

Rainbow of Hope
by
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Catherine was unpacking her suitcase and noticed Vincent looking out the window. Smiling, she stopped what she was doing and walked up to him. She hugged him from behind, resting her head on his back.

He spoke softly. "It's been a long time." He gently took her hands in his. "Should we even be here?"

"Yes." She let go and turned him around to look at her. "Jacob wore his mask and he will be close by, should anything happen. I have the cell phone he gave me; if one of the Helpers got a message that something was amiss Below, they will call. Caroline and Charles are also helping out." She kissed his cheek. "Even in this pandemic, this is the perfect time to come. We might never get another chance."

He gently stroked her cheek. "I missed this lakeside cabin. There has been so much to do and..."

She placed a finger on his lips. "Shh, not another word. Let's enjoy this fall season, being alone together. Let's not dwell on who died, on other people's troubles, or anything else. It may sound selfish, but right now, we should think only of ourselves. We are getting older, you know."

He nodded, then gently kissed her. "I feel guilty, Catherine. So many of our Helpers, others are suffering right now."

"So, does that mean we put our lives on hold? No, we grab what good we can grab onto and enjoy our dream, if for no other reason but to honor their lives that were lost. We should treasure our blessings."

He looked at her, kissed her, asking, "Almost done?"

"Well, you know me, I pack a lot."

They both laughed. "And you advised me I did not pack enough."

"You," she playfully pushed his chest, "do pack too little."

He grinned. "And you..." With a twinkle in his eye, he picked her up.

"Vincent!" She looked surprised. "Should you even be lifting me?"

“Catherine, I am older, not weaker.” He then carried her to the bed and placed her on it. “I need to get reacquainted with my wife, my love,” he started to kiss her hair, her eyes, “and no one is going to stop me.”

Catherine giggled. “I am not done...” He kissed her passionately. Unpacking could wait.

Vincent sat at the desk, writing in his journal and reflecting. He got up early and did not feel like waking up Catherine. He needed to be alone to reflect. Last night was wonderful, but that only added to his feeling of guilt. There were so many negative things happening, things that also affected his world Below, his family, his friends. Yet, he agreed with Catherine, that just because the world seemed like it was ending, that was no reason not to enjoy special moments together when they can.

He put down his pen. He felt that Catherine was waking up. He felt how calm, peaceful, and happy she was. He closed his eyes and savored the feelings coming from her. He had to admit that right now, in this moment, despite his darker feelings, there was a sense of contentment about being here, having a moment to truly cherish each other, love each other. It had been nice trying not to think of his duties Below. Ever since Father died, the mantle of being the person the council looked to for the deciding vote or for guidance, fell on his shoulders. It was a hard burden to carry, along with taking care of his family. How did Father do it?

Catherine walked into the living room. “Vincent? Am I disturbing you?”

He shook his head, “No.” Looking at her he asked, “Are you hungry?”

“Breakfast sounds good and then how about a brief walk through the woods. It’s autumn time and there will be colorful leaves to admire.”

“I would like to check on things...”

“Shh, remember what I said. They will call us.” She reached into her pocket and pulled out a smartphone. “Jacob showed me some things this wonderful device can do.”

He stood up and walked over to her. They kissed passionately. Silently, they hugged each other. With the bond, they shared feelings of intense love, passion and joy. It was as if time stood still as they basked in this warmth, clinging to each other, unwilling to let go.

After a few moments, he gently whispered to her, “I am eager to take that walk through the small forest.” Reluctantly, he let her go. “Let me help you make breakfast.”

She looked at him and chuckled. "Guess it is time to feed the hungry lion, isn't it?" She giggled as he gently gave a soft growl and grabbed her hand. They walked toward the kitchen. "And the lioness needs her coffee."

Catherine felt stuffed, all because Vincent insisted that she eat a hearty breakfast, which she did. *Keep this up and I will become a fat old lady.*

Seeing he was done cleaning up, she walked up to him and led him out of the kitchen to the bedroom.

Vincent chuckled. "I thought we were going for a walk."

"I am only stopping to get your cloak and my sweater before we go out. It's a bit chilly outside." She giggled. "You're a dirty old man." She grinned as he started to blush.

They walked into the bedroom and went over to the closet. Catherine put on a huge heavy sweater that had a big pocket. A nice place for the cell phone.

He reached for his cloak. "Will you be warm with just that sweater? Perhaps you may need to take a coat?"

"I will be warm, don't worry." She grabbed his hand. "Walk first, play later. I have to show you the fall colors that we can never truly see in the city."

