

TERRIBLE SAVIOUR

(The Lost Love Letters of Catherine Chandler #2)

by Joy Faulkner

Dear Vincent,

Strange, how quickly your name has become familiar to me, rolling off my tongue as easily as my own. But that's the secret isn't it, Vincent? It is as familiar as my own, and in many ways, far closer to my heart.

And yet... and yet... oh, my dearest friend, I hardly know how to say the next few words. They are so difficult for me. But say them I must. How I ever came to doubt you, to disbelieve your reassurances, I will never know. That I should ever imagine you could hurt me, that could I draw back from you, from your touch, fills me with such anger now, such disgust with myself, that I can scarcely bear the thought of it.

I can't forget your face, Vincent. Your wonderful, precious face. Its image burns into my mind like fire. You looked so stricken, so betrayed. And to think it was me - me, who did that to you. You, who have shown me nothing but love; who would lay down your life for me. Dear God, how could I have done it? How could I?

My world is so different from yours, my friend, and you are right to fear its intolerance and brutality. Anything it does not understand, it will try to destroy. We both know that. And I am a product of that world, Vincent. I am. It leaves its mark on me, too.

But I'm not trying to find excuses for my behaviour, nothing can ever do that. Nothing. I just want to explain, to show you that your Catherine may sometimes hurt you, even though she loves you dearly. And I am deeply ashamed of that, Vincent. More ashamed than you could ever be of the rages which sometimes consume you. Those, at least, have a reason behind them: a purpose, if you like. My doubts were based on nothing but my own world's legacy of suspicion and mistrust. There was no protectiveness, no love, in my reactions at all. They showed only my fears for myself, and nothing of the fears, the love, I feel for you.

Of course, I know what you will say. You will tell me my fears can keep me alive. And in my world that is true. But not with you, Vincent. Not with you. Of all people, I should be able to tell the difference, I should know you are not the same. And you are not, Vincent. YOU ARE NOT. You must believe that.

It hurts me to know how I made you doubt yourself, made you almost convinced that I should be honestly wary of you. But that shows my shame, Vincent. Mine. Not yours. The shame of my mistrust. That I still hadn't learned enough to know you. To believe in you. And I have to live with that memory always.

I faltered, Vincent. I lost my way. Thank God you were still there to find me.

And I know in my heart that you always will be, that already you will have forgiven me. I don't even need to ask. You will never fail me as I have failed you. I can only hope that, in time, you will come to trust me again. And that I will be able to forgive myself so easily.

Take care, my dearest Vincent. Be well.

Catherine