

# Familiar Features

*by Pauline Marshall*

*(from MASQUERADES '93)*

Catherine replaced the phone in its cradle and frowned at it. *'Joe must be outside the office for him not to be found somewhere in the building. Oh well! I'll get him later,'* and she returned to the pile of files mounting up on her desk.

"Cathy." A head poked itself around the door and looking up, she smiled at her friend and colleague.

"Come on in, Rita."

Showing her a pile of manilla folders, she handed them towards her. "There are the Deveron Files back, Cathy."

Frowning, Catherine gave her a fed up look and sighed as she took the bundle from her. "I thought this was wound up!"

With a cheery smile Rita nodded, "It is! But they were taken from your office last week when you were off, so I thought they should be returned."

"Okay Rita, thanks!" She smiled at her as she turned to leave. "Oh, by the way, have you seen Joe about today?"

Rita turned back as she was poised halfway through the doorway. "Yeah! He's out to lunch with some investigator from London."

"London! But we're not in liaison with London on anything at the moment, are we?" Frowning again, she wondered if she had missed something.

Shaking her head in reply as she opened the door wider, Rita replied, "No, this is someone that knows a friend of Joe's and asked him to look him up while he was over here."

"Oh, okay." She nodded to herself. "Thanks again, Rita."

Smiling, she shut the door behind her, leaving Cathy to put away the mounting files on her ever-covered desk.

Leaning over her cabinet she jumped as the phone rang and took her from her thoughts; thoughts she had allowed herself of her family, but mostly of Vincent.

"Catherine Wells." With phone in her hand, she fell back into her swivel chair.

"Hi, Cathy!" The voice was, as always, happy.

"Jenny! What's up?" Catherine smiled as she listened to her friend at the other end.

"Oh, Cathy, I need a favour. My car's off the road, and I have this big conference at the weekend." She stopped for breath. "Any chance I could use yours? Just for the weekend?"

Cathy's smile spread. "Sure, I won't be needing it."

A sigh of relief could be heard from the other end.

"You sound a bit concerned over this, is there any problems?"

Her laugh vibrated down the line. "No - no problem, just me, but there is this English author of one of the antique books we are pushing, and I'm to take him under my wing."

"What's he like?"

"Hmmmmm, I'm told he's a hunk!"

Cathy laughed this time. "Then there is definitely no problem."

They shared the joke before they made arrangements for someone to pick up the keys.

"I'll send Alice over at lunch time, if that's okay."

"Yeah - fine," she nodded at the phone. "Have a great time and fill me in with the details when you get back!"

"You got it, Cathy, and thanks for the car."

"Bye, Jen."

"Bye."

The line went dead, leaving Cathy once more to face the dreaded files.

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Joe stretched out his hand to the stranger in front of him. "Hi! I'm Joe Maxwell."

"Hello, I'm Vince Dixon," he smiled warmly at Joe. "Eddy told me you were close friends at law school."

"Yeah, how's he doing over there anyway?" Joe called a waiter over. "I had lost touch with him over the last couple of years." He gave the waiter their drinks order.

"I know what you mean." Vince had a soft velvet voice and was very easy to listen to. Joe liked him right off, even if his large frame and height emphasized his small one. When Joe got Eddy's phone call last week he was surprised, to say the least. He'd worked with this man many times and said he was a genius at his job - Insurance Investigator - and could Joe spend a little time with him.

"So, what brings you over here, Vince?" Joe ordered their food, and waited for his companion to speak. Looking at him, he had this feeling, he had seen him before somewhere.

"Well, my main job is to investigate assorted stolen antiques. We have had a tip off on a new case- - but - I'm also here to publicize my new book." He tried the wine. "This is good."

Eyebrows raised. "A book?" Joe asked. "What on?" He took his beer.

"I happen to be very interested in antique furniture, so I've written a book surrounding some of the cases I've had." He smiled and his bright blue eyes sparkled. "It seems that are a lot of other people who share my interest."

Joe sniggered. "Well! I could think of a lot more interesting things to look at," and the two shared Joe's joke. "Tell me about this case you're on."

"It's not easy to break it down, but cutting a long story short, the antique furniture trade is booming over our side of the world, and there are thousands of pounds changing hands every day." He took a deep breath and placing his elbows on the table, he entwined his fingers before resting his chin on them, thinking of the best way to explain this. "I have discovered a group of very well known, well-to-do people who are ripping others off with fake furniture. Not only in Britain, but it is spreading over here too." He took some more wine before going on. "Don't get me wrong, fake furniture is okay if the people know it is, and the price is right - but these lads are into thousands per piece, and are laughing all the way to the bank. They are smart too! They always show the genuine article, so it can be checked over - but - that's not the one that is delivered to the buyer when they pay their money!"

Joe nodded. "Sounds like fun." He was not into antiques but he understood why Vince felt so strongly about

people being ripped off. "Do you think you will get anywhere over here?"

Vince shrugged his shoulders and looked at him. "Joe, I have to, there is so much at stake here!" He took at his hands. "It's a bit personal this time."

Joe could see that he was deep in thought. "Is there anything I can do?"

He came out of his distant concern. "What? Oh sorry, Joe - yes you might! About a month ago they managed to con a frail old lady out of her savings. She died last week of a heart attack when she found out about the fraud." He looked up at Joe with misty eyes. "She was buying items as an investment for her grandchildren - 'A *surprise*', she said," and he shook his head. "She was my grandmother."

Joe was at a loss for words, so he reached inside his jacket pocket and pulled out his office card. "Here, take this, my home number is on the back. If I can help in any way - just call."

Taking the card, Joe thought this good-looking man once again, seemed so familiar. "Thank you, Joe - I just might take you up on that offer." As they were saying goodbye, Vince added; "Tell you what, I'll give you a ring on Monday and shout you lunch."

"Me! Out twice in one month - Huh! The girls will give me a hard time at the office over this," he smiled, "but I would like to, thanks."

Nodding his thanks, Vince shook hands. "I'm glad Eddy told me to look you up."

They said goodbye and Joe rushed back to the DA's office whilst Vince headed towards the hotel, to pack his bag for the weekend and wait to be picked up by his guide, Jenny.

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Catherine cleared her desk and was about to leave when Joe stuck his head through the door.

"Hey, Radcliffe! You just going?" He had that impish look on his face.

"Yes, I was! And no! I can't stay," she smiled sweetly at him and lifted her bag and coat. "Night, Joe."

"Cathy, please, Vincent won't mind, just half an hour." He looked so pathetic. "Please!"

"Oohhhh! Joe." She let her bag thump to the ground. "What's so damned important?"

"I want to help a friend out." He came into the office. "Can you remember if we had any recent cases involving furniture fraud, antique and stuff like that?"

Cathy was thinking back, but nothing came to mind. "No, I don't think so," she sighed. "We would have to scan the computer and Rita is the only one able to give you that information." She watched him. "Sorry, I can't help you this time, not without the readouts."

Letting out a deep breath, Joe nodded. "Okay, it was a long shot anyway. I'll check with Rita on Monday." Reaching out, he opened the door for her. "Goodnight, Cathy."

"See you, Joe - have a good weekend."

**"Hey!"** Joe shouted after her. **"Say hi to Jacob junior for me!"**

"Why don't you come over on Sunday afternoon and say hi yourself." Cathy had the feeling Joe was in the need of company.

"Might just do that, thanks."

"Bye, Joe," and she smiled at him as she left.

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Vincent was waiting at the apartment when she got there, with JJ crawling around the living room floor.

She put her arm around his neck, and they kissed, a long slow kiss.

"Oh, It's so good to know it's Friday night, and we have the whole weekend together." They hugged each other till JJ decided he wanted some of the attention.

"*M-u-m-m-y*," and two chubby arms were held out for someone to lift him. Catherine shook off her coat and threw it over the back of the couch before bending to pick up her son.

"Hello darling, How's my big boy today?" and she kissed his cheek while he made a grab for her hair as he put his little arms around his mother's neck.

Vincent watched, love flowing freely for his family here, in front of him. He sighed to himself as he remembered how this had only been a dream a short time ago.

Catherine turned to look at him, as she felt his thoughts and smiled a smile that would have melted him away if he hadn't closed his eyes.

Going to the kitchen, he put the kettle on and called, "Catherine, come and have some salad. It's getting late and you must be hungry."

