

The day of the dance was complete chaos.

Jaune had grown up with seven sisters, so he knew what to expect but it never really prepared him for it. It was still morning, more than eight hours away from the dance itself, but you would think it was about to start in thirty minutes with how everyone was acting.

Correction. Not everyone. Just the girls.

"If we don't leave now, we're going to be late," Weiss fretted, glancing at her scroll every five seconds. "What is she *doing* in there?"

"Do you want me to knock again?" Blake asked, amused.

"If she doesn't hurry up, I'm going to break down that door and drag her out. It doesn't take that long to shower!"

They had their appointment at the hair salon, the one that Yang had set up. Not only that, they were meant to be getting their nails done, and who knows what else they had planned. Jaune remained silent as he watched them bicker, knowing very well not to get involved unless he wanted to be scolded.

It had already happened a couple times this morning.

He'd gone through his normal morning routine. He'd woken early, and went for a jog around campus. He'd even left earlier than usual so he could get back and shower before they woke, so he wouldn't get in the way. The team bathroom rules were still in effect, after all.

But when he'd gotten back, they'd all been awake, and the shower was occupied. Miracle of miracles, Weiss had actually woken up *early*. That was very impressive. At least Jaune thought so.

Unfortunately, it meant he had to sit around in sweaty, damp clothes as they took turns getting ready. He could have gone to the communal showers instead, but Weiss had taken it the wrong way and started ranting about planning, and how he should have known better, and – well, she was a little high strung.

It was clear that this prom meant a lot to her. Much more than those glitzy events in Atlas. She hadn't been fazed by those at all, the only tension coming from her father. This was an entirely different beast.

The bathroom door opened, and Nora stepped out.

"*Finally*," Weiss snapped. "Do you know how long you were in there?"

Nora blinked. "Uh... no longer than usual?"

Blake snickered.

"Our appointments are in thirty-five minutes! We need to move," Weiss began storming towards the door. "Hurry up!"

“Okay, okay – sheesh,” Nora followed. Blake shot him a wink before joining them, and Jaune heard them knock on the door across the hall.

“Yang’s still in the shower,” Ruby said immediately when she answered the door, and Jaune thought he could hear Weiss’ blood pressure rise.

“What does she think she is doing?” the heiress demanded. “We’re going to be late!”

So that was his morning.

Jaune showered after that, and when he got out, the girls were gone. He could hear other teams going through a similar situation, though. A few shouting matches broke out in the hallway, and Jaune even heard a weapon discharge, but things were quickly brought under control when Professor Goodwitch arrived to restore some semblance of order.

Yeah. People were going a little bit crazy.

Since there were no classes, he was free to do whatever he wished.

He decided to spend the day with his sisters.

Shooting them a quick text, he got an almost instant response. They were having breakfast down by the waterfront, and so after getting the address from Saphron, Jaune made his way down to Vale.

“Little bro, over here,” Violet waved happily.

It was a cute little cafe facing the ocean, and they’d chosen a table outside to take in the scenery and fresh sea air. Their food had already been served, plates of bacon and egg and hash browns, as well as stacks of pancakes and waffles drowned in maple syrup. Adrian waved with both hands when he spotted Jaune, and Jaune waved back.

“Hey guys,” there was an open seat between Terra and Lavender, so he took it. Olive scowled.

“What took you so long?” she asked in her usual manner. “Saph wouldn’t let us start until you got here.”

“I thought I made pretty good time,” he said. “Didn’t I? I had to come across the whole city.”

“You did, it’s fine,” Saphron rolled her eyes. “You know her, she loves food almost as much as you do.”

“I do *not*,” Olive snapped. “What is that supposed to mean?”

“I’m sure you can figure it out,” Saphron drawled sarcastically.

Terra rolled her eyes, and shot Jaune a look as if to say, “*Look what I have to put up with.*”

Jaune laughed.

“You guys didn’t have to wait,” he said, but he saw they had ordered enough for him as well. “So – shall we dig in?”

They must have only just served the food since it was still hot. The bacon was crisp and smoky, and the poached eggs were just how he liked them. Everyone started eating, Terra playing a game with Adrian to get him to eat since he was fussing.

“Here comes the airship,” she cooed, a small piece of egg and hash brown balanced on the end of her fork. She made engine sounds with her mouth as it approached, and while he resisted at first, he finally broke down and ate it. “There we go! Good job, Adrian.”

