

May God Hold You In His Hands



A Beauty and the Beast Story

By: Jennifer Thompson

May God Hold You In His Hands
**A Beauty and the Beast Novella by
Jennifer Thompson**

Based on the series created by Ron Koslow

Acknowledgements

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To Mrs. Lowry, wherever you are..."you taught me to run, you taught me to fly, helped me to be the me inside..." without you this would've never been possible.

To Justin, my Devin, you're my fan and I am yours..."Listening to you, I get the music, gazing at you, I get the feet, following you, I climb the mountain, I get excitement at your feet..."

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Author's Preface

I was 15 when Beauty and the Beast went off the air. I can remember the emotions I felt when I discovered it was going to be cancelled. Suddenly part of my life was disappearing and I had no control over it. Within the first year of it's cancellation I began putting my tapes away and finding other things to do with my life instead. By the time I was 20 it was all but forgotten. The only remnants of my previous obsession were two pewter figurines of Catherine and Vincent and my companion book. The rest were away, in storage somewhere, long forgotten.

Every Halloween until I was 23 I would watch "Masques." A tradition that had been upheld somehow for many years. But for some reason, even with watching that episode I wasn't encouraged to look up some of the other tapes. Even that went by the wayside eventually, at least for two years. Then last October I vowed to continue that tradition. Around 8pm I pulled out my copy of "Masques" and watched it. After it was over my mom asked me if I had any other episodes on tape. Pulling out my first season tapes I found the pilot and we watched that together. In those two hours I was pulled back into the magic, pulled back into the love, and pulled back into fandom once again. The next day I started looking on the internet and found that I was not alone. Ten years after it's demise, Beauty and the Beast has more fans then ever. The fairy tale would live on.

During this adventure in cyberspace I discovered something called fanfiction. Being a writer since I was little, I wanted to give it a try. A month later I had my first story on the 'net, with more to come. By St. Paddy's Day 2000, I had completed my first zine, a novella titled "May God Hold You In His Hands." This zine was a St. Paddy's Day gift for some friends and family, but within a month I decided to share it with the rest of fandom. This is the second edition, and I hope you enjoy it.

This story is dedicated to all of us who have come back; who were never far away, fairy tales never die.

An Irish Blessing

*May the road rise to meet you,
May the wind be always at your back,
May the sun shine warm upon your face,
The rain fall soft upon your fields,
And until we meet again,
May God hold you in the palm of his hand.*

Chapter One: The Import Shop

Catherine walked down the street to a small shop specializing in Irish imports and books. She has gone to this shop many times before. Often looking for the latest release by Brigit O'Donnell. She knew the shops owner quite well.

"Hi Fiona, I'm looking for the new Brigit O'Donnell," Catherine said walking inside.

"Hi Cathy. You're very lucky, we just got a shipment in this morning," Fiona said with a thick Irish accent. She was in her early 20's with long curly blonde hair and twinkling green eyes. Handing her the book, Catherine heard a voice from behind the counter.

"Fiona. I'm really hungry," the voice said.

"We will get something for lunch in a minute," Fiona said. "I'm sorry, I have custody of my 4 year old nephew. My sister died a few weeks ago and I'm the only relative he had." Putting her head in her hands Fiona asked, "Why am I telling you all this?"

"That's ok," Catherine said gently. Leaning over the counter she saw the small boy. He had hair as curly as his aunt's and eyes just as green. "Hello Joseph,"

"Say hi to Cathy, Joseph. She's a friend."

"Hi Cathy," Joseph said looking at her with his fingers in his mouth.

"So where is his father?" Catherine asked quietly.

"In Ireland still. He had my sister flee with Joseph right after he was born. He feared for their safety," Fiona explained quietly.

"Why is that?"

"He was part of the IRA and my family was a prominent Protestant family. When my sister showed up pregnant my father was devastated. He kicked her out. She came here to live with me and try and make a life for Joseph, but that was impossible," Fiona said sighing heavily. "When my sister took sick with cancer Joseph Sr. couldn't even come to see her. The IRA vowed to kill him if he tried to leave. I want to get Joseph back to him but I don't know how to do it without putting our lives in danger."

"That seems absurd. Why would they kill him if he left?"

"Because they knew he would go and see her. She was a threat to the IRA because of who her family was. They'd rather see him dead than telling the secrets of the IRA."

"Why didn't he just quit?"

"He would've if he could, Cathy. But he wouldn't pay for it with his life," Fiona said with a deep sigh.

"That's so sad," Catherine said with her forehead wrinkling.

"It's a way of life in Ireland, unfortunately. Even with the peace talks the IRA refuses to submit to the English. I just want to get Joseph back to his father," leaning over Fiona said quietly. "I'd keep him myself, but I can't afford it and it isn't right. He needs to be with a parent."

Thinking for a moment Catherine began digging through her purse. Pulling out a business card she handed it to Fiona. "Here is my card. I'm with the DA's office. I might be able to help you. Please give me your phone number and I will get back to you."

"You really think you can help me?" Fiona asked skeptically.

"I have a connection in Ireland who is familiar with these kinds of cases. I think she can help me," Catherine said.

"Thank you so much. Oh look at me! I got so busy talking I didn't even ring up the book. It's \$29.95."

"Here's \$30.00," Catherine said handing her a wad of bills. Collecting her change and the book she told Fiona she would call her as soon as she knew anything.

"Thank you so much," Fiona said waving as she walked out the door.

* * * * *

Walking back to work Catherine wondered what time it was in Ireland. Back at her desk she went through her Rolodex file finding a small slip of paper in the "O" section. Opening it up she read the note again with a smile.

Thank you so much for your help. Keep the dream alive!

Love, Brigit

Her number was listed at the bottom of the page.

Picking up the phone she dialed. She knew it was late there, but hoped Brigit wouldn't be asleep. No such luck as she heard a very sleepy "hello" after the fourth ring.