"Okay, I'll just get changed first," and coming over to him, gave him a kiss on the cheek. JJ, not to be outdone, pulled his hair. "**Ow!**" This caused the child to laugh with delight.

"Oh Vincent, he knows just the right time to do that." She was trying hard not to laugh herself!

"Yes! I'm sure he waits till we are occupied - just to make sure of its effect!"

They both laughed then and, as Vincent took his son and secured him into his bouncy chair, Catherine had a quick shower and changed into jeans and jumper.

After they had eaten, they were relaxing by playing with JJ on the floor. Vincent was stretched out to let his son climb over him, which he did with great relish and Catherine decided she would enjoy it too, so she leaned over and planted a kiss on his forehead as she let her hand wander under his jumper. This caused him to squirm from her touch. "Catherine!"

"Hmmmmmm." She let her hand explore further down as Vincent struggled to concentrate on entertaining JJ.

"Catherine - please no!" and his shortened breath told her all she needed to know, smiling at him - he wrinkled his nose at her.

Withdrawing her hand she cradled his face and kissed him with desire and love, then turning from him, went to put some coffee on. Coming back she stood and just watched the sight in front of her - there on the floor by the fire, was Vincent sound asleep with their son cradled in his arm, and his head resting on his father's chest also sleeping soundly. The warmth from the fire and the days activity had taken its toll on them both.

"What a beautiful sight!" She felt her heart skip a beat, which in turn woke Vincent. When their emotions were this strong, their connection was more powerful than even they could understand.

"What... Cather ---"

"Shhhhh," and she pointed to the bundle on his chest.

He nodded and let her lift JJ and put him into his cot.

By the time she returned to the living room, Vincent was asleep again. Kneeling down, she kissed him gently on the mouth. He stirred and pulled her down beside him. "I love you, Catherine." A simple statement that was so full of meaning.

"Oh, Vincent, I love you too, and I'm so happy!" She hugged into his chest, where she always felt so safe and secure. There they slept for hours until cold awakened them, and they went through to bed - too tired to love - but loving each other as they coiled into one cocoon: Just content to have each other; to be with each other in body and soul.

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Saturday was a lot busier than they would have liked, but on the other hand they were pleased to see their friends; Jamie, with Mouse in tow, looking so out of place and uncomfortable, they only stayed for a short while.

Then Laura called in for a short time, and as she left, Michael called to see Vincent about something.

By evening they were happy just to be alone and went to bed early; their happiness complete with their joint desire and never ending love.

The sun was streaming through the windows when Vincent awoke, and he just lay and enjoyed its beauty for a while before moving. They had awakened earlier, and made love with all that was beautiful, and a desire that he once never dared dream about. Yet here Catherine fulfilled all his wildest dreams and more. He sighed and stretched, then went to have a shower, aware that Catherine was in the kitchen talking non-stop to their son, who every now and then, got his say in.

Sunday was a family day - Catherine took JJ for a walk in the park when she went for the papers, knowing Vincent was relaxing with a book until she got back.

Joe never came over, but phoned to say he was at the office and he would see her tomorrow. Diana phoned too, had a chat with Cathy, said her work was keeping her tied down just now, and they all knew they wouldn't see her until she had finished the case she was working on - that was her way.

No wonder Joe was at a loose end.

The rest of the day was heaven and when Jamie came in the afternoon to take JJ Below, Cathy was a little reluctant. This was the hardest adjustment for her, but one they had decided on for now. Left alone for the remainder of the night they enjoyed each other to the fullest and satisfied their wants and desires with ease, from tender loving that came with the purest of love created within these two bound beings.

In the early hours of Monday morning, Vincent slipped from the bed to dress and go Below.

"Vincent," she pushed herself up on one elbow.

"I'm here, Catherine."

"Do you have to go right now?" she whispered.

He came and sat by the bedside and took her hand. "I must, but we have tonight to look forward to," and bending forward, kissed her with a soft tender touch, and left.

Catherine rolled over to snatch another couple of hours sleep before her alarm would stir her into action.

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*'Monday's were always slow to start off,'* Catherine thought, shutting her eyes, allowing herself a sheepish smile as she remembered the early morning with Vincent. *'I love you,'* she concentrated her thoughts, knowing he would feel her even now.

"Cathy," there was laughter in the name as the door opened.

Jenny coming in forced her to open her eyes and bring her back to the present.

"Jenny. Hi." She got up and they hugged. "Well? How did it go?"

"Oh, Cathy he was so beautiful! Hunk could never be a good description." She looked closely at her friend.

"But he's married, has a baby daughter, and is a great person." A long meaningful sigh escaped her.

"You still had a good time I take it?" She was smiling, watching Jen's reactions.

"Hmmmm. There was this guy from LA. I mean we're talking special, here, and he's in publishing!" Her face was radiant and told a thousand tales! "Geoff - his name is Geoff - and we're going out to dinner next weekend!"

"That's great, Jen, I'm happy for you." She sat down again. "What about the books, did they go well?"

She beamed a happy contented smile. "I'm pleased to say we did better than we had expected." Slowly she came around the desk and balancing on the end - smile gone - she looked serious.

"What? What's on your mind?" Cathy could read her pretty well by now.

"I need to talk to you about something important. Can we go out to lunch?"

Catherine glanced at her watch and as it was 12:30, she rose from behind her desk. "Sure! Let's go," and coat in hand they left the office without another word.

Once seated and having placed their order, Catherine couldn't wait any longer.

"Jenny - come on! Tell me what's wrong?"

"I'm not sure where I should start, so don't be mad at me if I jump about a bit."

Cathy nodded and sipped her coffee.

"The author from England, his name is Vince Dixon, well - that's what he gets called, but his actual name is Vincent."

Cathy shot a look at her friend, concentrating on her every word.

Jenny shrugged. "We got talking over dinner on Saturday night and he told me his family history, one you will be interested in."

"Me - why me?"

"Just wait, Cathy, okay?" She took in a deep breath. "He's from London, and has spent practically his whole life there - but he was born here! Right here! He's over six feet and has shoulder-length blonde hair. It's fashioned and shaped, but he still prefers to wear it long - so he said. His eyes are so blue, I have only seen one other person with eyes like them, Cathy."

"My.... Vincent?"

Jen nodded.

Catherine was feeling uncomfortable and couldn't quite put her finger on the reason.

"Yes, Cath, your Vincent," she sighed. "There's more - he was adopted at birth, by a couple who had lost their child, the same day he was left at the hospital by some unknown person. They found him wrapped up outside

the nursery unit at St. Vincent's Hospital, hence the name, Vincent."

Catherine fell back in her chair, and could only stare at her friend - mouth open in disbelief.

**"Jenny ... are you serious?"**

Leaning forward Jenny spoke softly. "Cathy, if you were to meet him, you would see your Vincent, as he could be without his special features." Jenny's eyes were huge as she looked at her friend. "Do you think there could be any connection here?"

"What are you saying?" Catherine's throat was dry and words were hard in coming out. "That they are - are brothers?" She didn't know what to think.

"Cathy - let me introduce you to him - judge him for yourself!" She covered Cathy's hand with her own.

"There's one more thing, he showed me a picture of his family. His daughter is called Crystal, after his wife's mother, and to look at her ... she's ... she's JJ's double!"

**"Oh, God!"** Catherine was confused and trying to think straight. "Jenny, I don't know what to feel about this ... if it's possible. I'm not sure! But should I find out ... should I interfere?"

"I don't know what I can tell you, but Vince will be here for some time. It seems that books are only a hobby. His job, as such, is an investigator for antique furniture companies and that's why he's here."

"Wait a minute," Catherine's mind was buzzing. "I think Joe had lunch with him last week!"

"Could be." Jenny drank her cold coffee. "He said he had met someone, a friend of a friend, who works at the DA's office."

"Jen - let me think about this." She had a few ideas creeping around her head that needed looking into first.

"Oh!" Diving into her bag Jenny produced some keys. "These are yours, Cathy, and thanks for letting me have the car." They held hands and smiled at each other, as she handed over the keys.

"Any time, Jen," and they hugged each other before parting.

"Phone - okay?"

Cathy nodded.

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"Your move, Vincent." Father knew he was winning only because Vincent's thoughts were on other things.

"Sorry, Father, but can we leave this until a later time?" Vincent sat back in the huge chair.

**"Yes - well - you could be right!"** He retorted, watching his son. "Is it Catherine? She's not in any danger?"

He shook his head. "No ... not danger ... but her thoughts are overpowering, she's in turmoil ... but there is no fear," he sighed. "I think she's holding back her feelings for some reason."

