

MOONBEAM 5

by Jackie Kapke

Catherine had wanted to go swimming in the warm mineral springs. It was late enough that they would have the place to themselves. Arriving, she teased Vincent about still being shy when it came to undressing in front of her.

"It's hard for me to break with old habits," he told her as he took her blossoming body gently in his arms and nuzzled her neck.

This evoked an immediate, delighted giggle and she said, "If you can look at me in the full bloom of pregnancy, I must be allowed to look at you as well," she told her beautiful husband.

"This is only fair," he said softly, as he stepped out of his pants and allowed her to glance over his body before pulling her back into his arms once again.

Entering the soothing water, they cavorted and played until Vincent saw that Catherine was tiring. As her pregnancy advanced, he became progressively more tender and solicitous of her. The sight of her still excited him beyond belief, but he knew that he must keep his passion under tight control. Each time they loved, it seemed so new, there was still so much to learn. He was so glad now that those many months ago, he had summoned the courage to fulfill their dream - to give in to the sexual desires and needs he could no longer fight.

He smiled to himself, wondering why he had not given in sooner. He chided himself, for he had certainly been missing the most indescribable joy of his life.

Leaving the tepid water, they chose a spot to lie where the moonbeam danced. They were both in the direct rays of the diffuse light filtering down through the ceiling and reflecting off the still water. Vincent had made their place soft and warm with towels, pillows and himself. They lay close, touched and loved.

In the quiet, Vincent reflected on his happiness. *He had finally been able to give Catherine that which she so desperately wanted. Yes, his love and more importantly, a child, 'his' child.* He still had serious doubts, however, in the wisdom of their decision. But, there was no turning back now and he knew she was overjoyed.

Catherine had told him in one of her more carefree moments that she wanted to '*fill the tunnels with their offspring.*' They would '*deafen everyone with the pitter-patter of their tiny little feet,*' she had added.

"And they will give their grandfather not a moment's rest." Vincent fondly remembered how they had both chuckled over that.

In a serious tone, Catherine said, holding his face between her palms, "More than anything I want our child to look like you, Vincent."

Her words touched him so that tears filled his eyes and soon streamed down his cheeks and he kissed the delicate fingers still resting there.

She held his face a little tighter, a fierce conviction in her lovely voice. "I won't want it to end with you, Vincent. You are so beautiful. There should be more of you - of your kind!"

He sadly shook his head, softly admonishing her as he said her name. He knew that she truly believed what she said, but, he was unable to understand why.

Catherine began sensually rubbing his chest and ran her hands through his thick, coarse hair. "I mean it, Vincent, with all my heart."

He hugged her close, whispering, "I know, I know you do, my love." He kissed and embraced her closer. Her tears began to flow, merging with his, as she realized he accepted her words, but did not believe them. She shivered and snuggled closer to his breast, as he wrapped a large towel closer around them.

"You're too perfect not to have been conceived intentionally," she murmured.

He dropped his head, the color rising in his cheeks as she continued her train of thought. "I feel this deep inside me and know it to be true."

"Catherine, it is not in my destiny, to procreate. One such as I is surely enough in this world."

"Why do you say that?" she asked.

"Catherine, is it not obvious?"

"No, it is not! Why then did the Lord make you so sensual, masculine and alluring?"

Vincent had to chuckle a little at this statement, despite himself. She was amazing, her love, truly blind.

"Only to entrap you, my dear." He pulled her closer, but then quietly whispered in her ear. "But you are the only one that thinks me so, Catherine."

"Oh?" she responded, pulling away to look into his face. "What about Lena? She still loves you. If I'd let you go, she'd snatch you up in a second. Then, there's Lisa, who also confided in me. She said she'd made the biggest mistake in her life, leaving you and your love. She was stunned by the fascinating man you'd grown into."

"Lisa said'..."

"Yes. Then there's Jessica, Jamie, Brooke. They *'all'* have said how amazing you are, charming and sexy."

"Catherine!"

"It's true, should I go on?"

"No, please." He had had no idea that he had affected these women in this way.

With one finger, she stroked his lower lip, and he gazed down at her lying at his side.

"I hope part of the purpose in your creation was to love me. I am all the more happier because of your love. And Vincent, I am so glad to be carrying your child, *'your'* child. It's such a wonderful thing!"

He bent to kiss her, knowing she spoke the truth of her heart. *But, how could she know the pain and torment, the aloneness a child born like his would have to endure.* No one but he could ever know this.

He had given Catherine his child, but he secretly prayed with all his heart that it would be normal, like its mother, without a trace of his genes, features and capacity for rage. He lay his head on her breast as he softly stroked her rounded stomach, his fears for Catherine and their unborn child intensified. *What if Catherine had a difficult labor? She could even die.* This was going to be a large baby, they could already tell, and she was so petite. He tried to force these thoughts from his mind.

If this child 'did' carry his genes, resemble him, have his odd features; it would be their only one. He could not give her another. He would not produce a line of beings like himself. To have allowed this to happen already may have been a grave mistake on their part.

Catherine lay still, almost sensing what he thought, feeling his turmoil as his fingers caressed her abdomen.

"Vincent, don't you even start thinking it's going to stop with this child. I want a 'big' family."

He quickly raised his face, to look into hers. He was startled. It was as if she had read his very thoughts.

"Our children will be loved and wanted, whoever they look like," she assured him. "They will know joy, family and friends."

"But, Catherine..."

"No buts. If your fear is that they will be alone, you are wrong. They will 'never' be alone, we'll see to that. We will have each other. And they will have something you never had. They will grow up knowing 'you', Vincent. They'll have a 'father' just like themselves. I should be the one worrying, for 'I' may be the odd man out. But, it doesn't bother me in the least. It would be so wonderful!"

"They will grow up knowing our love. They'll know a father who loves them and is a most amazing man. They will be proud to be like you, and perhaps you can help them through hard times if they arise, for you've already gone through these experiences. They'll know a mother who considers her mate the most beautiful, perfect, sensuous, kind and considerate man in all the world."

She stopped and smiled at him then, her eyes opening wide as she enjoyed the soft rays of light sparkling in his hair. As she continued to look at him, her breath caught as she wondered if he was truly real. *He is so gorgeous, she thought, and some day, he will believe it.*

"Catherine..."

Oh, no, not that tone, she thought. He was going to start the debate all over again. She pulled him down to her, both fists clenched tightly around thick bunches of his hair.

"No more protests! Do you hear me?" she announced in lighthearted sternness, kissing his lips fiercely. "Remember your vows? You will obey me! And we 'will' be fruitful and multiply."

"I don't recall 'that' last part in our vows, Catherine," he said softly.

"Well, be that as it may. You 'did' promise the former."

He sighed and a deep rumbling in his throat relayed that he was through arguing, for now. But,

both knew, the discussion was not yet over. It had just been set aside for the time being.

He took on a playful mood and tone as he asked, "Catherine, about what you said earlier - you wouldn't let me go and leave me to Lena, would you?"

She grabbed his hair and neck, forcing him onto his side and she pressed as close as she could, with her ever-increasing girth. He moaned with the feel of her against him.

"No, I'll '*never*' let you go. '*Never!*' She can't have you. You're all mine... forever." Catherine said this in a playfully melodramatic voice, but meant every word of it.

Vincent's reply of, "Yes, forever!" was lost, as she captured his lips to her.

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