"Hi Brigit. I'm so sorry I woke you up."

"Catherine? Oh don't worry about it. It's so nice to hear your voice again,"

Brigit said brightening up a bit.

"It's good to hear yours too. I have a question to ask you," she said explaining the story of Fiona and Joseph.

"Ah, I know that story too well, don't I?" Brigit said sympathetically. Her husband was killed by a car bomb several years ago.

"What should I do?" Catherine asked.

"If you can bring them to me I will be able to do something to ensure their safety," Brigit said assuredly. "You have such a heart Catherine."

"I learned from the best,"

"Be sure to tell Vincent a warm hello from me and call me when you have the arrangements made,"

"I will," Catherine said. "Goodnight." Pushing down to disconnect she called her travel agent to get rates for a flight to Ireland in three days. She figured it would take her that long to tie up any loose ends and prepare to leave Vincent.

Picking up the phone again she quickly dialed the import shop. "Fiona. I have everything taken care of. Can you leave in three days?"

"Of course I can!" Fiona said. Grabbing a piece of paper she wrote down all the details. "I'm to meet you at the DA's office at 5:00 am on Sunday. Okay. I will see you then. You don't know how much this means to me!"

Hanging up the phone Fiona turned around to Joseph who was sitting wide-eyed on a chair. "Guess what? We're going to meet your Daddy!"

* * * * *

Walking to the lunch counter Catherine saw Joe grabbing a pastrami sandwich and a coke.

"Looks good Joe," she said ordering a veggie sandwich and a diet Coke. "I need a week off."

"Don't we all Radcliffe," Joe said jokingly as he picked up his sandwich.

"No, I'm serious. I need to take next week off. I would've told you sooner, but I didn't find out until today," Catherine said picking up her order.

"Where are you going?"

"Ireland."

"Looking for the proverbial pot of gold? Let me tell you a secret..." Joe said whispering in her ear. "It isn't there."

"There's a woman who works at an Irish Import shop," Catherine began telling him the story. After she was finished she looked up expectantly.

"Ok Radcliffe. You can go," Joe said sighing.

"Thank you so much!" Catherine said giving Joe a hug and a kiss on the cheek.

Chapter Two: Leaving

That night Catherine met Vincent on her terrace.

"I'm sorry I have to go," she said after she told him the story.

"I will miss you tremendously when you are gone, but I understand why you need to go," Vincent said giving her a hug. "I will be counting the days until you return."

"So will I Vincent, so will I," Catherine said holding him close. "I should be back before Thursday."

"Don't worry about it Catherine. We can celebrate when you get back," Vincent said after they released. "Be sure to give Brigit my best wishes."

"I will. Oh I almost forgot, I bought her new book for you," Catherine said walking back into her bedroom and picking it up. Walking back onto the terrace she handed it to him. "That was why I went into the shop today."

"Michael Collins: An Irish Dream," Vincent said reading the title. "I understand her new book is about how he founded the IRA,"

"I don't understand how this conflict even started, but I hope to learn why when I'm there," Catherine said quietly. "I will stop by tomorrow before I go."

"I will be waiting for you," Vincent said giving her a kiss on the forehead and a hug.

* * * * *

Saturday morning Catherine went to the travel agent to pick up the tickets. Then she went to the bank to convert some of her dollars into traveler's checks. Going back home she decided to start packing.

Wondering how cold Ireland can get she pulled out sweaters and turtlenecks, dresses, slacks, khakis, and jeans. She also picked out a business suit just in case she needed to look like a lawyer. Realizing her favorite blouse was wrinkled she pulled out the iron and ironing board. As she laid out the blouse she heard the doorbell ring.

"Coming!" She said running to the door and opening it. "Joe?"

"I wanted to stop by and tell you to have a good trip," he said walking into her living room.

"Thank you Joe," she said walking into the kitchen. "Would you like something to drink?"

"No thanks," he said sitting on a chair. "So are you nervous about going?"

"Kind of. I really don't know what I'm going to be walking into until I get there," Catherine said sitting on the couch.

"Just watch your back and you should be ok," Joe said. "I'll be praying for you."

"Thanks. I think everything is going to work out. Brigit O'Donnell is going to let us stay with her."

"Oh, the peace activist. She's the one who you were kidnapped with on Halloween two years ago."

"Don't remind me. That was a crazy night," Catherine said quickly. She didn't want Joe to ask her about Sean O'Riley, the man sent to kidnap Brigit. They never did figure out how he died. Catherine didn't wish to make up another story again.

"Well hopefully nothing like that will happen in Ireland. Although I would be a bit nervous about staying at her house."

"Oh, I'm not worried at all. She has a lot of bodyguards," Catherine explained.

"Well I should be going. I don't want to keep you from your packing. Just be careful Radcliffe," Joe said getting off the chair and giving her a quick hug.

"I will," Catherine said smiling. "I will see you when I get back."

* * * * *

Later on that evening Edie came over to help her finish packing. Anytime Catherine needed to go on a trip for work Edie would come over the night before. They would usually spend more time packing than talking, however.

"Girlfriend. What aren't you taking with you?" Edie asked shaking her head. Looking at Catherine's bed she saw clothes strewn all over it.

"I know," Catherine said putting slacks and blouses into a suitcase.

"Looks like you are going away for a month," looking up at Catherine she saw tears streaming down her face. "What's wrong honey?"

"I don't know. I guess I'm just nervous," Catherine said wiping her tears.

"You'll be fine Cathy," Edie said reaching out to give her a hug. "He'll be

"What are you talking about Edie?" Catherine said looking up quickly.

"Don't think I don't know girlfriend. You've been working with me for over two years now without one hint of a man being in your life except Elliot Burch. Yet when you go to California and now to Ireland you act like you are leaving someone behind. Now honey, I know you've got a man stashed away somewhere."