"She knows you can feel all she feels, Vincent." Father covered his hand with his. "Perhaps she is trying to cause you less worry," he sighed. "She's a remarkable person, Vincent, her love is beyond everything and keeps growing endlessly." Getting up from his chair, Father went to his son and lay a hand on his shoulder.

"She has become so much a part of our lives, Vincent, her not being here - would cause us all a great deal of heartache. Take great care of her, and protect her - not just for you - but for all of us."

"I will, Father," Vincent smiled at him, and then decided to go to the nursery to see his son.

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"Rita, come in, will you please?" Catherine motioned her in as she passed.

"I'm pushed, Catherine. Joe's got me chasing around looking for antique fraud cases!" She lifted her arm up as a sign of despair.

"That's okay, Mine is straightforward." She looked at her with her *'help'* look.

"Okay, okay! I'll fit it in at lunch," she smiled. "What do you want to know?"

Catherine gave her all the details she could about St. Vincent's Hospital and what records she needed - pointing out that this was between themselves at this stage.

Then, she sent a letter Below to Father, asking him to meet her, without Vincent knowing - that afternoon.

Feeling slightly better, she tried to concentrate on the work load on her desk. Her phone rang as she sipped at her second cup of coffee.

"Catherine Wells."

"Radcliffe! You busy?" said Joe's voice at the other end.

"Not especially."

"Great, I've someone I want you to meet." And with that the phone went dead.

"Cathy," Rita came in. "This is all I can get on St. Vincent's but I spoke to a retired nurse, who was working there at the time you were asking about, and she told me there was a note."

"A note!"

"Yeah, apparently there were two children - twins - but one of the boys, and the mother were supposed to have died - although there was no record found on the brother. They think that the mother was a woman found outside a soup kitchen downtown, but that's not official."

"Thanks, Rita," and as she left, Joe came in.

"Cathy?"

She collected the papers and put them in her briefcase before looking up at him.

Not expecting anything out of the ordinary, she got a shock when she saw the tall, good-looking figure in front of her. She knew her mouth was open, but couldn't shut it - or speak.

"Cathy," Joe came forward. "Meet Vince Dixon, from London."

He came forward to shake her hand. "Pleased to meet you, Mrs. Wells - Joe speaks very highly of you."

His touch was gentle, as was his voice, and Catherine could feel the blood drain from her as she stared.

"Hi." She spoke in a whisper before regaining herself. "I'm sorry, you just remind me of someone ... nice to meet you."

Joe was frowning at her reaction.

"Cathy, Greg Hughes phoned to say he'd had word from Interpol and as Vince is here as their Investigator, we are to assist him in any way we can." He sat on her desk. "And as you are my Number One, I'm going to give you the job!" He smiled his sheepish smile.

"But Joe - you know I'm not in the field anymore. Why now?"

"I just think you'll do good with this case." Joe turned to Vince. "Jenny is a friend of Cathy's too and that could



help with a cover for you."

"Jenny?" Cathy looked at them.

Vince came forward. "Yes - she has been pushing the sale of my book, so my link with her could help cover a few tracks." He smiled at her, and she could feel herself go red. *'How like her Vincent he was, as he tilted his head to talk in his low soft voice. It was scary!'*

"Look at this." Joe handed Cathy Vince's Antique Book. "It's great, isn't it?"

Cathy took the book, had a quick look through it, then when she was about to hand it back she noticed the photo on the back cover. *'God!'* She took in a deep breath as she looked at it.

Leaning over her shoulder, Vince said, "Not very good is it! It was taken a couple of years ago and my hair was still pretty shaggy then."

Joe came and joined him to look over her shoulder hoping to see what had taken her interest. A whistle escaped him as he saw the photo. "Cathy - you thinking what I'm thinking?"

"Yes, Joe! Can you see it too?" She lifted her eyes to him.

"Yeah." Now he knew what seemed familiar about this man.

"What's wrong?" Vince was puzzled.

Cathy turned the book around.

"This photo, you look so very like my husband."

He nodded at them.

"Well, you know what they say," he shrugged his shoulders. "Everyone has a double!"

"Can I borrow this for tonight?" She asked Joe. "I don't have time to look through it at the moment."

"Sure." They got ready to leave. "As from tomorrow, you two can get together and make a start."

"Okay." Cathy shook Vince's hand, her mixed feelings bouncing inside her.

"See you in the morning," and he smiled as he left, feeling there was something about her. For some unknown reason, she was very special. He would get onto Joe and find out more about her.

Catherine looked at her watch and grabbed her coat. She was running late for her meeting with Father.

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Father was waiting at the Park entrance. ***"Catherine! What's so important you have asked me here without Vincent's knowledge?"***

"I'm sorry, Father, but I feel this is too important."

Without delay she explained everything that had occurred over the last few hours. She was out of breath by the time she had finished. Waiting for Father to speak, she reached into her bag and took out the book with Vince's photo on the back. Without speaking, she showed it to Father.

***"Good God, Catherine. The resemblance is astonishing!"*** His eyes wide, he took in every detail.

"I know," she whispered. "It frightened me."

They were both silent for sometime before Father spoke. "Cathy, I think we have to assume that this man could be Vincent's brother. With the facts we have, I feel we should tell Vincent our findings, and see what his

reaction to all this is."

"Yes, I know, I wanted to tell him this morning after Jen's visit, but decided to hold back until I had spoken to you about it." Cathy was now pacing the tunnel.

"Vincent felt your unease this morning," he smiled at her. "He also knew you were holding something back in your emotions."

She returned his smile. "It gets harder to hide anything from him these days," she sighed. "Father," she stood in front of him.

"Yes?"

A short sigh escaped before she spoke. "Joe wants me to help this man on his case while he is here. I'm more than a little concerned about it, and how Vincent will feel."

Father rubbed his chin. "I'm afraid you can only wait and see, Catherine. You know Vincent better than anyone."

She nodded at him. "Thank you, Father - 'till tonight then."

He nodded back. "'Till tonight."

They parted for the next few hours to go over in their minds the events that had come to them.

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Vincent was in the lower chambers with Mouse, preparing a support beam. He was smiling to himself, wondering what Father and Catherine were up to now. *'Whenever Father went to stretch his legs it was usually to meet Catherine without him about'*. This time he was uneasy. *It was unusual for them to meet during the daytime. Was it something to do with her unrest this morning?*' He shook his head, *'I must concentrate on this beam.'*

All of a sudden, without warning, he let out a growl, and dropped the beam, just missing Mouse by inches. He grabbed his shoulder as a shooting pain went through his arm, and he doubled up out of breath.

**"Vincent?"** Mouse was frightened.

Slowly he regained his footing.

"It's all right, Mouse, whatever it was has passed." He went to reach for the beam again. "Are you all right?"

"Okay, good. Okay, fine," came the usual reply, as he dusted himself off.

"We are very nearly finished now," and he heaved the beam onto his shoulder again. *'What's wrong with me?'* He didn't like the strange feeling within him.

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As Catherine got back to the office, she was greeted by Joe.

**"Where the hell were you?"** He was upset.

**"At a meeting, Joe. Why?"** She was taken aback by his manner. "What's wrong?"

He threw his hands in the air. "Hey! I'm sorry, Cathy - I didn't mean to...."

"It's okay, just tell me what's wrong!" She came into his office and lay a hand on his arm.

"After we left you, Jenny phoned and asked Vince over to her office to make some final arrangements over the signing of his books." He took a deep breath. "Just as he was getting into a taxi outside here, he was shot in the shoulder."

**"God! No! Was anyone else hurt?"** Cathy asked. "How is he?"

Joe paced the office. "You know, Cathy - that man is really something!" He pointed to his own shoulder as he explained. "He got shot here and he landed on the pavement with such force, anyone else would have been out for the count! Not him - he just got up, came in here, asked for help and doubled up, hardly able to speak!" He stopped for breath. "Cathy, he reminds me more of your Vincent every time I'm with him."

She nodded. "Yes, I know, Joe. Where is he now?" Her voice was barely a whisper.

Joe was calmer now, and spoke very softly. "Back at his hotel, the hospital said the bullet went right through. He's okay."

"Should I go over?" Cathy looked at Joe, not sure she wanted to.

"No - let's wait and see what tomorrow brings," Joe sighed. "I'll call in to see him later on my way home."

