

MASQUES

(The Lost Love Letters of Catherine Chandler #5)

by Joy Faulkner

My dearest Vincent,

It's been a long, hard day at work today, and I've not long been in. But for once, I've brought my work home. I intend to spend what's left of my evening writing to you. So, I've thrown off my shoes and made myself a coffee, and now I'm settling down on the window seat, my pen in my hand.

I've opened the window a little, and from where I'm sitting, I can see the terrace clearly. The sky is quite dark outside, even the shadowy light of evening has faded. And it is so quiet here at the moment, Vincent, so hushed. Not a leaf stirs. No sounds drift upward from the world below my building, no voice speaks. Suddenly, my small balcony has become a world apart. Our world.

Instinctively, I look into the shadows, half-expecting to see you there. To hear your voice murmuring to me from out of the darkness. But then, I've been hearing it all day. No matter where I've been. In the office, or the car. Wherever I happen to be at the time, you're there, too. And maybe you'll think I'm silly, but it's true.

I can hear your voice now, talking to me, just as I did last night on All Hallow's Eve. And I can see you smiling, feel your presence at my side, walking with me. I feel it still. So strongly. Like a warmth invading my heart. And I hope, so much, that you can feel it, too; that you are sharing this moment with me.

I, too, know the city well. I know its lights and its people. They are no strangers to me. But last night, it was different. Last night, it was magical. Last night, you were with me.

Oh, Vincent, last night we saw the possibilities, our possibilities, open up in front of us. And they were wonderful. We took our very first step through our own private threshold, together, and we touched the sky. So you see it is there, our theshold, just as I said. Waiting for us. We must not lose sight of it now.

Brigit is an amazing person, isn't she? An inspiration to so many. Including us, for she played no small part in our experiences last night. Though, my dear friend, don't think I've forgotten that it was she, she, who first drew you from your 'safe places'! Not I. It was Brigit you left them behind for, not Catherine. And I was just a little piqued.

In years to come, I think I might often remind you of that. But for the present, I am too content, no... too happy, to bother.

So you see, you are not the only one to feel envy. You are not the only one whose heart misses a beat when another gains the attention of your... dare I say it, your love. The walls between our worlds did indeed grow thin. I never intend to let them grow so thick between us again.

Take care, my dearest Vincent. Be well.

Catherine