"You've got me Edie," Catherine said with a sigh. "I am seeing someone. I've been seeing him for over two years."

"Then why doesn't he ever come around?" Edie asked with her eyes getting big. She wanted the juicy details.

"He's very busy. Maybe someday you will meet him," Catherine said thinking about a dream she once had. She dreamt that Vincent and her were walking together in the daylight. Vincent ordered her some ice cream and no one said a word about it.

"Don't worry about it Cathy. As long as he makes you happy that's all that matters," Edie said reaching out to touch her shoulder.

"He makes me very happy Edie," Catherine said with a small sigh. "Very happy,"

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That night she went below to see Vincent. She felt herself walking quickly through the maze of tunnels as she went further and further down. She couldn't bear the thought of being away from him for a week but she knew she had to be strong. In the past year they had become closer and closer and Catherine found

herself going down Below more often than not. She spent most of her weekends down there as well. She couldn't remember the last time more than a day went by without seeing him. With tears in her eyes she entered his chamber.

Looking up from a book Vincent stood up and walked over to her. Pulling her into his arms he gently stroked her hair. "I sense that this trip is distressing you,"

"Yes," Catherine said looking up at him "Between leaving you and walking into such a dangerous situation I'm questioning why I decided to go in the first place."

"Because you want this little boy to be reunited with his father," Vincent said gently releasing her.

"I can't remember the last time I went a day without seeing you. This is going to be so hard to be so far away from you," Catherine said sitting down on the bed. Putting her hands in her face she began crying again.

Kneeling down Vincent gently took her hands away from her face. Leaning in closer he gave her a soft kiss on the mouth. "I will be there with you. I'll feel your joy when you first set foot on Ireland's beautiful soil. And I will feel your courage as you negotiate to return this boy to his father. And I will feel your love when you are on the plane coming back, knowing that you are that closer to seeing me again."

Looking down at his face Catherine began crying again. This time the tears of sadness were mixed with tears of joy. "I love you so much," she said

"I love you too Catherine."

* * * * *

The next morning Catherine collected all her luggage and grabbed a cab to the criminal courts building. Rubbing her eyes she tried to wake up. Five in the morning was not an easy hour to be awake as it is, but last night she found herself not coming back Above until after midnight. She smiled to herself thinking about the kiss Vincent gave her. Even though they had been together for nearly three years their kisses were few and far between. Despite wanting a more physical relationship with him, Catherine had grown accustomed to the courtship style of their relationship. And she had to admit it did make the kisses between them all the more special. After they talked about her leaving, they started reading Shakespeare's sonnets to each other for over two hours. She was quite upset when she realized how late it had gotten, but having Vincent walk her back to her apartment made it all worth it. After hugging him tightly for several minutes she said a quick goodbye before going back to her apartment. As soon as she came in the door she fell asleep on the bed with all her clothes on. That's how she woke up Sunday morning.

Puling up to the criminal courts building she could see Fiona was waiting for her.

"Thank you for doing this," Fiona said hugging Catherine tightly.

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"It's your turn," Father said with a sigh. This was about the tenth time he caught Vincent staring into space instead of paying attention to the chess game they were playing.

"I'm sorry Father. I'm just not in the mood to play chess right now," Vincent said apologetically.

"Catherine will be back," Father said sympathetically.

"I know that Father," Vincent said standing up. "But I feel her getting further and further away."

Chapter Three: The Dream

"Customs is such a pain," Fiona said in her thick Irish accent as she dragged her luggage with her. "I wouldn't have come back to this godforsaken place if it wasn't for Joseph."

"I told Brigit to meet us by the 4th terminal. I hope she remembered what time to pick us up," Catherine said somewhat out of breath. The luggage she was carrying was becoming very heavy.

"Here's terminal four. Was she going to meet us outside?" Fiona asked heading for the doorway up ahead.

"That's what she said," Catherine said as they walked out the door with Joseph trailing behind them.

"Catherine! How nice to see you again!" exclaimed Brigit as they walked out the door. She was standing in front of her car with keys in hand. She looked dramatically different than she had the night of the costume party. She had on a pair of jeans and a heavy blue knit sweater. She let her curly black hair flow loose. "Go ahead and put your luggage in the trunk."

As Catherine picked up a heavy bag and put it in the trunk she looked up. Surrounded around her were buildings that had probably been standing for nearly 200 years. Interspersed were new buildings and the shell of old ones. "Brigit, this is Fiona. Fiona this is Brigit O'Donnell. She's agreed to help us locate Joseph's father."

"Brigit O'Donnell the writer?" Fiona said with her eyes growing large. "I've

"So I've heard," Brigit said opening the back door of the car. "I'm afraid you guys are going to have to sit in the back. My bodyguard Maguire is sitting in the front,"

"Oh, that's fine," Catherine said sliding across the seat. "Hello Maguire."

"Hello," the man said turning around. He had a large frame and bright red hair. His eyes were the color of gray clouds and he appeared to be in his late 30's.

"Hi Maguire," Fiona said getting in the car behind her nephew.

Pulling away from the curb Brigit looked in her rearview mirror. "You must be hungry. I'll find a café we can go to. Do you like fish Joseph?"

"I love it!"

"Good because I know a great fish restaurant not too far from here," Brigit said turning on the radio. Catherine was surprised when she heard an oldies station.

"I love the Beatles," Brigit said sheepishly.

Lunch was at a small sidewalk restaurant near the airport. While Fiona retold her story to Brigit Catherine thought back to the night they had met. It was at a costume ball held in Brigit's benefit on Halloween night. Vincent had managed to come to the party, desperately wanting to meet Brigit. He owned all of her books. They left together and Catherine followed them. Catherine was never sure how deep Brigit's feelings for Vincent were.

After lunch Brigit drove them back to her house. She had told Catherine on the phone that no friend of hers needed to stay in a hotel. She added that her house is probably the safest place to stay as well because of her security guards.