"Okay," and she turned to leave.

"Cathy," he handed her some files. "Vince gave me these for you - they are the suspects he's after on this fraud case."

"Thanks!" she smiled at him. "Should I phone Jenny and let her know what's happened?"

"No, it's okay, I phoned her." He pushed his hands into his pockets. "She'll be in touch."

With that, Cathy went to her office and prayed the rest of the day would pass quickly then the morning.

Vincent had showered, and with JJ, was waiting in their chamber for Catherine to come home. He was restless - she was restless, he could feel it, and he was on edge waiting for her to arrive. When he sensed her approach he put JJ in his chair, and turned to hold her as she came in the doorway.

"Catherine," and he held her close. She could not speak, for a minute, and just shut her eyes, enjoying the feel of him.

"Oh, Vincent! What a day!" Finally they pulled apart and kissed.

"I know," Vincent spoke quietly. "Let's have dinner first then we can talk."

She smiled at him. "Okay," then turned to her son. She knew Vincent wanted her to unwind and relax before she started to relay the events that troubled her.

An hour passed, and supper over, JJ in bed for the night, they finally sat down with tea.

"Now, Catherine, you have something that troubles you a great deal - are you ready to tell me about it?" He kissed her gently and with his arm around her shoulders, she leaned back against him and snuggled close.

Taking in a deep breath, she filled Vincent in on everything that had passed that day. When she had finished - she unwound herself from his hold and stretched for her briefcase and Vince's book. Slowly she handed it to Vincent, and watched his face for his reaction.

"Is this what you wanted to see Father about today?"

She smiled up at him. "I knew I couldn't keep anything from you," she said, pulling back to get a better look at

him. "I wanted to tell you this morning, but decided to see Father first. I didn't know what was for the best. What if I'm wrong and it's just a coincidence?"

Vincent let out a deep sigh and turned to face her, then brushed the side of her face with his hand.

She closed her eyes for a minute to enjoy the touch and feel of his love.

"I don't think you are wrong, Catherine." He rose from the large sofa, and with the book in his hand, walked around the chamber.

"What makes you say that?" she spoke softly.

"Because something happened today, that can only be explained as an event that happens between two people conceived at the same time."

"What happened, Vincent?" She looked at him with all her love and listened as he explained the unusual events in the lower chamber.

"God, Vincent! That was the time that Vince was shot today." She rubbed her forehead and then ran her fingers through her hair.

Vincent's concentration ran deep. "Catherine, it's one thing for me to find out about having a brother, but what do you tell him?" He was very quiet, with such sadness in his voice.

"Oh, Vincent," and she went to him, kissed him and held him, with all the love she could, letting it flow through their connection to its fullest. Holding each other, they just stood where they were, their minds and thoughts as one, both waiting for their feelings to guide them.

"Vincent, he's so like you, I'm sure he would understand." She guided him back to the sofa. "No - I know he would!"

"How can you know, Catherine?" Vincent was not as sure as his wife on this.

"Are you willing to find out?" She let her hand caress his face.

"I don't know," he shook his head. "I don't know."

"Well then," Catherine put her arms around his neck. "Let's sleep on it."

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Catherine arrived early at the office next morning, only to find Vince waiting for her.

"Vince? You shouldn't be here!" She was genuine in her concern. "How's the shoulder?"

"It's okay, really," he smiled at her, and let his head drop slightly to the side. "Besides, we have work to do!"

"Listen, how would you like to come over for dinner tonight and meet my family?" She was smiling at him as she went around her desk.

"Are you sure it would be convenient?" he sounded pleased.

She smiled at him. "Really - we'd love to have you to come," and she sat down in her chair gathering the files in front of her, thinking of the early morning plans she and Vincent had been making.

"Fine, thank you, I'd like to!" his eyes twinkled.

"Okay, then let's get started here."

They proceeded by breaking down all the names and faces on the files he had compiled.

It was some time later before it was done. Catherine took it all in, and discovered Joe was right. This was an interesting case.

"So - what do you think of this one?" she asked, tapping a file with her pencil. "This Ted Ross, he's your connection this side of the business."

He nodded as he surveyed the photo. "It seems so, all I need is access to some of his files." He sighed. "Files that I hope will give me the information I need to tie up with London."

"You mean days, dates, times and delivery - that sort of thing?" She looked at him.

"Yes, I'm afraid with this kind of fraud it's all in the paperwork," he laughed then, a muffled laugh she knew from someone else. "Unless you get too close, and they don't like it!"

"Aren't you worried they might try again?" Catherine was aware they could.

He leaned back on the office couch where he was now sitting, stretching one leg out in front of him, so like Vincent, then putting his hands behind his head, he shut his eyes.

"I wouldn't survive in this job if I did!"

Cathy laughed with him this time. They were very relaxed in each other's company and he knew this was going to be a special time for him - *'I don't know how - but I have some very strong feelings when with this woman. She was special, and Joe told me a bit about her, but I know certain things were not passed on.'* However, he knew enough to admire her from his own judgement.

"What do you want us to do next?" Cathy took him from his thoughts.

"How about lunch?" he smiled. "Hope you don't mind, but I said we would meet Jenny."

"Great!" She was pleased, and reached for the phone.

"Rita! Yeah, it's Cathy. Can you come in a minute - no, it won't take long ..." she laughed, "... I promise!" She replaced the phone, and turning to look at Vince she explained. "Rita is our expert."

"I had heard."

"Cathy?" Rita poked her head in the door.

"Come in, Rita," she smiled. "Don't look at me like that, it's not a big job!"

Rita grinned at both of them. "You say that to all my computers!"

Laughing, she gave her the Ted Ross file. "Everything, or anything you can please."

"Okay, Cathy - but I'm pushed so it'll be late afternoon."

"That's fine - thanks, Rita."

"Oh, by the way," she turned to face Vince. "The readouts on those fraud cases you wanted, I put them on Joe's desk." She gave a weak smile. "I'm sorry - there's not much!" and with a nod to them both she left the office.

"She's good!" Vince was impressed.

"Yes, she is," Cathy wholehearted agreed.

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After lunch they scanned the readouts trying to find some connection between them. They felt they were at a

dead end, when Rita came in with the updates on Ted Ross.

"Okay, this is everything I can get from the files. Not much but I've cross-checked it all." She tapped the pile of papers. "There was, however, one other name that did pop up a few times - Laurie, Charles Laurie." She shrugged. "We don't have anything on him - I checked, but I thought I should mention it."

Taking them by surprise Vince jumped up from his chair and kissed Rita. "You're a marvel - hank you!"

Both Cathy and Rita stared at each other, puzzled by his reactions. "You're welcome," Rita whispered.

"Don't you see - we've cracked it!" He grinned. "Laurie - he's the missing link at the London end." He couldn't hide his pleasure. "Cathy, can I use your phone?"

"Sure - help yourself," and they left him alone in the office.

"Tasty," Rita commented, and they quietly shared a silent laugh.

"Cathy - Rita!" Joe called them over, he looked decidedly pleased. "You've done good work, Vince is over the moon," he grinned at them both, nodding his approval.

"Thanks, Joe," Cathy returned his smile. "But it's Rita who deserves the pat on the back."

"What'd you want? Medals?" Smiling to himself, he turned back to his office - this would look very good for the DA.

Rita and Cathy shared a knowing look then parted.

When Cathy returned to her office, Vince had gone, but on her desk was a note.

*Thanks, see you tonight about 7.30*

She allowed herself a smile; supper was going to be interesting if nothing else! Then, looking at her watch she decided to call it a day, and get some shopping done on the way home. Collecting her things she tapped on Joe's window as she left. "See you tomorrow."

He lifted his head from the folder he was reading. "Okay, Radcliffe." He turned to her. "Vince mentioned he was coming over for supper tonight?"

"Yeah - Vincent thought we should."

"You gonna try and sort things out - investigate - so to speak?" His voice was tender, he didn't want her to take his concern the wrong way.

Shrugging her shoulders, Cathy frowned. "I'm not sure, Joe, I'll play it by ear."

"Take care, Cathy," and he came and rested his hand on her arm. "Give my regards to Vincent."

"I will." She gave him one last look. "Night, Joe," and she left the office.

Her head full of thoughts, and reaching for Vincent to somehow reassure her for what the night had in store for them.