The pancakes were good, fluffy and just a little bit sweet on their own. Spreading the syrup across them, Jaune took a healthy bite and hummed.

“Not as good as Ma’s, right?” Lavender asked from his side, smiling.

“Not as good as Ma’s,” he agreed.

“What are all your friends up to? I was hoping to see that hottie again,” Violet leaned on the table, grinning. “He doesn’t have a girlfriend, does he?”

Olive snorted.

“Uh... no, he doesn’t,” Jaune answered, eyebrow arched. “Why?”

“Why do you think? He’s single, I’m single – maybe we could hang out some time, get to know one another.”

“Jaune is meant to try to date our friends, not the other way around,” Saphron said, amused.

“She always liked younger guys,” Olive muttered. “Cradle snatcher.”

“Hey! We’re only a few years apart, stop acting like it’s weird,” Violet glared at Olive. “Just because that boy you liked in fifth grade had eyes for your more beautiful older sister doesn’t mean you have to be nasty.”

Olive glared. “As if.”

“You know it’s true,” Violet smirked. “He was so cute, too. Stammering whenever I was in the room, and the way he could look at me when he thought I wasn’t paying attention... whatever happened to him?”

“Not telling.”

Lavender giggled.

“Anyway, I think Ren is having a quiet day. We’ve got prom tonight, so things are a little hectic at school.”

He shouldn't have said anything. While the dance had been mentioned in passing the last time he was with them, it had flown under the radar for the most part. They'd been much more interested in his friends. But now that he said it, every single pair of eyes snapped to him.

Shit.

That was really stupid of him.

"Prom?" Violet had stars in her eyes. "Oh my god, what? Who are you taking? Oh, I know," then she grinned evilly. "Weiss Schnee, right – or maybe Pyrrha Nikos. Both? The word on the street is that you're a bit of a playboy."

Oh no. They'd finally seen the tabloids.

"I never knew my little brother was such a social climber," Saphron sighed dramatically. "Attending galas with the two most eligible, single women on Remnant. You've really moved up in the world."

"Why are you idiots believing that crap?" Olive growled, actually defending him. "They're just making shit up to make their crappy mags interesting. As if they'd want to date him!"

Okay, maybe she wasn't defending him.

"Jaune is very handsome," Lavender spoke up, a true ally. "If they don't want to date him, they're the stupid ones."

Olive scoffed. "You're just saying that because he spoils you with attention."

"And you're just saying that because you're jealous!" Lavender countered.

"Hah~! Me? Jealous? Why the hell would I be jealous?" Olive pointed at Lavender. "Now you're just making shit up like those dumb publishers!"

"Aw, they're so cute when they start arguing about their brother," Saphron cooed.

Terra tried and failed to hide her laugh.

His family really was one of a kind.

"So?" Violet pressed as Olive and Lavender continued to bicker. "Are those mags telling fibs? Or are you really dating those bombshells?"

"I'm not dating Pyrrha," he said, but he wasn't willing to lie to them. Maybe it would have been for the best to save his own skin, but they were going to find out eventually. As much as Jaune wanted to delay it, and had been hoping that he could keep it a secret for a few years, at least, he hadn't expected them to turn up like this. Now that they were here in Vale, it was only a matter of time. And as painful as this was going to be, he wanted to tell them because they were his family. His beloved sisters. "...But I am dating Weiss."

Lavender and Olive paused mid-insult, and Saphron covered her mouth. Terra blinked, eyebrows raised, and Violet leaned back in her chair, shocked.

There was a long beat of silence.

This was it. He needed to get it out now while they were still too stunned to speak.

“I’m – uh, actually – well, you see the thing is...” so maybe it wasn’t as easy to get out as he thought it would be. Jaune grimaced. “This might sound a little bit crazy, but... I’m actually dating Nora, as well.”

They stared.

“Nora, Weiss... and Blake,” he forced out, trying to keep his cool. “You know how we’re all on the same team? Well, things happened and... it just sort of worked out that way?”

Violet’s mouth dropped open, and Saphron’s eyes looked like they were about to pop out of her head. Lavender got that weird pinched expression she sometimes wore when she was confused, and Olive – well, her face was going red.

That wasn’t good.

“Olive,” he snapped as her mouth flew open furiously, about to lay into him. “Don’t.”

She flinched, and then grit her teeth. “What do you mean *don’t*?”

“Don’t make a scene.”

