

Songs of Wonder, Songs of Light

by Ruby

December 2005

Vincent quickened his silent step in the snap bite of the late December air. He had a few more packages of food and gifts to deliver to Helpers, and then his own hearth waited for him. It had been a hard year for so many, and as he passed windows, he could hear faint snatches of song.

A glamorous older woman sat in a chair he could see through the alley-facing window. A woman's sultry voice poured out of a sleek black stereo. "...I've cried a river over you..." The woman looked like she was feeling every note of the song, and listlessly swirled a drink in one of her hands.

Vincent put his hand to the window and offerened a silent wish. *Whoever he was wasn't worth it. I wish you love this coming year and all years after that.* The woman seemed to smile at some private joke and took a sip of her drink. Vincent moved on.

A brownstone a few doors down was a shaking box of noise and laughter. Tippy guests leaned out the windows to catch some cold air to sober up. Vincent carefully melted further into the shadows.

The song playing was a happy, silly one, and an excited voice shouted from inside. "Oh I haven't heard this one since college! *ooh open the door get on the floor, everybody walk the din-o-saur...*" and the rest was lost in another gale of laughter. Vincent smiled this time and walked on.

Behind a nightclub, he heard the singer on stage turning "What Child is This" into a bebop cool anthem with the help of her band. Vincent loved that the song sounded completely new to him and paused for a verse of it. He walked on with the verse "*safe in the arms of his mother Mary...*" dancing over his head.

He thought of his mother, Mary, older now but beloved. He thought of his birth mother, a phantom to him still. He wished... he wished her peace, if she still lived. And he wished that someday an explanation would come, and he'd know why she'd left him to the unforgiving cold behind St. Vincent's.

Before his thoughts got too melancholy, he passed an electronics store, where the TVs showed a group of singers singing a favourite carol on a television show. He liked that they sang the verse about myrrh - the Holidays could suffer from too much forced cheer. He appreciated people who weren't afraid to look at the darkness at this time of year too.

He slipped into Eli's shop and walked toward the tunnel entrance in the storeroom. He passed Rolley sleeping on a cot with Chance. Her belly was big with their child. Chance

didn't like the chill and rock walls of Below, but she wanted Lena to deliver her baby, so they had taken to staying at Eli's until it was time.

Vincent smiled tenderly at the couple and went to turn off the radio they'd been listening to, "*the wind it blows, the wind it blows the door closed..*"

He walked toward his home, reflecting. Yes doors closed, but doors opened too. There was no room at the inn, and so they made a home in a place not meant for people. Like his people. Love faded away, and love bloomed in the harshest circumstances, where it seemed nothing could grow or survive. People found their way home again, like Rolley. Like himself.

He walked into his chamber where his family was waiting. Jacob was braiding his sister Nora's fiery red hair. They leapt up when they saw their father and covered him in hugs, both of their long slender limbs making him so proud of the beauty of their respective mothers. Diana carefully stood, her hand on her own big belly.

Vincent sighed with happiness; their second child. He knew happiness was a fragile thing, and especially so in winter. But he let the songs of the city he'd just heard fill his heart. They were together. The love of everyone they'd known shimmered over them as a coat of protection and Vincent let himself miss his first love, as he embraced Diana and placed his hands over their child.

"I hope it's a girl." He smiled.

"If it is, I would like to name her Catherine." Diana said, looking at him carefully, with great tenderness.

Vincent smiled as his eyes misted with tears. "I think that would be a beautiful thing to do, Diana."

Catherine Bennett was born on January 6, 2006, Epiphany.

Soundtrack

"Cry Me a River," Diana Krall - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fTqjApzEX0o>

"Walk the Dinosaur," Was (Not Was) - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zYKupOsaJmk>

"What Child is This," Vanessa Williams - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UiGeR0lwplI>

"We Three Kings," The Roches - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9lqHsr3_b0g

"King of the Mountain," Kate Bush - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F8xk_AkeP5c

"Anthem," Vancouver's Men Chorus - <https://youtu.be/wG-hnlzySqA>