\*\*\*\*\*

Vince phoned London and got them moving on Charles Laurie, he then got hold of Greg Hughes and put in motion a search and arrest warrant on Ted Ross. That done, he filled Joe in and left the DA's office for St. Vincent's Hospital. He was going to do a bit of checking up while he was here.

His parents had been killed in a car crash some years earlier and his only relative was his grandmother. Her telling of his arrival into the world had got his curiosity going. Now! She was gone! So here he was at his

birthplace and ready to check out the old lady's tale.

The hospital confirmed the story as he knew it, but they put him in touch with a retired nurse who had been working there at the time he was abandoned. He used the phone at the hospital and made sure he could call. That organized, he grabbed a cab and found himself sipping tea with a very nice elderly lady.

They chatted for a long time - it seemed she was only too happy to talk to someone. Finally, they got round to why he was there. She told him about a note that had been left, found tucked inside the blanket he was wrapped in.

His mother had not been well, and the birth was a difficult one. He was one of twins - but it happened that the other boy and his mother had died.

How could they know?

They didn't for sure. The note had been badly written, and they thought, by someone that had only been a passerby, or it was somebody who had been with his mother at the time. They just had no idea. There was a woman found dead outside a soup kitchen, but the police couldn't find any sign of a child anywhere. An autopsy told them the woman had given birth within forty-eight hours of death, but no identification of any kind had been discovered. Could it have been possible that the other baby had survived and was rescued by another passerby? She thought it was, he had been weak but sound in heart, and there was a strength so determined to live within him; then why not his brother too? He thanked her and said goodbye, his mind in a state of confusion. Glancing at his watch he discovered he would just make it in time to meet Greg.

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"Father." Vincent was holding JJ, who as soon as he saw his grandfather, tried to wriggle free of his father's hold.

Turning from his desk, he removed his glasses. "Ah!" He smiled with joy on seeing his grandson and held out his arms to hold him. They were very close, this older man and young child. Watching Vincent, he could see he was in deep thought. "You're concerned about tonight."

Vincent nodded.

"Have you come to any conclusions about this man?" Father adjusted the hold he had on JJ, as he tried to climb up his chest to pull at a leather lace he had spotted.

"Yes." Vincent stretched one leg out in front of him as he settled back in the large chair. I am sure, Father - with all my inner feelings - that he is indeed, my brother." He sighed and leaned forward. "But how will he react to me?"

Father came over to his son and lowering JJ to settle on Vincent's knee, said; "You must know by now, Vincent, that love and understanding also creates a great acceptance in people. Catherine has helped teach us this, in more ways than one." He sat down again and played with his glasses. "When you meet your brother, all your feelings for each other will guide you both. Trust in that, Vincent, and in the love you have with Cathy and your son. They will give you strength you need - and support at this sensitive time."

"I know, Father," and, lifting his son above his head, there was an outburst of laughter from him which spread over the two men.

"You know, Vincent, this is very hard on Catherine too, her emotions have once more been tested and, as strong as she is, there is always worry in her - for you!" He took a breath. "You are her life."

Vincent kissed his son while he concentrated on Catherine. He could only look at his father, and let him know

facially how he felt. Father needed no words from him. His face explained his feelings completely.

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Catherine let herself into the apartment and put away the shopping in the kitchen. She had decided on a simple chicken salad for tonight, as she wanted it to be as informal and relaxed as possible. An hour later everything was prepared, and she headed for the shower. Looking at the bedside alarm she saw she had about half an hour before Jamie came in with JJ. It had been hard, not to concentrate her thoughts in any way that would upset Vincent. Their bond was so strong she had to work hard to channel her thoughts on a variety of things, just to give him some peace of mind.

She sniggered to herself, then realized he would know she was doing just that anyway. "I love you, Vincent," she whispered to the water tumbling down her face and over her body - and shivered as she was aware he also was confessing his love to her.

By the time Jamie arrived, Cathy had dried her hair and was about to get dressed. "I won't stay, Cathy, but will JJ be stopping here tonight?" She was holding his hand as Catherine rested him on her hip.

"Yes, thanks Jamie." She smiled at her son. "I'll leave him on my way to work tomorrow."

"Okay, goodnight," and with a kiss to JJ, Jamie was gone.

"Right, young man, into your playpen till Daddy gets here and I've got some clothes on!" She hugged and kissed him before putting him down to play with the few toys on the floor. He looked up at her as he grabbed a block and called, "*Mu-mm-y!*" She knelt down and played with him before going to get dressed, not wanting to leave him too soon. Besides, Vincent would be here shortly and there was a good hour to go before Vince arrived.

"Catherine."

She turned and jumped up - throwing herself into his arms.

"Oh, Vincent," and they kissed each other with some urgency, before parting and looking at each other. His beautiful blue eyes were slightly misty with the emotion she could feel within him. She stood on her tip-toes to kiss them.

He smiled down at her. "You have been sending some mixed signals today - our bond has been working overtime!"

"I was worried about you!" She took his hand, and seeing JJ was playing happily - they went through to the bedroom.

"I know," and he tilted his head to the side as he watched her move about, getting her clothes ready.

"What time is he coming?" Vincent's voice was soft.

"Around 7.30, she said." She kissed his cheek as she leaned past him for her hairbrush.

\*\*\*\*\*

Vince got back to his hotel around 6.30pm, and he knew he was pushed for time. His afternoon with Greg had been a great success; Ted Ross was in custody along with all his records and dealings. They had found a false back in his safe, with accounts and records that never saw the light of day on a regular basis.

He was feeling great, and looking forward to his evening with Catherine and her family. There was a feeling



within him when he was near her - he couldn't explain it or understand it, but it was there and he had a suspicion that there was more to supper than a meal! *'But what? My past perhaps? The old nurse had told me someone from the DA's office had been asking questions regarding the left child at St. Vincent's.'*

He cast his clothes aside and went for a shower, letting his mind flow with the water. *'He's alive - I know it.'* His thoughts for his long lost brother were deep and only the ache in his shoulder returned him to reality. He would have to change the dressing again, as the wetness had let the blood seep through. *'Damn'* - he should have thought about it before his shower.

Once dried off, he phoned Catherine to tell her he was running late by about half an hour - would it be okay?

"Just get here when you can, Vince," her voice was friendly. "But remember - we don't talk shop tonight!"

He could hear her gentle laugh.

"It's a deal, Catherine - see you soon!"

Dressing changed, he dried and dressed himself, then he stretched for his jacket, and headed for the lobby. The doorman hailed him a cab, and he was on his way without a second thought.

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The phone rang, just as Vincent was about to grab Catherine stretching past him for the hairbrush.

"Saved by the bell!" she teased him. "Hello, Catherine Wells." She felt Vincent come behind her. It was Vince, running late, so they had a little more time together.

Putting the phone down she could hear JJ in the living room playing with his toys, then she turned her gaze on her husband. His head tilted to one side, he held out his arms to her and she willingly went to him, as their love was burning within her. This was a special night and tension was telling in them both, as they waited for their visitor to arrive.

"It's going to be all right, Vincent." She held his face in her hands and soothed him with her loving soft voice.

"As long as you are here I have no doubts or fears." He bent to kiss her; a long tender kiss. Their lips barely touched but the result was as powerful as if it was the most passionatel kiss they could muster!

Parting from the kiss, Catherine clung to his chest and shut her eyes, as he gently caressed her hair.

Speaking to the top of her head, Vincent said, "You had better finish getting ready, Catherine."

She nodded and moved away, as Vincent went to get JJ and play with him till it was time for him to meet his brother.

Catherine had just finished shifting the toys to the bedroom when the doorbell rang. Handing the building blocks to Vincent and giving him a fleeting kiss, she went to open the front door, as he pulled the louvered doors of the bedroom behind him.

Standing for a second, she took in a deep breath before opening the door. "Come on in," and she stood aside to let him pass. He greeted her with a broad smile, and a beautiful bunch of roses - assorted colours, as he felt they were a safe bet!

"Why, thank you, they are beautiful." She smelled them and led him to the couch. "Would you like a beer, a wine or coffee?"

"A wine would be fine," he nodded at her. She was relaxed and on her own; he glanced around and spotted a photo of her son on the small coffee table. He stared at it, very aware that the likeness to his own daughter

was very strong.

Coming back with his wine, she was watching him. "That's my son, Jacob, named after his Grandfather." Her voice was full of motherly pride and Vincent felt a surge as he held the boy in his arms.