"Please make yourself at home," Brigit said as she opened the door.

Walking into the entryway Catherine looked around. There was a set of chairs and a couch in the living room. It was all overstuffed and vintage. In the corner sat a desk with an old typewriter on it and some papers.

"I'm sorry it's so messy in here. I don't have company over very often," Brigit said sheepishly looking at her desk.

"Doesn't bother me at all," Fiona said dropping her luggage.

"Okay Fiona and Joseph you can have the front bedroom and Catherine you can have the bedroom by the bathroom. As you can see Ian and I were planning on having a lot of children," Brigit said with a sigh.

Walking down the hallway to her bedroom Catherine looked out the window. It overlooked the neighbor's backyard. Putting her suitcase on the bed she began unpacking her clothes and putting them in the closet. Setting down the suitcase she lied on the bed to rest her eyes a minute. Sleep engulfed her within a matter of seconds.

About a thousand miles away night had fallen on New York as well. As Catherine slept she dreamt of Vincent and her walking through the Irish countryside. It was broad daylight and there wasn't a soul around. They walked hand in hand to a place by a tree. Putting down a blanket Catherine spread out a feast of food like fruit for dipping in a rich chocolate sauce, dainty finger

sandwiches and plum wine to drink. Sitting down they began to feed each other. She could feel Vincent lovingly placing a strawberry dipped in chocolate to her lips. Eating it slowly, savoring every bite she closed in...

A loud knocking on the door suddenly awoke her.

"Sorry to wake you up Catherine, but dinner is ready," Brigit said walking in the room.

"Did I sleep that long?" Catherine said sitting up quickly. Pushing her hair out of her face she looked at Brigit. "I only meant to sleep for 20 minutes."

"Jet lag will do that to you," Brigit said with a laugh as she walked out of the room.

Getting up quickly Catherine went into the bathroom and splashed some water on her face. Running her fingers through her hair she walked into the kitchen. There was a table set up by the window like a breakfast nook. Fiona and Joseph were already sitting at the table. Brigit was stirring something on the stove. "Have a seat," she said turning around with a pot in her hands.

Bringing it to the table she began spooning out portions into the bowls on the table. "I hope you like Irish stew."

"It smells wonderful," Fiona said taking a bite.

"Would you like something to drink?" Brigit asked Cathy before she sat down.

"Water would be fine."

Getting a pitcher out of the refrigerator she poured some water into the glass next to Catherine's place at the table. Setting it on the table she sat down.

"This is a treat, I never get to cook for anyone but me anymore."

"It's delicious," Fiona said "Do you like it Joseph?"

"It's yummy!"

"Ok ladies. I called a friend of mine, Kelly O'Brien. He's a lawyer for the IRA. He will be willing to meet with you to arrange some negotiations between yourself and Joseph Sr. He thinks this shouldn't be a difficult process at all," Brigit said between bites. "But you have to be aware of the dangers. A protestant girl talking to the IRA can be risky."

"I'm willing to risk it," Fiona said quietly.

"Do you have any family in Ireland?" Brigit asked.

"Yes, My great aunt, she owns a bakery in the village. And my mom is still here, but she refuses to see me. She disowned me after I moved to America," Fiona said with a sigh. "We never had a good relationship."

"What happened to your father?" Catherine asked.

"He died during what was supposed to be a peaceful demonstration. He was a policeman and some of the people started rioting. He was shot."

"I know that story too well," Brigit said sympathetically. "It had happened to too many of my relatives."

"It's wonderful what you have done to try and stop this nonsense. I've read in the papers about what you have done," Fiona said.

"Thank you. Unfortunately this is the work that will probably kill me," Brigit said quietly.

The next morning Vincent walked into Father's chamber.

"You look like you didn't sleep too well," Father said looking up from a book.

"The strangest thing happened last night. I had this dream about Catherine but it was so strong and so real. I felt like it was really happening. I have a feeling Catherine was having the same dream because all of a sudden in the middle of it, it was over. She must have awakened suddenly," Vincent said almost to himself.

"Your bond seems to get stronger and stronger," Father said. "It's remarkable. Can you still feel her this far away?"

"I can sense all her emotions. She's still a bit apprehensive about having Brigit help her, but she knows she doesn't have anything to worry about,"

"Why is she apprehensive about Brigit?"

"The night of the costume ball when we met I felt Catherine question Brigit's motives toward me," Vincent said quietly. "That's the only time I've felt her feel jealousy,"

* * * * *

Fiona and Joseph had gone straight to bed after dinner leaving Catherine and Brigit alone on the couch.

"I was sorry to hear your father died," Catherine said awkwardly.

"He died in jail as I suspected he would," Brigit said sighing. "I never got a chance to truly thank you for helping me that night. I was so stupid to leave that party, but I was just frustrated with everyone, I needed a break."

"That is understandable," Catherine said thinking about the guard outside her home. She had a constant patrol set up around her house to ensure her safety.

"I'll be fine," Brigit said assuredly. "If I die for the cause I will have done my job I suppose."

"It takes a lot of courage for someone to take the stand that you have," Catherine said.

"It doesn't feel like it took much courage. It's just something I knew needed to be done. The entire thing is such nonsense. Watching these men sit and kill themselves. All my life I've seen it, lived with it," Brigit had a look of deep sadness in her eyes. Catherine had briefly seen what she lived with every day the night of the costume ball. The violence she had seen in her lifetime was astounding. "So how is Vincent?"

"He's doing well. Not very happy that I'm so far away though," Catherine said thinking of the words she had just spoken. "*He's doing well?*" For the first time Catherine was able to freely talk about their relationship. It felt very strange, yet very comfortable.

"I can imagine how he feels about you being here. So far away and possibly in danger," Brigit said quietly. "He loves you so much."

"I love him too. Even in the beginning I knew he was the one," Catherine said with a smile.

"How long have you been together?"