She spluttered. “I – I’m not going to make a scene! What the hell are you saying?”

“I can see it on your face, you’re turning red,” he pointed out. “You only do that when you’re about to throw a tantrum.”

She gaped at him.

Adrian suddenly started giggling, waving his hands around. It helped to break through the sudden tension.

“Just don’t go yelling things,” Jaune sighed. “You know who Weiss is, right? If something like this got out…”

They all got the message.

“Jaune, what the hell is going on?” Saphron hissed, keeping her voice down. “Did you just say you’re dating three girls?”

He nodded. “Yeah.”

“Woah, I wasn’t expecting that,” Violet shook her head in disbelief. “I never knew you were such a slut, bro. Damn.”

"Violet," Lavender scolded. "Don't call him that," she then turned to regard him. "Are you three-timing?"

Jaune pinched the bridge of his nose.

"They all know, I'm not – you know, doing *that*," he stressed. "In fact, Nora is sorta the one that pushed for things to go in this direction."

"I can't believe what I'm hearing," Saphron laughed incredulously. "My little bro is starting a harem. What the hell is going on?"

"Don't put it like that," Jaune groused.

"Like what?" Saphron asked, throwing up her hands. "Like the truth?"

"Dear, calm down," Terra chided gently. "You can see how awkward it is for him."

"You can't tell me you find this normal," Saphron turned on her wife, wide eyed.

"...Some people don't consider our relationship normal," Terra pointed out softly, and that took the wind right out of Saphron's sails.

"I didn't mean – no, Jaune, I'm not—," Saphron sighed angrily. "That isn't what I was trying to say!"

Jaune smiled. "I know. You're all just a little shocked."

"And worried," Lavender said quietly.

Olive stood up without warning and walked away without a backwards glance. Lavender palmed her face.

"And there she goes," she muttered.

Jaune was close with all of his sisters, and all in different ways. But he knew that Olive in particular had always been *very* sensitive when it came to him, and if he was being honest, he was the same when it came to her. If she'd come to him and told him that she was dating three guys, he knew he wouldn't take it well.

For as much as they fought, their bond was incredibly strong.

"I'll go after her," he said, standing.

Violet grimaced. "Good luck. We'll just sit here and wonder what happened to our sweet little kid brother."

“Haha – very funny,” he deadpanned, though he couldn’t stop the twitch of his lips when she smirked. “If I need help, I’ll send up the signal.”

She hadn’t gone far. There was a small platform that overlooked the beach, just across the road from the cafe. She was leaning against the railing, her slim shoulders hunched. Even though she was older than he was, Olive was much smaller.

“I want to be alone,” she said before he could say anything, knowing it was him who followed. “Go away.”

“You know I’m not doing that.”

She scoffed but didn’t move, so he took the spot next to her, placing his hands on the railing. They stood there in silence for a few minutes, and Jaune took the time to admire the coastline. The water was calm today with only the odd wave here or there, but it looked like it would be very cold to enter. Winter had only just ended, and spring was only just getting started. He doubted there would be very many people willing to swim here for a couple months yet.

Considering they were in the city, it was a peaceful spot.

“Aren’t you going to say something?” she asked grumpily.

He shrugged. “Nah. I thought I’d wait for you to talk.”

Another bout of silence, and then, “You shouldn’t let girls take advantage of you.”

Jaune smiled, though he hid it by turning his head slightly. He didn't want to antagonise her right now.

"Who says they're taking advantage of me?"

"What else would it be?"

"I could be taking advantage of them."

"You'd never do that," she said quietly. "You aren't that type of person."

She was worried about him, and he felt a warmth in his chest. Looping an arm around her shoulders, he pulled her in roughly. Olive yelped, and then pinched his side furiously.

"Ouch! Hey, what are you doing?" he demanded, squirming. "Stop it!"

"Let go of me!"

"No."

"Then prepare for pinches!"

Jaune awkwardly avoided her hands until she gave up, and then she leaned against him heavily. He remained tense, waiting for a sneak attack but it never came.

“...Are you sure they aren’t using you?”

“If they are, I don’t know what they’re using me for,” he squeezed her gently. “You met them. Did they seem like bad people, Olive?”

She pouted. “No... but looks can be deceiving, and you said Nora was the one that pushed for this... whatever it is.”

He chuckled. “I did, didn’t I? I wasn’t lying. She was a big driver behind us coming together, but... that doesn’t mean I didn’t have feelings for them. All of them. And they had feelings for me.”