"He's with his father at the moment, they will be joining us soon," and with that, she sat down opposite him and lifted her wine glass. "Welcome to New York."

He looked at her for a moment then putting his glass down on the table, he lifted his gaze to hers.

"You know my background story, Catherine. Is that why I am here?"

She smiled at him. "One of the reasons - but you will get dinner!" Laughing quietly she tried to ease any tension there might be.

His muffled laugh came with his smile. "Can you tell me anything more about my brother? This is the object of our getting together, away from the office?" He tilted his head as he looked at her and reached for his wine.

"What do you know, Vince? Can you tell me? What have you found out?" She leaned forward and put her glass on the table. Putting her feet under her, she sat back to hear what he had to say.

Vince went through everything he could and ended by confirming his feelings that he knew his brother was alive.

"That's it, Catherine - that's the lot!" He leaned back and sighed. "I don't know where to go from here - do you?"

"I'm not sure - but what I have to tell you is the truth and the only request I have is that you keep your questions till I've finished."

She waited for his reply.

"All right - agreed," and he sat back on the couch, noticing for the first time the large chair that was so majestic and ancient looking. He must take a good look at it later.

Slowly - and with great care - Catherine told Vincent's story, watching Vince's face for reactions. Once or twice she saw a deep frown come over his face, but on the whole he sat absorbed in everything that she was saying.

As she was near the completion, she got up from her seat and picked up a framed photo, lying in the small drawer of the phone table. Caressing it with her hand, she remembered the day Diana took it for her. Coming back to this good-looking man, she carefully handed it to him. It was a beautiful picture of her, Vincent and JJ and the only family photo she possessed.

He sat forward on the couch as he took the photo from her, watching her as he did so. The love on her face when she had looked at the photo was overpowering, and he thought how lucky these people were. Then he lowered his eyes to take in the family snapshot.

**"Well! I'll be ..."** He didn't finish. He just stared at it. The resemblance between them was there, but the features of this remarkable man took his breath away. **"This is Vincent?"** He never looked up - just touched the glass frame.

"Yes," she smiled. "My husband and the father of my son."

"He's magnificent!" He said, looking at him. "Now I can see why he has had to lead the life you described." He knew now why one child was left outside, while the other was placed at the nursery.

"Vince, now you have seen this, how do you feel about the possibility that he is your brother?" She retrieved the family photo and put it safely away.

He was smiling to himself.

"Possibility?" He shook his head. "**No! It's fact!** He's my brother, all right - I feel it in my bones!"

Without saying another word, she smiled at him, kissed his cheek and motioned him to wait. Going to the bedroom, she opened the louvered doors and Vincent came forward. JJ half asleep in his arms. Bending forward he kissed Catherine - knowing how difficult this last hour had been for her. Then he lifted up his gaze to behold the sight of his brother.

Catherine took JJ from him, as she saw Vince rise from his seat and come towards Vincent. Without a word the two men clung together.

Catherine lowered her head, thinking that it was the first time she had seen anybody at a level height with Vincent. Then looking at JJ, decided to put him to bed. Leaving the two men together - getting to know each other - she went through to the bedroom.

With JJ resting soundly, Catherine went to the kitchen and completed the preparations for the dinner. Then going through to the living room again, she sat on the arm of Vincent's chair and put her arm around his shoulders.

He instinctively put his arm around her waist.

"Well, are you both hungry?" She looked from one to the other.

"Starving!" Vincent teased as he held her close - not at all uncomfortable in Vince's presence.

"Come on then, it's ready," and they all went through to have the long awaited meal.

The whole evening went off in a relaxed and happy manner. Catherine left the two men alone as much as she could, as they were trying to put their lives together in one short night.

"When will you be leaving to go back to London?" Catherine came through with the coffee.

"Next Monday," he smiled. "And that's long enough to be away from my family!"

The next hour or so was full of his own family, and the love for them was as strong as with Catherine and Vincent. However, the night had to come to an end and around 1 am, Vince rose to leave. He shook Vincent's hand and then hugged him.

"Vincent, meeting you has made my life complete! Knowing you now will help me through anything the future has in store!" he sighed. "For so long I have thought about your existence, and deep down I was convinced you were alive."

Vincent felt his heart beating and was so proud to know this man, his brother, in all ways. They had discovered so much in such a short time, and the fact that Vince had also felt so alone at a young age, made him realize how fortunate he had been. Once his loneliness was never far away from him, but since Catherine, he now had a life - and hopes. His life Below as a young man and child seemed to have been a superior existence to his brother's. He never lacked love, but there were not many to give it and his adoptive parents died when he was young.

'Yes,' Vincent thought, *'I was the lucky one!'*

Then, placing a hand on the broad shoulders of his brother, he smiled at him before speaking again.

"Catherine will bring you Below tomorrow night and you can meet my father." Vincent was rather proud of this statement.

Vince nodded and returned his warm, nice smile. "I'm looking forward to it, little brother." He laughed at this remark!

"Little?" Catherine asked with raised eyebrows.

"Yes," Vincent's soft tones flowed. "We have decided Vince was the first born, therefore he is the elder."

"I see," she was holding back an urge to laugh, so instead she kissed his cheek. "Goodnight, I'll see you tomorrow."

Then, with a grin and a wink at Vincent, she took the coffee cups into the kitchen, leaving them alone again.

Having said his goodbyes, Vincent came to Catherine in the kitchen. She turned to him, then went into his arms, overflowing with emotions and love.

"Oh, Catherine!" he sighed deeply into her hair. "Yesterday, I thought I had all the family a man could hope for. Today I was proved wrong." He gently pulled her from him. "Today I have found a brother!"

"And a very special one, Vincent!"

"Yes," he smiled as he thought of him. "Yes, he is."

Kissing each other with delayed desires, Vincent gently lifted Catherine into his arms and took her through to their bed.

Their lovemaking was very special to them this night, and lasted a long time. When finally they had slept a short while, Catherine was awakened by JJ. '*He must be thirsty,*' she thought, remembering he had fallen asleep without his evening snack!

"Mu-mm-y." His little arms outstretched, she lifted him and gently placed him beside Vincent's sleeping body. JJ was not to be outdone and made a grab at his father's chest, causing Vincent to wake rather quickly. He gazed at his son, and once more felt a lump in his throat at the thought of Catherine, and how she had wanted only him - and here beside him was the proof of her outstanding love.

Coming back from the kitchen, she gave JJ his drink and watched as he settled himself against his father, eyes half shut, soon to close tight.

Vincent lifted him with great care and placed him back in his cot; standing watching him for a few moments before returning to bed. Catherine looked at the alarm as Vincent sighed. "We don't have much time when I'm Above, Catherine."

She snuggled up to him and kissed his chest. "No, but at least we don't waste it!"

"HMMMMMM." He pulled her close then, just as suddenly he sat bolt upright, gasping for breath and holding his head.

"What?" Catherine didn't understand what was happening. "Vincent - what is it?"

"He's in trouble, Catherine - I must go to him!" and he threw the covers off and jumped from the bed, slightly unsteady.

"Who?" she grabbed his arm. "Vince?" The realization that he could have a form of bond with his brother took hold.

"Yes!" his voice was husky. "Something's wrong, I can feel it," and he reached for his things.

"No, Vincent!" Catherine's mind was buzzing. "You can't do anything from here; wait - please - just a few minutes."

"Catherine, he's in trouble!" He gave her a look that was full of concern.

"Please, Vincent, just till I phone Joe," she pleaded with him.

Sighing, he nodded his head and finished getting dressed as Catherine lifted the phone and punched Joe's number from memory.

"Joe, sorry to bother you at this hour, but I need your help." Short of breath, she went on. "Yes, Joe - I don't have time to explain but get over to Vince's hotel and check he's okay. Yes, Vincent. No! I don't think so, but

now, Joe, please. Okay, thanks!" and with that she replaced the phone. Turning to hug him, she said, "Vincent, don't worry, Joe's only a short distance from the hotel and can be there long before we could. When he has spoken to Greg Hughes he'll phone back." She lay her hand on his shoulder. "It'll be all right,; and she tenderly kissed his cheek, holding back her own mixed emotions and worry for his brother.

"I should go to him, Catherine."

"Vincent, this once, please - just listen to me." She took his hands and they sat back on the bed. "Joe's got it in hand - trust us in this."

He let out a long deep breath and fell back on the bed, eyes shut tight.