"Three years this Thursday, Catherine said.

"You are so lucky to have a relationship like that. I had it once, but I lost it," Brigit said with a sigh.

"It's so weird to be able to talk about Vincent so freely. I've never been able to do that," Catherine said looking down. Her eyes were full of tears.

"If you ever need someone to talk to, you know where to find me," Brigit said taking her hand. "Always."

Chapter Four: Kelly O'Brien

"Vincent. I answered your questions twice. Why aren't you listening?"

Geoffrey asked.

"I'm sorry Geoffrey. My mind is somewhere else today."

"You're thinking about Catherine aren't you?" Said Kipper.

"Yes," Vincent said wearily.

"Why did she have to go so far away?" Samantha asked.

"To help a friend," Vincent said realizing he could turn this into a history lesson. "The place where Catherine went has been in war for many years."

"War? What does that mean?" Samantha asked.

"It means two countries are fighting with each other, right Vincent?" Kipper asked.

"Very good Kipper. It can also mean a country is fighting within itself," Vincent said, "That is what happened in Ireland. Ireland broke off from another country named England. Now part of it is still under control of England," Vincent said explaining the difference between the Catholics and the Protestants and why they are still fighting.

"Are you scared that Catherine is there Vincent?" Samantha asked after the lesson was over.

"I fear for her safety, but she is well taken care of."

"If Brigit can get along with each side, why can't everyone else?" Geoffrey asked.

The next morning Catherine woke up feeling very rested. Getting out of bed she noticed the house was warm. Looking at the clock on the beside table she realized it was already 9:00 am. It was much later than she expected. Grabbing some clothes she walked into the bathroom. Undressing quickly she stepped into the hot shower. Letting the water pour over her tired muscles she thought about the conversation she had with Brigit last night. Stepping out of the shower she dried quickly and got dressed.

"Good morning," Catherine said walking into the kitchen. She could smell oatmeal and toast with honey.

"Looks like it's just you and me this morning. Fiona left early this morning to go see a friend. She should be back this afternoon," Brigit said. She was reading the paper. "Go ahead and have some of the oatmeal and help yourself to the toaster. There is hot tea on the stove. I'm not much of a coffee drinker. Gives me the shakes I'm afraid."

"No problem," Catherine said putting some bread into the toaster. "I love tea. My mom used to fix me some with honey when I was sick."

"I though you and I could go talk to Kelly O'Brien this morning and then we could go to some of the shops in the village."

"Great! I wanted to buy something for Vincent for an anniversary gift."

"I thought you might," Brigit said with a smile.

* * * * *

Walking along the sidewalk Fiona looked up at the house before her.

Quickly she walked up the steps and put a note in the mailbox. Walking back down she continued to walk on the sidewalk like nothing had ever happened.

"Come on Joey," she said grabbing his hand. "We'll go to that bakery that I promised to take you to,"

* * * * *

"So how'd you meet Kelly in the first place?" Catherine asked after she got into Brigit's car.

"He came to a fundraiser I attended. He told me he was friends with the heads of the IRA by sympathetic to my cause. If I ever needed a favor he told me I could call him," Brigit explained as she drove.

Catherine looked around at the countryside. She couldn't believe how bare the land was. Even in a big city like Belfast there were a lot of farms.

"Ah, here we are," Brigit said pulling up to an office building. It must have been a house long ago based on the exterior design. Going up the walk Catherine noticed a sign that said Kelly O'Brien Attorney at Law.

Walking inside the house Catherine noticed a small reception area in what must have been the living room. An older lady with her gray hair pulled back in a bun sat behind a desk.

"Why hello Brigit!" She said as they walked up to the desk. "Go on back."

Walking down a hallway they opened a door to what must have been a bedroom at one time. Walking in the door she instantly recognized the face of the man sitting behind the desk.

"Why hello Cathy," he said in a thick Irish accent.

"How much further do we have to walk Aunt Fiona?" Joseph asked whining a bit.

"Just a few more blocks Joseph. I used to walk up and down these streets all the time. See that building across from us? That has the best cake and cookies in all of Ireland," Fiona said picking him up and walking across the street.

"Hi Myrna!" Fiona said as she walked into the bakery. "I want a dozen of your sugar cookies."

"Jesus, Mary and Joseph! Is that you Fiona?" Myrna said coming around the counter to give her a hug. "Is this Joseph now? He's grown up so much since the last time I saw him!"

"He's growing everyday," Fiona said setting him down. "Say hello to your great aunt Myrna."

"Hello," Joseph said burying his face into Fiona's leg.

"I'm afraid he's a bit on the shy side," Fiona said with a laugh.

"Much like his mother was at that age," Myrna said with a sigh. "I was sorry to hear about her passing."

"I wish she could've been buried here. But I didn't have the money to do it and I knew that woman wouldn't help any," Fiona said with disgust in her voice.

"Fiona you must not talk about her that way," Myrna said sternly. "She doesn't realize what she does."

"That doesn't make it any more acceptable," Fiona said quietly. "She

"She'll come around Fiona. Let me tell her you're back home and I'm sure she'll see you."

"She might, but I have a feeling it's only wishful thinking," Fiona said quietly.

"You seem in a better mood tonight," Father said as they played chess. "Perhaps it's because you beat me at one game already?"

"Perhaps," Vincent said with a chuckle. "Actually I can't help sensing that Catherine is with someone she knows."

"I though you said Brigit O'Donnell was there with her."

"Besides Brigit. I sense someone else," Vincent said silently wondering who it may be.

* * * * *

"You know Catherine, Kelly?" Brigit asked. A look of confusion had come across her face.

"We worked at the same place a few years ago," Kelly said quickly.

"He used to work at the DA's office a long time ago," Catherine said flashing him a look as she sat down. She couldn't begin to imagine how Devin Wells had come to work in Ireland. She silently wondered what kind of fraud he was running this time.

