincent,” she prodded tenderly. “Tell me what it is that you feel.”

“I feel as if by loving another woman... by loving Diana... that I... I would dishonor... you,” he admitted reluctantly.

“Vincent...” she sighed. “Don’t you see? You would dishonor me if you *don’t*.”

“I don’t understand,” he said, clearly confused.

“You once said that I was the end of your ‘aloneness.’” She reminded him, smiling wistfully at the memory.

“Yes, I did... *you were*.”

“Do you believe that I want you to be alone again? Seeing you suffer... seeing your pain does *not* ‘honor’ my memory. It mocks everything we were... *together*... It mocks the gift we were to each other.”

He felt suddenly ashamed for grieving her so deeply. “I’m sorry, Catherine.”

“Don’t be sorry, Vincent. Your grief is normal... *it’s real*. But it shouldn’t last forever.

“I saw how Diana cared for you when you were injured. Then how she rescued you and Jacob from Gabriel... how she avenged my death to protect you... how she looked at our son when she held him in her arms on his naming day. She’s been there for both of you in ways that I no longer can. Diana is offering you a second chance at happiness... a second chance at love.”

Vincent was beginning to understand what Catherine was trying to say to him, but he wanted to be sure. “It sounds as if you are... giving me your blessing to—”

She smiled, pleased that he was beginning to understand. “*My blessing...* is the only thing I have left to give you... and I give it... freely. I **want** you **to live**, Vincent... I want you to experience every gift that life has to offer... free of guilt, free of regret. *That...* is my last gift to you.

The sound of voices and footsteps Above interrupted them.

A look of sadness crossed her face. “I have to go,” she said. “I’ve already stayed too long.”

“No! Catherine, I... I don’t want you to go,” he pleaded.



“I’ve lingered near you for too long already... That’s what grief is, you know. My father tried to tell me once. I understand it now. It’s time... time for me to move further away... so that **you** may move forward.”

She sighed, her eyes glistening with tears. “But please know, Vincent... that I will love you, and carry you with me... *in me...* *Always.*”

The apparition evaporated in the misty light as mysteriously as she had appeared.

Silent tears streamed down his cheeks.

“Always...” he whispered as he sunk to the floor. “Always... always... always...”