Catherine quickly put on jeans and jumper. "Vincent, I'm going down to the basement to send a message for Jamie to come for JJ." She gently rubbed his face, her voice full of love. "You will have to go Below soon too - or you will end up here all day!" She braved a smile.

"But, Catherine..."

Trying to reassure him, she added; "As soon as Jamie gets here I'll go over - don't worry." She grabbed her jacket and headed for the door, calling over her shoulder. "If the phone rings you had better answer it in case it's Joe," and with that parting shot, she disappeared.

Vincent sighed and felt at a loss, but he knew Catherine to be right, and slowly relaxed as he waited for her return.

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Joe wasn't sure if it was his phone or not - but his hand automatically reached for it just the same.

"Yeah! Joe Maxwell." A yawn escaped as he recognized Cathy's voice. "***Do you know what time it is?***" he asked, trying to focus on his alarm.

Realizing there was something wrong by the sound of her voice, he sat up and concentrated on what she was saying.

"Is Vincent okay? Vince? One of the Wells' hunches, huh? I can guess. Okay, Cathy. Now? Okay, stay by the phone, I'll get back to you as soon as I've spoken to Greg."

He replaced the receiver and redialled. Greg got things in motion and was already on his way when Joe phoned Cathy back. Vincent had answered and would pass on the message to meet him at the hotel. With that he pulled on his jeans and sweater and headed for the door.

\*\*\*\*\*

Vince had been walking around, not in a hurry to return to his hotel room, his mind was crammed full after his evening with Vincent and Catherine.

'*What a night!*' he said to himself, but eventually headed back, with no intention of sleeping. It had been a most eventful night and his brother ... '*Well, what could I say about him? Special, somehow didn't seem enough to describe him. Unique, perhaps. Oh, Vincent,*' he hoped to spend as much time as he could with him before going back to London.

He was so deep in his thoughts, he didn't take his usual precautions before entering his room, and when the

blow came, it took him by surprise. Falling to the floor with a thud, he landed on his sore shoulder. **"Ow, God!"** and he took a deep breath before the present events faded and a blackness overtook him.

He didn't know how long he had been out, but he was most uncomfortable and in some pain when he did re-surface.

Looking up at the ugly character, sitting on the end of the bed, watching him, he shook his head before he knew that it wasn't a good idea! **"Ow!"** Then; **"Who the hell are you?"**

"Tut tut, Mr. Dixon! That's not a nice way to treat your guests!" and a sleazy chewing gum smile escaped the black teeth and wrinkled face.

Whoever he was - he was enjoying himself.

Vince groaned as he shifted. "What do you want from me?" Slowly he lifted his hand from the back of his head where he felt the warm blood covering his hair, and he could feel a bump growing. Clenching his teeth he took in a deep breath.

"Mr. Dixon - you don't appear to be thinking too good." He came forward. "You have caused some big problems for some friends of mine," he started to wave his gun around.

"You're right!" Vince replied. "I'm not thinking too good!" and as quick as he could, he sent his legs out from under him, throwing the intruder off balance and onto the floor, gun flying to the other side of the room.

Trying to get up, he felt dizzy and staggered before regaining control. Just as he pulled himself straight, the other man flew at him, knocking the breath from him, as they ended up on the floor again. Rolling around they were both trying to get the upper hand - but so far, *'Ugly'* seemed to be in the driving seat! He was stronger in body, but Vince was determined and when he received another blow to the stomach, it only added fuel to the fire already burning inside him. Somehow he found an extra surge of energy and flattened his opponent.

**"Goddamn it!"** he swore to himself, as he shook his head and the pain shot through it. He glanced down at his attacker and, seeing him move, pulled the tie wrap from the curtains and tied his hands behind his back.

Getting up from doing this, a banging on the door swung him around, and before he had time to open it, Joe shouted.

**"Vince-----you in there?"**

**"Yeah, coming!"** he shouted back - but Joe couldn't wait and flung the door wide, and in his eagerness nearly fell over the squirming mass on the floor. Then he slowly gathered himself together.

"Hi, Joe! What are you doing here?" Vince was more confused, as the sounds of more bodies approached.

Nursing his head, he stepped over the cause of his pain, and went to stand by Joe.

Looking around, Joe could see that everything was under control.

"You okay, Vince?" but he didn't get an answer.

"Hey, what the hell is going on here?" and Greg Hughes appeared, close behind Joe.

Vince looked at these two new found friends, and still nursing his head, he turned to Joe.

"How did you know I was being entertained?" He threw a glance at *'Ugly.'*

"It's a long story." Then Joe helped Greg lift the unwanted visitor from the floor and handed him over to the uniformed men that were part of the back-up.

Greg came forward and placed a hand on this tall man's shoulder.

"Sure you're okay?"

"I'll be fine. It's just a bump on the head, and the head will probably be black and blue." He laughed at himself.

"But truly, I'm okay."

"What about him?" Joe asked, as the intruder was led away.

"One of Laurie's men. He must have hired him before we picked Ted Ross up."

Greg followed the uniformed men, and was nearly knocked over as Cathy came rushing into the room.

"Sorry, Greg," she nodded a quick goodbye to him, as she approached Vince, but before she could speak, Joe did.

"He's fine, Cathy - he managed to survive without us this time!" he grinned at her.

"Cathy, are you behind all this?" he waved his good hand around at the people who were now leaving the room.

"Well, no! Not me, it was Vincent." She turned to take in the room and realized there had been a struggle. She gave Vince a worried look, but he said nothing.

"Vincent?" He lowered his head slightly to look directly at her, and she felt her heart give a lurch, as he was so like Vincent when he did that.

"Yes, he felt your pain; your hurt," she smiled. "He's very good at that!"

Vince nodded - but did not go into detailed questions, as anything he learned about his brother now was bound to be out of the ordinary!

"Where is he?"

"He's waiting for us, that's if you feel up to it?" She frowned slightly knowing he must be tired as well as sore.

"Excuse me!" Joe butted in. "Am I missing something here?"

Cathy turned to him. "Sorry, Joe," and as he came to stand beside them, she continued. "Meet Vincent's older brother."

"You're kidding me!"

"No, I'm not, Joe," Cathy beamed with pleasure.

"Well that's great, Vince," and he shook his good hand.

"I take it you know Vincent?" he smiled, as he nursed his sore hand.

"Oh yes! I'm one of the few that have met him and survived!" he laughed at Cathy.

"Joe, stop that!" but she smiled at his joke. Vince also smiled at them, knowing, from his talks with them earlier, about their adventures.

"How's Vincent taken it, Radcliffe?" Joe was more serious now as he thought of his friend.

"He's delighted - like a child with a new toy!"

Joe nodded and realized how pleased and happy he felt inside. Vincent was due something like this.

"Well, I'll be off, kiddo - you want a lift?"

"No, thanks, Joe, I'll stay with Vince awhile."

"Okay, see you tomorrow," and he turned to leave.

"Joe," Cathy went over to him. "Thanks for coming over."

"You know, Cathy, you and Vincent have more instincts and hunches than the rest of the DA's office put together." Laughing and shaking his head he left for home and a couple of hours sleep.

Cathy turned back to Vince. "You sure about that head, it looks pretty nasty."

"I'll feel fine after a shower," and pointing at the kettle, he suggested, "You can make us a coffee. I won't be long." He smiled. "Vincent will be worried."

"Oh! He knows you're okay," she smiled to herself

"Ah!" was all he said as he disappeared into the bathroom.

Cathy closed her eyes and concentrated all her thoughts on Vincent, and within seconds she felt a soft sensation run through her and knew he was feeling her.

Half an hour later Catherine and Vince were walking through the Park to the tunnels and an impatient Vincent.

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He had felt them approach, and was pacing - waiting for their arrival.

As they entered the tunnel, he took Catherine's hand and, squeezing it tight, kissed her before turning to his brother.

"Are you all right?" he lowered his voice. "I was worried."

Catherine answered him. "Joe got there as quick as he could, Vincent, but Vince had everything under control." She smiled up at him, as she returned the squeeze to his hand. His relief was evident and he led them to the sliding door.

"Are you hurt?" He noticed Vince holding his hand. Vince glanced at his brother as he allowed a smile to cross his face.

"Just a bump on the head and a rather sore hand," he chuckled to himself. "Fellow had a pretty hard jaw!" Then turning to face Vincent, added; "Truth to tell I'm not a great one when it comes to fisty-cuffs!" and the two of them laughed together. "Vincent!" he bent down slightly to get through the next entrance. "Cathy told me you felt my pain, my emotions - is that true?"

