

# PAIN REMEMBERED

by Katrina Relf

*(An Excerpt from Vincent's Journal)*

*After so many years away – so many silent years – Lisa came back to the tunnels, but not, I feared, for a home – but as a refuge.*

*Her return evoked so many memories – dark, terrifying memories – memories that have lain hidden within me for so long – always there – shaming me – sleeping uneasily until now.*

*I will never forget that night – the night I watched Lisa dance. She danced for herself – for me – and I thought that I had never seen anything more beautiful than Lisa. Something deep inside me drew me towards her. I tried to touch her, to hold her, but these hands – these claws – hurt her – tore at her flesh, and I saw fear of me in her eyes. I had let myself forget, just for a moment, who I am and what I am. The shame of those moments will always be with me – always there – deep within my soul. And those memories – and the pain they caused to those I loved – will forever be the abyss that keeps me apart from Catherine.*

*These hands will never touch her as I long to touch her, lest they tear her flesh as they tore Lisa's. The words I long to speak can never be spoken, lest they open my heart to a world of possibilities that I know can never be.*

*There have been times, so many times, when I have been lost in the warmth of her love, in the nearness of her body against mine, and I have forgotten for a moment who I am. I have forgotten that these hands can harm her - and that can never be – for if I hurt Catherine – if I lost her – I would lose myself, my reason for being. To have her near, to see the love shining in her eyes, is all that I will ever ask; for, in truth, it is more than I ever dreamt possible.*

*I am grateful to Lisa for returning, for reminding me of what was and must never be again. For reminding me that a creature such as I must never forget who I am and what I am – lest I hurt that which I love the most.*

*She has left our world again, but the memories will remain forever. Memories that I must find it within myself to share with Catherine. I have never withheld the truth from her, so these words – no matter how shameful – must be spoken. Tonight.*