"So you have a friend who is trying to return her nephew to his father? Why didn't she just keep him in America?"

"She can't afford to. She's a single woman living on a limited income. Besides I think this was an excuse to come back and try and make amends with her family," Catherine said sitting down.

"Listen ladies, I don't think it's going to be very difficult to return Joseph to his father. Let me talk to him tomorrow and I will give you a call. Okay? Now if you'll excuse me I have an appointment to be at in fifteen minutes," Devin said shaking Brigit's hand and then Catherine's. Leaning over he whispered in her ear "meet me at O'Malley's pub at 7:00 tonight."

As they walked out of the building Brigit gave Catherine a strange look.

"What?" She asked with a laugh in her voice.

"I don't think either one of you were telling me the complete truth in there," Brigit said.

"Don't worry. I'll tell you all about it when we get to the shops," Catherine said as they walked down the street.

Walking into a jewelry shop Brigit said. "Okay, we're here, what's the story?"

Catherine was fingering some of the jewelry that was laid out on the table.

"Oh this is beautiful," she said picking up a medallion on a burlap chain.

"It's called the cladding," Brigit explained. "A long time ago it was the wedding band in Ireland. Now it is used for many other reasons. It means love, loyalty and friendship,"

"I've got to get this for Vincent," Catherine said taking it up to the register.

"Thank you," Catherine said picking up the bag as they left.

* * * * *

Vincent walked into the kitchen chamber. Looking around at the stoves and cupboards and pots and pans he smiled remembering times he had gone there when he was little.

"Why hello Vincent. What brings you to the kitchen? You want to lick the leftover cookie batter?" William asked laughing.

"I'm afraid I outgrew that years ago," Vincent said smiling. "Actually I need to ask a favor."

"A favor? Sure. What is it?"

"Catherine's and my anniversary is coming up at the end of the week and I want to do something special for her. I'd like to prepare a special meal for her, but I need your help," Vincent said a bit sheepishly. He really didn't want to share what he was planning but he knew he needed help. Telling him what he was planning he waited expectantly for William's answer.

"Sure I would love to help you out. Give me a list of what you need and I'll make sure one of the helpers get the ingredients. And on Thursday I'll help you prepare everything."

"Thank you William. This means a lot to me," Vincent said giving him a quick hug.

"Catherine means a lot to us Vincent. More than you realize," William said earnestly.

* * * * *

"Okay, how do you know Kelly?" Brigit asked again. They were sitting in a sidewalk café eating soup and sandwiches.

"He was born in the tunnels," Catherine said recalling a time when Vincent told her he had written a letter to Brigit explaining the tunnel world. "His name is Devin Wells."

"He's Father's son?" Brigit asked getting very wide-eyed.

"Yes. He's a con artist for the most part. He goes from place to place taking on different identities and professions. I can't imagine what lead him her."

"So you mean he isn't really a lawyer?" Brigit asked with a concerned face.

"I seriously doubt it. At least he wasn't when he was with the DA's office."

"That is unbelievable," Brigit said shaking her head. "I can't believe he's a fraud,"

"He told me he wants to meet me at a pub called O'Malley's tonight. I suppose he'll explain everything to me then," Catherine said shaking her head. "I wonder what he's up to."

Later that day everyone returned back to Brigit's home. Joseph went down for a nap so Fiona had a chance to speak to Catherine.

"I left a note at my mom's house today," Fiona said. "I tried to explain some things to her, but who knows if she will even listen to me."

Catherine explained "We met with Brigit's friend today. He said he would talk to Joseph Sr. tomorrow to arrange everything. Hopefully Joseph will be

"I pray everything will go well," Fiona said quietly.

"So do I."

* * * * *

Catherine walked into O'Malley's pub and looked around. The smell of beer was heavy in the air and you could almost taste the salt from the peanuts. In one corner of the room was a piano. A heavysset man with a beard was playing an Irish folk song.

"Catherine!" Devin said loudly. He was in a booth in the back corner.

"It's good to see you again."

"What are you doing?" Catherine said sitting down in the booth. "You can't possibly be a lawyer."

"No, I'm really not," Devin said as the waitress came up to the table. "I'll take a beer, Catherine what would you like?"

"I'll have the same, thank you," turning back around she asked, "I thought you were in Connecticut with Charles?"

"I was. But Charles died about a month after we got there. He wasn't well. I needed to come up with something to do so I decided to travel to Ireland. Vincent made the mistake of loaning me *300 Days*. I suppose I got inspired," Devin said taking a drink of the beer. "Nothing is as good as Guinness,"

"I wouldn't know," Catherine said taking a sip and grimacing. "Do you realize what kind of danger you have put yourself in?"

"I live to be dangerous," Devin said with a mocking tone.

"I'm serious! They're like the Mafia. You should know that. What happened when they find out your true identity?"

"I never stay in one place long enough for that to happen," Devin said facetiously.

"Well I just hope your true identity doesn't keep a little boy from finding his father," Catherine said grabbing her coat and walking out of the bar.

Back at Brigit's home Catherine sat on the couch shaking her head. "I don't understand why he insists on doing this. It's one thing to put yourself in danger, but someone else's life is a whole other matter."

"Everyone has wanted to be someone else at one time or another. Just pray that he can keep up this act for two more days. By then it will be too late," Brigit said hopefully.

Chapter Five: The Reunion

The next day Brigit got word early that Joseph's father could meet them in Devin's office at 1:00 PM.

"I can't believe this day is here," Fiona said sitting down at the table drinking a glass of juice. I feel so relieved but so sad at the same time,"

"That's very understandable," Catherine said putting her hand over Fiona's.

"I didn't think this would be so hard," Fiona said with tears in her eyes. "He's the only family I have in America."

"Maybe you can go visit you're family before you leave," Catherine suggested.

"I don't think so," Fiona said shaking her head. "When I left the note on Monday I gave her the number here. I haven't heard anything."