“...That sounds messy,” she admitted. “How does that even happen?”

He shrugged. “We’ve been through a lot, I guess – and we bonded because of it. I know this isn’t exactly normal, but... we’re happy. I’m happy.”

She turned to face him, his arm still loose around her shoulders. Peered up at him, their eyes met, blue on blue, Olive searching for something.

“You’ve always been a terrible liar,” she said.

“Gee, thanks.”

“You aren’t lying.”

“I’m not.”

Her mouth thinned. “...Now I have to share you with three girls...”

He blinked. “What was that?”

“I didn’t say anything,” she sniffed, turning her nose up.

“I’m pretty sure you said—,”

“Shut up.”

He snickered, and a moment later, she joined him.

“So it’s just those three?” she asked.

Jaune hesitated.

Olive frowned. "...No way."

"Wait, it's a little more complicated than that."

"Jaune, what the *fuck* is going on at that school?" she shook her head. "I didn't realize Huntresses were so hardcore."

"That isn't it."

"Then what is – you know what? I don't want to know, it'll just give me a headache," she sighed. "I can't believe you're dating multiple girls. Ma is going to *flip*, you know that, right?"

Jaune cringed. "Can you keep it a secret from her, please? At least until I can say something myself."

"I'm not lying to Ma," she grunted, poking him in the stomach. "If she asks if you've got a girlfriend..."

"I... well, uh – damn it," he sagged. "If she does, then... don't lie to her."

"I said I wouldn't, so I won't. So you better hurry up and send a letter, because you know she's going to ask all about you the next time we see her. And you *know* Saphron can't keep a secret to save her life."

Yeah, no kidding. Saphron was the biggest blabbermouth around.

“How do you even start a letter like that?”

“No idea, but good luck. I’m rooting for you,” she said, voice filled with sarcasm.

“You little brat.”

“Watch it, I’m older than you. Just because you’re bigger doesn’t mean you can talk to me that way.”

The cheeky expression she wore was a familiar one from their childhood, one that had accompanied a lot of sibling torment. Scowling, Jaune got back at her by wrapping his arms around her and giving her a hug, Olive stiffening in surprise before melting into him.

“What are you doing, doofus?” she grumbled, but hugged him back.

“Hugging my sister,” he said, squeezing her firmly before releasing her. “Feel better?”

“No,” she snorted. “...We better go back. I sorta stormed off.”

“They’re watching us.”

Olive looked, and saw them all watching from afar. Violet even had her scroll out and was recording.

“If I push her in front of a car,” she said calmly.

“I’ll look the other way,” Jaune finished.

They shared a look and smirked.

“Finished having a cry?” Violet cooed when they rejoined them at the cafe. Olive glared.

“No one cried,” he said, trying to defuse the tension. “We just talked.”

“So – that’s it? Are we accepting Jaune’s alternative lifestyle?” Violet grinned.

He told them what he’d told Olive, because if she was worried, so were they. They were his sisters, after all. As much as they were joking, Jaune understood how odd this situation was. He wanted to put them at ease.

They had the same message for him, though.

They weren’t lying to Ma.

He spent the rest of the morning with them, touring the shops along the waterfront. Noon quickly approached, and after a small lunch, Jaune bid them farewell. It was time for him to return to Beacon.

Things had only gotten more hectic when he returned. Girls were running around in a panic, and more than a few guys looked harried as their dates berated them for not taking things more seriously.

His friends hadn't returned from their appointments yet, so Jaune was able to relax. He bumped into Ren, and they sat together in the common room without a word, simply enjoying the quiet while it lasted.

"Where did you go this morning?" Ren finally asked as Jaune idly flicked through channels on the television.

"I had breakfast and lunch with my sisters," he said. "Violet says hi, by the way. I think she likes you."

Ren didn't respond immediately, and when Jaune glanced at him, he saw an odd expression on his face. Odd because Ren rarely had any expression other than stoic.

"I... see," he finally said, and Jaune smirked.

"I give my blessing."

“Jaune...”

“You know, if you feel so inclined,” then he got serious. “But you understand that’s my sister, so if you hurt her...”

Ren palmed his face.

“Nora has been rubbing off on you.”

Jaune laughed. “Yeah, maybe a little.”

Ren hesitated. “She seems... nice.”

“Violet?”

“Yeah.”