"Lead on, my fair lady, I will follow you anywhere."

"Of course, you will." They walked out the back door onto the porch and looked around.

The leaves were ablaze with amazing colors. She noticed how Vincent had a happy look on his face. He looked at the leaves, the sky. He closed his eyes, lifting his head, breathing deeply. But all too quickly, he opened his eyes, as his expression changed to one of worry.

She broke the silence, "What are you thinking?"

"I just started to realize there will be much I need to do when I get back. There may be some task that the others could not do and that is waiting for my return."

"Vincent," she sounded frustrated, "you have got to learn to let go and relax. I was so glad that last night you did that." She gently grabbed his arms. "We have only a few days. I want you to realize the world is not going to end if you finally let go and start to enjoy yourself."

“Catherine, I can’t stop reflecting.” He looked at her. “I do enjoy and love being here with you alone, but...”

“You are a responsible man with responsible tasks.” She sighed. “And you start to worry that the other shoe is going to drop when you are having so much fun.”

“Catherine, I also see what is happening in the world. People dying without the comfort of loved ones near. Sometimes, I feel...guilty.”

“I know, I feel sad, too, and sometimes I feel guilty, just like you. But Vincent, we must go on living. Don’t try to save the whole world...”

“Yet, our community also suffers. Some Helpers have gotten sick or died.” He paused and looked into her eyes. “Yet, I have to admit, I am having a wonderful time being here with you.”

“And I, would have more of a wonderful time if you quit trying to be a savior to everyone. Can’t I get a whole week without you thinking of something that has to be done?”

He smiled. “I will push such thoughts aside, just for this week, since you, too, have been doing the same.”

“I make sure my boundaries know their places.”

He gently traced the lines on her face. “You are so wise, so wonderful, so amazing.”

She noticed his adoring look. “Stop worshipping me. We discussed this before.” She made a face and it made him laugh. “I, too, am not perfect.”

“Sorry, my love, but to me you are a goddess, even when you are not.”

“And you wonder why I fall more in love with you every day, over these many years.”

“With mirth and laughter let old wrinkles come.”

Catherine blushed. “Shakespeare again-how did you say it?- ‘Knows everything’. So that being the case, let’s take a walk and enjoy the changing leaves. It looks like it is going to rain.”

He looked and noticed that dark clouds had begun to appear on the horizon. “Perhaps the rain will hold off until our walk is over.”

“Scared?” She playfully teased his hair. “My teddy bear is scared of a fall rain?” She let go of his hand and quickly moved away at a brisk pace. Laughing, she turned to see that he was right behind her, picking up his pace as well. “The air is so wonderful. Chilly, but wonderful.”

When they got into the woods, they slowed down, stopped, and looked around. She noticed he was hesitating.

“Vincent,” she reached for his hand, “there are no trolls or goblins in these woods.”

“Yes, but I am concerned...”

“For God’s sake Vincent, enjoy this moment, relax.” Catherine gave him a worried look. “These past few years you’ve started to sound more like Father than yourself.”

He looked at her, then all around. Closing his eyes, he said, “I can hear the birds calling out. The chirps they make before a storm. The leaves are rustling.” He opened his eyes. A smile appeared on his face. “You are right, let’s make the most of this day.”

“Glad you see it my way.”

“And when did my Catherine learn not to be so worried?”

“Who said I never worry? It’s just I know when to tell the worrywart in me to turn off and enjoy the moment. Something you should do.”

They walked over to a path in the woods and he stopped. Catherine looked up at him. He grinned. “Maybe we should go to the beach?”

She saw the mischievous look in his eye. “Vincent, it’s fall not summer. I still have some limits. Especially in a chilly fall air, who wants to be in the cold water?”

“I heard that some people like a dip in cold water.”

She shook her head and laughed as she led him to another path. “If you want to do that, be my guest, but don’t come sniffing to me or our children for comfort if you catch a cold.”

They both laughed and continued their walk down the path.

The rain came down just as she and Vincent were making their way back to the cabin. As they walked quickly onto the porch laughing, Vincent immediately took off his cloak and placed it on her.

“Vincent, I am fine. The rain is not coming on the porch and I only got a little wet.” She kissed his cheek.

"I feel that you are getting chilled. Should we go in to dry off?" Vincent's voice sounded worried.

"Vincent," she gently brushed his hair with her fingers, "I'm fine and don't mind a little chill."

He held her close. Gently he placed his forehead against hers. "The temperature is dropping. It is starting to feel like the beginning of winter now."