"Give it some time," Brigit said. "They will come around."

"I hope so," Fiona said quietly. Getting up from the table she said, "I'm going to get Joseph ready. I pray I can handle this."

* * * * *

"I'm sensing Catherine will be home soon," Vincent said walking into Father's chamber.

"Ever figure out who is with Catherine?"

"No, I honestly don't know who it could be," Vincent said sitting down in a chair.

"Well, I'm sure she'll tell you about it when she returns. So what are you planning for your three year anniversary?" Father asked cautiously.

"You remember?" Vincent said looking up quickly.

"How could I forget that date? The day I thought I feared the most, but have come to love instead. Catherine means a lot more to me than you realize," Father said quietly. "She's like a daughter to me."

Looking up with tears in his eyes Vincent walked over to Father and gave him a hug. "I'm so glad that you told me this."

"I've wanted to say something. For a long time. I guess I feared telling you the truth because I would be giving my blessing to something I still fear. But the truth is over the past year I've been able to talk to Catherine and get to know her. I understand why you love her so," Father said putting his hand over Vincent's.

* * * * *

Driving up to Devin's office, Brigit and Catherine got out of the car and walked into the reception area to announce their arrival. Fiona stayed back in the car with Joseph. It was her last chance to say goodbye.

"Kelly is waiting for you," Devin's secretary said as they walked inside.

"I noticed quite a few cars out there," Brigit said as they walked back to Devin's office. "I wonder who else is here."

"I don't know," Catherine said entered the office.

Fiona came in a few steps behind them holding Joseph in her arms. "Are

"I ready!" Joseph cried in excitement.

Walking down the hallway Fiona opened the door to Devin's office.

Opening the door she looked in. "Mom!" she exclaimed. She couldn't believe her eyes.

Her mom ran over to give her a hug. "Oh Fiona I've missed you so much," she said hugging her tightly.

"I've missed you too," Fiona said as tears streamed down her face. Her voice was barely above a whisper.

"I'm sorry honey. The mistakes I made with Caitlin I don't want to make with you too," Fiona's mom said holding her tight. "Is this Joseph?"

"Joseph, you know who that is?" Fiona said leaning over to whisper something in his ear.

"Grandma!" he said excitedly reaching out to give her a hug.

Watching the reunion take place from afar Brigit and Catherine walked out of the office.

"It's terrible that Joseph's father died in an IRA bombing," Catherine said shaking her head. "I didn't realize that."

"No one could have. But at least we helped reunite Fiona with her family," Brigit said looking outside. "I need a vacation."

"Where are you going to go?"

"I'm thinking New York."

"Really?" Catherine asked with a smile on her face.

* * * * *

"I want to thank you for everything," Fiona said giving Catherine a hug. Her plane was leaving in half an hour.

"You're welcome Fiona."

"Be sure to tell Vincent and the old man that I said hello," Devin said giving Catherine a hug. "Maybe one day I'll be back to see them,"

"I'll give you a call when I know what day I'm coming," Brigit said giving Catherine a hug. "Tell Vincent hello for me."

"I will. I'm sure he will be pleased to hear that you're going to be in town," Catherine said picking up her bags. "Goodbye everyone."

"Goodbye," they said watching her walk down to meet the plane.

"Guys. I have a question," Fiona said after Catherine boarded the plane.

"Who is Vincent?"

Once on the plane, Catherine forced herself to sleep. Any other activity would have been futile. She was too excited. April 12th was tomorrow!

* * * * *

"She's on her way back!" Vincent said excitedly. He was in the middle of a cooking lesson with William.

Looking up from the melted chocolate William smiled. "Go ahead Vincent. I know you need to see her."

"Thank you William," Vincent said quickly before racing out of the kitchen. Quickly he ran through the tunnels and up the staircase. Once Above he scaled Catherine's building and climbed onto her terrace. Standing there he waited for

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Catching a cab from the airport Catherine willed it to go faster. That was impossible in the thick New York City traffic she was caught in. Silently she thought of Vincent. She had a feeling he was waiting for her on the terrace.

Arriving home about twenty minutes later Catherine ran into the building, luggage in tow. Grabbing an elevator she counted the seconds it took to reach her floor. Pulling her luggage out she ran to the door and unlocked it. Throwing her luggage in the living room she ran to the terrace and flung open the doors. Seeing Vincent standing in the corner she ran over to him embracing him tightly.

"I missed you so much," she said holding him as tight as she could.

"I missed you too," Vincent said holding her face in his hands. Bending over he gave her a quick kiss.

"I missed that too," Catherine said laughing.

* * * * *

The next day Catherine returned to work tired, but happy. Sitting down at her desk she started to sort through three days worth of mail. She didn't look up until she felt a shadow cross her desk.

"I thought you were going to be gone for a week," Joe said grabbing a handful of M&M's out of her candy jar.

"So did I," Catherine said smiling. "It didn't take as long as I thought."

"So did you find the pot of gold?" Joe asked.

"You know, I think I did."

Chapter Six: The Anniversary

The next day Catherine could hardly concentrate on her work. She was too excited about the night ahead. Vincent asked her to meet him in his chamber around 6:00.

She left work early so she could take a long bath before getting ready. Sitting in the tub she sat back thinking three years couldn't have possibly passed by. She sat in wonderment—how could the most horrible night of her life turn out to be the best as well?

Stepping out of the tub she put on a robe and slippers. Quickly she applied her makeup and pulled her hair up in a French twist. Spraying her wrists with her favorite perfume she went back into her bedroom to get dressed.

She put on a dress that she had been saving for this night. It was made of a soft flowing fabric with an empire waist. Walking over to her dresser she put on the crystal necklace Vincent gave her for their first anniversary. Grabbing her jacket and keys she walked out of her apartment and onto the elevator.

* * * * *

In the tunnel kitchen Vincent was quickly stirring chocolate.