Jaune had only been half joking, but Violet did seem genuinely interested. She wasn’t above cracking some jokes, but as her brother, he had a sense for when there was more going on than a quest for some laughs. At the very least, she found Ren attractive.

“...They’ll be watching us,” he said. “You know, during the Vytal Festival. They got some tickets for several of the rounds, so they’ll be around a lot.”

Was he really playing wingman for his sister?

“...I see.”

“Maybe you guys can hang out,” he suggested, shrugging. Yeah, okay, this was a little awkward. “Just, uh – no details.”

“Please, Jaune – with respect, shut up.”

“Yeah, sorry.”

They heard the girls return before they saw them, their voices carrying into the common room as they ascended the stairs. They met them in the hallway, and he got his first look at them, fresh from the salon.

Weiss was wearing her hair down, and the white strands practically *glowed*. A curtain of moonlight, shimmering as the light touched it, the ends tickling the backs of her calves. Yang’s had somehow gained volume, a golden waterfall of gentle curls tumbling down her back, appearing like a lion’s mane. If Weiss’ hair was moonlight then Blake’s was the void of the night sky, combed and straightened until it fell about her shoulders like black silk. And Pyrrha...

Jaune blinked, startled.

She smiled timidly, and gestured to her hair. “What do you think?”

They'd curled her bangs, the crimson strands tickling her cheeks as they framed her face. The rest had been gently curled, and even in a ponytail, it appeared to have been given life. Like a bonfire, a halo, a wreath of flame.

It suited her.

"That looks great," he said before looking around. "All of you."

Nora rolled her eyes. "I just got mine trimmed. It's practically the same."

"And it looks good," he said, smiling. "Like always."

Like Nora, Ruby only had her hair washed and trimmed. Whatever they used to wash it brought out the red highlights vividly, though. Ruby flushed as he stared, fingers poking together.

"Does it look okay?" she asked.

He nodded. "Yeah, it looks good, Ruby. I really like it."

They also showed off their nails. Jaune thought that they'd probably all matched their nails to whatever dresses they were wearing, so he had a pretty good idea on the main colors they were wearing. Weiss' nails were a dark blue with white tips, while Yang's were yellow shifting towards orange in a gradient. Pyrrha's were a bright crimson much like her hair, while Ruby's were a much darker reddish tone, the ends black. Nora's were a bright pink with white glitter, and Blake's were a purple so dark they almost appeared black at certain angles.

“Hope you fellas weren’t too bored without us,” Yang grinned.

“We were enjoying the peace and quiet, weren’t we, Ren?” Jaune joked.

“Yes, yes – we’re taking this all very seriously, I know,” Weiss sniffed. “Please endure it a little longer.”

The dance was officially starting at five, so there were still a few hours to kill. They lounged around, chatting about nothing, hanging out as friends do. He noticed Blake and Yang talking a lot in low whispers, and Nora joined them on occasion, adding her two lien to whatever conversation they were having. He wasn’t sure, but Jaune had a feeling that it had something to do with him.

Maybe the subtle glances his way weren’t so subtle.

They were planning something.

That made him a little bit nervous.

When it got closer to time, the girls began peeling away. They were going to be using Team RPRY’s room to get ready, leaving Team JBWN’s for the boys. Ren was given the chance to get his things and move them across the hall, and then that room was strictly off limits on punishment of death.

They were not to be seen until the time was right.

Ren hit the showers first, and then Jaune. Afterwards, he collected one of the suits Weiss had prepared for him in Atlas, a dark charcoal three-piece with a double-breasted vest, a white shirt and gold tie. He grabbed the small box tucked away by his bedside, the one that contained the small crescent cufflinks that Weiss had gotten him, and started getting dressed.

The shirt, the suit – it all fit like a glove, as he knew it would. Just like the suit he'd worn to the auctions, and to dinner with Weiss' family. Adjusting the tie, he looked at himself in the mirror after slipping on his black leather shoes.

He looked pretty good – he just needed to get his hair somewhat under control.

Looking over, he saw Ren was ready, his hair much neater. He wore the suit they'd picked out with the green shirt, and dark green tie. He'd chosen to place a small pink handkerchief in the front pocket to match the streak in his hair. It was a color he wore well, and Jaune knew that Violet would be in total agreement.

Slipping into the bathroom, he combed his hair and applied product to keep it in place, and did a satisfactory job. Spraying a few pumps of cologne on his wrists and around his neck, he nodded.

He was ready.