"Yes, but don't worry- it won't snow." She looked over his shoulder. "It's stopping, look!" She took off his cloak and handed it back to him.

The rain had turned into a fine drizzle, until only a few drops were falling every now and then. He looked up at the sky. There was a look of amazement on his face. She followed his gaze and saw something wondrous in the sky, over the lake.

He flung his cloak over his shoulders, as he quickly moved toward the lake. She followed him, looking up occasionally at the sky. At the lakeside beach, they both stood there, looking at the sky in awe.

There was a big beautiful rainbow crossing from one end of the sky to the other. A huge colorful rainbow. She looked at him and noticed that he was transfixed at the sight.

"Catherine," he whispered, "this...this is the first time I ever saw one."

She did not know what to say. Over the years she had occasionally seen rainbows, yet she realized that in all their time together and the brief moments Up Top, even when they came here, there was never a rainbow around. He was right. This was the first time, together, they were seeing this arc of colors.

"I read about them, have seen them in books. But, in all the moments we had Up Top, even at our brownstone, I never saw one. There were only rare times by the waterfall Below, but even those were lacking the many colors a rainbow should have. This is..." He became quiet.

"Speechless, are you?" He kept looking at the sky so intensely, she felt tears in her eyes. They embraced and held onto to each other, looking at that most amazing sight. Tears started to fall down her cheeks. She looked at him and noticed a tear also going down his cheek.

"It is so beautiful," he whispered, "I don't want to take my eyes off it."

She felt intensely happy that they were here sharing in something that was his first time. They watched as the colorful rainbow slowly faded away.

"Catherine, there is always hope, isn't there?"

She looked at him. "Yes, my love, there is always hope." She shuddered. "But now, I do need to go in and warm up." He took off his cloak and wrapped it around her.

She had to smile. She asked, "What about you? Aren't you getting chilled as well?"

He kissed her on the top of her head. "I am fine."

"You are glowing."

"I have seen the Angels paint a rainbow in the sky; Elizabeth must be with them. I...feel blessed." He put his arm around her, and they walked back into the cabin. He glanced over his shoulder. "While I treasure the books that showed me many worlds, things, even rainbows, nothing can compare to seeing it with my own eyes." He gave her a gentle squeeze. "I love you."

They walked through the room. Taking off his cloak and her sweater, she placed them on the couch. She walked up to him, reached up, and kissed his cheek. "I love you, too." She noticed that wonderful look of awe was still on his face. He also looked so young, so innocent. "Are you all right?"

He looked at her with the happiest smile she had ever seen on his face and nodded.

"Why don't we settle in for the night?" Catherine suggested. "You look as if you saw something magical."

"I did. And with you." He reached over and hugged her. Oh, she was liking this. He held her tight and then after a long moment, he reluctantly let her go. "Catherine, I feel so blessed. That rainbow was so magical. I could ...could..."

"Burst out singing?" She laughed. "We forgot to check for the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow."

Vincent looked into her eyes. He whispered, "I don't need to do that."

"Why not?" She asked.

Gently he kissed her lips and whispered. "You are my pot of gold."

"Rainbow
[Kacey Musgraves](#)

When it rains, it pours
But you didn't even notice it ain't rainin' anymore
It's hard to breathe when all you know is
The struggle of stayin' above the risin' water line

Well, the sky has finally opened
The rain and wind stopped blowin'
But you're stuck out in the same ol' storm again
You hold tight to your umbrella
Well, darlin', I'm just tryin' to tell ya
That there's always been a rainbow hangin' over your head

If you could see what I see, you'd be blinded by the colors
Yellow, red, and orange, and green, and at least a million others
So tie up the bow, take off your coat, and take a look around

'Cause the sky has finally opened
The rain and wind stopped blowin'
But you're stuck out in the same ol' storm again
You hold tight to your umbrella
Well, darlin', I'm just tryin' to tell ya
That there's always been a rainbow hangin' over your head

Oh, tie up the bow, take off your coat, and take a look around
Everything is alright now

'Cause the sky has finally opened
The rain and wind stopped blowin'
But you're stuck out in the same ol' storm again
Let go of your umbrella
'Cause, darlin', I'm just trying to tell ya
That there's always been a rainbow hangin' over your head

Yeah, there's always been a rainbow hangin' over your head
Mm, mm, mm
It'll all be alright

Source: [Musixmatch](#)

Songwriters: Shane Mcanally / Natalie Hemby / Kacey Musgraves

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