"Yes."

"Well - you really are something else, aren't you?"

Catherine came and held Vincent's arm, bursting with love and pride for this unusual man.

"You must rest before I give you the grand tour!" Vincent's voice was full of concern. "But first I think we should take you to Father."

"Yes," Catherine agreed. "He can check your injuries."

"Perhaps you're right," he nodded. "And besides, I'm looking forward to meeting your father."

"Good." Vincent was about to move off again when Catherine placed her hand on his arm again, her voice a whisper.

"I'll check on JJ, then go back to the apartment, Vincent. It's not long before I'm to be at work."

"Must you go in today?" Vincent was worried about her lack of sleep, but also knew she was capable of going on just the same.

"I'll be fine, don't worry." She placed her arms around his neck and they kissed - a long lingering kiss.

"Till tonight," and turning from him, said, "Bye, Vince, see you later." Then with a wave of her hand she headed for the nursery before going back Above.



With a sigh, Vincent turned to his brother and guided him to Father's chamber - all his present thoughts on Catherine.

Father was waiting in his chamber for the two brothers to arrive, slightly on edge, as his feelings for Vincent were his prime concern. He could hear their laughter as they approached and relaxed instantly. "Thank God," and he closed his eyes for a second, allowing himself to smile inwardly.

"Father," Vincent's voice had a slight edge of excitement about it. "I would like you to meet my big brother, Vince Dixon." His joy of this moment was clear.

"Hello, Mr. Wells, I've been told such a lot about you, I'm pleased to meet you at last," and changed his hand to shake the one Father held out.

"The feeling is mutual," he smiled. "Are you hurt? Let me see that!" Father gently looked at his swollen hand. Smiling at him he asked, "How's the fellow that was on the other end of that?"

"Not too good," and he returned the smile.

"Here - sit down. Vincent, get my bag please," and he automatically prepared Vince's hand for the bandage. The action broke the ice and these three men had an evening that none would forget.

The next few days flew by.

In the daytime, Vince was working to clear up his paperwork on the case, and the evenings were spent with Vincent, talking until all hours, discovering each other; and the years spent unknown. The weekend came and he only had two days before flying out.

Saturday, he spent with everyone Below, and Sunday was just for Catherine and Vincent.

Saturday had been a day to remember, not only because of Father and Vincent, but everyone from Below came to say goodbye to him. He had been here less than a week, and yet he felt happy and relaxed amongst these people. He would come again - but when? He didn't know - but yes, he would come back to this special world.

Saying goodbye had been hard, but he would keep in touch, and he had made a promise to Father he would send on some of the English Medical journals that he might find interesting. He was going to miss this extraordinary man!

Sunday, he arrived at Catherine's apartment for lunch, after spending the late morning packing.

"You should wear that track suit often, Vincent," he smiled at his brother. "It's good on you and cuts you down to size a bit!" He was teasing him over the younger brother bit again! Vincent laughed openly and going forward the two men had a shadow fight, like a couple of kids.

Catherine - with JJ resting on her hip - stood watching the scene with amusement. She had never seen Vincent like this with anyone and probably never would again.

Eventually they relaxed and sat down to lunch, which passed quickly and pleasantly.

Finally, it came to the hour for Vince to leave. "I'm going to miss you!"

Vincent took his brother's hand, then hugged him close. "Me too!"

Vince could hardly speak. "There is one thing I would ask of you both."

"Anything," Vincent frowned - he could feel unrest in his brother.

"My daughter is too young at the moment, to understand what I have found here - but I hope you understand why I must tell my wife, Linda," he stopped for breath, then taking Vincent's and Catherine's hands he went on, "If for any reason something should happen to me and Linda .... We have no relatives in England that are still alive, and I want to leave instructions for Crystal to come here to you two - if that's all right?" Looking

from one to the other he was a little emotional.

"Vince, our home is your home, and you and your family are welcome here at any time." They exchanged smiles and shook hands.

Catherine came and kissed him goodbye.

"I hope it won't be so long till we see you again," and she handed him an envelope. "That's all the addresses you asked for," her voice was a whisper.

He bent and kissed JJ, then returned Cathy's kiss before turning to Vincent for the last time.

"I have had a lifetime of happiness here with you, Vincent, and I promise I will come and visit you again." Tears welled. "My feelings for you run very deep."

"I know - so do mine," and Vincent embraced him.

With that they said their goodbyes and he was gone.

Vincent was on the balcony for a long time, going over things in his mind. Catherine left him to his thoughts and attended to JJ; fed, bathed and changed him, then went to the balcony doors.

"Vincent," quietly she called him. "Jacob is ready for bed!"

Turning, he came forward and took their son in his arms, holding him to his chest and kissing his cheek, rocking him gently. The boy closed his eyes as sleep took over and his body relaxed. Slowly, Vincent took him through and placed him in his cot.

Standing watching him, he didn't hear Catherine as she came up behind him and put her arms around his waist in a bear hug. Sighing, he leaned back against her for a moment before turning and encircling in a loving hold.

"I love you, Vincent, and I know your feelings are pulling at your insides now, but it will pass!" And on tip-toes, arms around his neck she tenderly kissed him. He responded without hesitation.

"Catherine!" He leant his head back and shut his eyes. "I always felt an emptiness whenever Devin left us, but it's different this time - much deeper somehow." His voice was soft and full of emotion.

"I know, I can feel it in you," and she gently caressed his face with her hands. "So much has happened in such a short time. You have hardly had time to catch your breath, let alone understand the reality of a twin brother!"

He lowered his gaze to the love of his life. She loved him, understood him and never questioned their feelings. Her acceptance of him, and their love changed his life forever.

Even now, with so much disturbing his thoughts, she managed to bring him down to earth, and the real world, with the purest and most complete love ever known.

Smiling, he took her hands in his and bending kissed each one, before looking up into her adoring eyes, head turned to one side.

"Catherine, I..."

"Sssshhhhhh." She kissed his mouth. "No more, Vincent, it's time for bed," and pulling him, she walked backwards to their bed - falling as she reached it - Vincent landing on top of her. Relaxing at last, they laughed quietly as he held her arms above her head, and showered her face and neck in kisses.

Just as he was about to roll over, he noticed a brown envelope lying on the pillow.

"What's this?"

Catherine turned to look at the object of his attention.

"Don't know - it's not mine."

Sitting up, she lifted the envelope to open it. "Perhaps Vince left it when he came for his coat?"

"Perhaps - but there is one sure way of finding out, Catherine!" and his muffled laugh made her glance sideways at him.

"Very funny," and she wrinkled her nose up at him. Carefully she opened the large envelope, to find a photo with a note attached fall from the inside. It was addressed to them both - but Catherine handed it to Vincent to read aloud;

*'When you read this we will have said our goodbyes  
and probably feeling a little sad. I wanted you to  
have this photo as a small reminder, and to let  
you know how alike we are, in looks and love  
Take care  
Love  
V*

Opening the folder to reveal the family photo, Catherine gasped. Here in front of her was an identical picture to the one she had - only it was Vince, Linda and Crystal. The same pose and the same look of love. It was beautiful.

Handing it to Vincent, he held it in his two hands and examined it at great length.

"Yes, it is indeed beautiful," and sighing, he placed it on the bedside table.

No wonder he wanted to get back home to his family!

Turning to his wife and gathering her in his arms, he said, "I have one advantage over my brother." He smiled. "I don't have to worry about my travelling keeping us apart!"

Catherine laughed into his chest as she cuddled close, and started a trail of kisses that ended with Vincent throwing her on the bed and following to land on top of her.

Their lovemaking was slow and beautiful, which filled them both with undescrivable happiness.

Tomorrow would be Monday, but already Catherine had decided that her day was going to be better spent than behind a desk at the DA's office! A whispering in her ear returned her from her thoughts.

"Another day off?" Vincent asked. "Joe must be very understanding."

"How did you ..."

Catherine watched him knowing he had read her loud and clear.

"Well, if you don't want me to ...!" She looked hurt and dejected.

Playing this game, he slipped off the bed and on his knees he begged her to stay. Besides he was hungry!

"Oooooohhhhhh!" She slapped his shoulder and sent him flying backwards, as he grabbed her and she also landed on the floor.

This, then, was their love filled; life full of adventures and happiness that could never be described and will never be equalled!