"You know Vincent, I think you finally got it," William said smiling. Dipping a strawberry in the mix he took a bite. "This is delicious."

"I'm so glad," Vincent said with a sigh of relief. "Thank you for helping me with all of this. Now all I have to do is take it to the waterfall."

"Father told us you were preparing something special for your anniversary and that you might appreciate the help so you can get ready," Samantha said smiling.

"Of course you can help me!" Vincent said smiling.

The children quickly grabbed plates of food and walked to the waterfalls.

Vincent followed carrying candlesticks, matches, wine glasses and a heavy blanket in a basket. Spreading the blanket out on the ground he placed the candlesticks all around.

"Go ahead and spread the food out on the blanket and put the fruit in the basket," he said standing up.

Quickly the children started carefully placing the food on the blanket.

"You should put the grapes this way," Geoffrey said.

"No this way," Kipper said grabbing them and placing them next to the basket.

"I like how Kipper has them," Samantha said sitting down and picking up the strawberries.

Vincent smiled thinking they were more perfectionists than he was.

"Here. I brought this for you. I thought you might want to read it tonight," Eric said handing him a copy of *Great Expectations*.

"Did you know this is the first book I read to Catherine?" Vincent asked opening the book carefully.

"She told me about it before I came Below. She said I shouldn't fear someone who would read a book to a woman. She was right," Eric said smiling.

* * * * *

Once in the sub-basement she made her way to Vincent's chamber. Lightly knocking on the door she walked in.

"Hello Catherine," Vincent said getting up from his chair and giving her a hug.

Looking at him took her breath away. He was wearing a white cotton shirt instead of his usually heavy clothing. And he smelled wonderful, a combination of soap and candles.

Taking her hand he escorted her out of his chamber.

"Where are we going?" She asked as they walked through the tunnels.

"To the waterfalls. I have a surprise waiting for you," Vincent said softly.

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The children were waiting for Catherine and Vincent to come through the last archway before they lit the candles. Hearing their voices they quickly lit all the candles. Sneaking in the back of the archway they waited for a moment.

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Walking through one more tunnel and under an archway they arrived at the waterfalls. Catherine let out a breath of surprise as she looked at what was waiting for them.

Candles were burning all around a blanket that was full of food. Finger sandwiches, fruit with chocolate sauce for dipping and plum wine.

Looking up at Vincent she smiled. "You had the same dream?"

"I had a feeling we were having the same dream. It was so vivid, so real, but it ended so quickly," Vincent said softly.

"Brigit woke me up for dinner," Catherine explained. Sitting down she quickly dipped a strawberry in the chocolate sauce and placed it in Vincent's mouth.

"Delicious," he said kissing her finger.

"So how did you prepare all of this?"

"William helped me. He even taught me how to make the chocolate sauce. The children helped me set all this up. It's my anniversary present to you."

"It's wonderful. I couldn't ask for anything else," Catherine said with a contented sigh. Taking off her coat she pulled a box out of her pocket. "This is for you," she said handing Vincent the box.

Opening it up carefully he pulled out the claddagh necklace. "This is beautiful Catherine."

Taking it from his hands Catherine put it around his neck. "It's called a claddagh. In Ireland it means love, loyalty and friendship. It's very special."

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Peering around the archway Samantha smiled.

"Why are you still here?" Brooke asked in a whisper walking over to her.

"I wanted to see them kiss."

"You are interrupting a private moment," Brooke said quietly. "I knew you would still be here."

"Shh. They are going to right now," Samantha said whispering.

Peeking around the archway Brooke watched Vincent take Catherine's hands in his own. Leaning in he kissed her softly on the lips.

"I told you!" Samantha said in a loud whisper.

"Come on," Brooke said grabbing her hand and leading her back to the main tunnels.

* * * * *

"I wasn't sure what my future was going to be when I found you in the park three years ago. But I knew that from the day I found you my life was going to be different,"

"Why is that?" Catherine asked with her head tilted.

"Because I fell in love with you. In my most secret dreams I never imagined that you would love me back,"

"Oh Vincent," Catherine said snuggling up to him. "I had fallen in love with you too. From the moment you started talking to me after I woke up. That should have been the worst night of my life, but because of what happened it turned out to be the best,"

Pulling out *Great Expectations* from under the blanket Vincent showed it to Catherine.

"*Great Expectations*! I haven't read that since we finished it together that night on the balcony," Catherine exclaimed.

"Eric thought we might want to read it together tonight."

Opening the book Vincent began to read the book. They each took turns reading a chapter at a time. Curled up next to Vincent, Catherine finished the last line. Looking at her watch she realized it was nearly morning. Closing her eyes she fell asleep in his arms.

The next morning Vincent gently nudged her awake. "You are going to be late for work," he whispered into her hair.

"Oh no. I need to run home and take a shower. I'm so sorry I fell asleep," Catherine said quickly getting up.

"It was late. Don't worry about it. This is the best I have slept in months," Vincent said softly as he stood up.

Looking up Catherine smiled. "Thank you for a wonderful anniversary,"

"You're welcome," he said kissing her forehead.

Epilogue: The Airport

Two weeks later

"I can't believe Devin was impersonating a lawyer again," Vincent said to Catherine. They were in his chamber.

"I know," Catherine said shaking her head. "At least he was able to reunite Fiona with her family."

"Now I know why I felt that there was someone there you knew," Vincent said softly.

"Oh, I have to get to the airport to pick up Brigit," Catherine said looking at her watch. "As soon as I drop her luggage off we will stop by."

"Until then," Vincent said giving her a hug before she left.

* * * * *

Walking off the plane Brigit grabbed Devin's hand. "I wonder what Catherine is going to say when she sees us together?"

"I'm sure she will have something to say. Although I'm more concerned about Vincent," Devin said with a laugh.

Walking into the waiting area they sat on a bench and waited.

