

ONCE UPON A TIME IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK

(The Lost Love Letters of Catherine Chandler, #1)

by Joy Faulkner

Vincent,

I can scarcely think of words to put down on paper, I'm so overwhelmed by the events of the last few months. Who would have believed they were possible? Not me, I'm sure. I was far too wrapped up in my slick New York City lifestyle to believe that a world like yours could exist. Or anyone like you. Sometimes, you know, in those long, long months when I didn't see you, I almost thought you were a dream. A beautiful but impossible dream. You and your world.

But then, I would catch a glimpse of you, suddenly, in my mind's eye. They were always in the quieter moments of my life, those times, happening when I least expected them. If I paused at work, and looked up to see a rainbow slanting down through a rainy sky. Or sometimes late at night, in one of those strange, fleeting moments when this great, noisy city becomes totally quiet and hushed. And even the traffic is still. Then, it seemed as if the whole world slept, if only for the space of a heartbeat. And then, then, Vincent, I would think of you.

I would see your eyes watching me again, so gently, so full of care, and hear your voice whispering reassurances into the quiet room. Comforting me. Supporting me. And I would know in that instant you were real.

You say I had the will to live, but it was you who gave that back to me. I couldn't have managed it alone. And it was easy to come to trust you, Vincent. So easy. It didn't take so much courage, believe me. Your love, your gentleness, is so evident in your eyes, in every whispered word you say. And I couldn't fail to see it.

It was you who had the real courage, you know; the courage to take me - an unknown woman - into your world, and to trust me with it. And with yourself.

You showed me another way, Vincent, and you trusted me to take it. That showed real love, real friendship. More than I've ever been shown in my life before. And I've done as you suggested, Vincent. I have, truly. It's been difficult at times, I can't deny it, and I haven't always been sure I've taken the right path. Your path. But whenever I wavered, if my certainty was lost to me for a time, I would think of you. And I could go on.

We have, as you say, become a part of each other, and goodbye is not a word meant to be heard between us now. Somehow, we found one another, against all the odds, and I thank God for that every day. You are so important to me, Vincent. I need your strength, your reassurance, to keep me strong. To make sure I don't falter in this new life of mine.

But most of all, I need YOU. Your continued presence. I need to know you are there. Never forget it. I don't think I could live without that knowledge any more.

Be well, my dearest friend,

Catherine