

Give it up for Daniel, who got this back to me in a day. Mind you, I still haven't Grammarly'd it, so undoubtedly there will be small mistakes throughout. That being said, on with the show!

## Chapter 9: New Dynamics, Same Grimm Problems

Harry woke up the next morning, his inner clock getting him up, showing no reaction from how his world view had taken a major blow the night before. Staring at the ceiling, Harry wondered for just a moment if the whole thing had been one very strange, extremely vivid dream. *Nope, stop that Harry old boy. The last thing you can do is try to run away from reality. Best you have some kind of idea about how to face the girls this morning. Things have changed, and it's best to grab the Beowulf by it's fangs.*

With that, Harry stood up and left his room, pausing to glance towards Pyrrha's original room. The two of them had shared his bed since Team ANVL had moved into the townhome, but last night Pyrrha and Harry had both decided to keep any arguments at bay it would be best if Pyrrha bunked down with Arturia and Tia.

Looking back on it, Harry was astonished they had all agreed to share Pyrrha's room peacefully. Indeed, he had only heard one raised voice throughout the night, to wit, Pyrrha shouting, "What do they feed you Arcs to get that big?"

*Which is fair enough. Pyrrha's a Mid B-cup, which I recall with some delight as being very sensitive and quite pleasant to the touch. Her whole body's svelte, built for speed and endurance over everything. That girl could still be jogging in neutral while the rest of us, even me, are either gasping out our lungs or being forced to use our Aura to keep going.*

*At the other end of the spectrum, we have Tia, who is built for POWER and, heh, now I can think of this without smacking myself, with big breasts to go with her wider shoulders. I have no idea how responsive they are but if this whole thing works out between us, I might find out. And then there's Arturia who's somewhat in the middle in terms of build, unless you count her legs which are deadly weapons, and her rear, which would probably be in the running for the best in Remnant if anyone would work up the courage to mention it to her.*

Smacking his face with both hands, Harry looked down at his crotch smacking his face muttering into his hands. "Alright, you rotter, just because you're standing at attention due to it being the morning and all is no reason for ya to take over my thoughts like that. Pee, then breakfast. Normal, nonsexual breakfast. You've got some serious thinking to do Big Head, and the Little Head needs to stay out of it."

Feeling a little more focused and not in quite as loopy a mood after brushing his teeth, Harry quickly began to make breakfast. Pancakes, as Nora would commit murder if they were not included. Apple cinnamon waffles for the rest of them, fresh fruit, and some cherry-infused

protein smoothies to round everything out. He made enough for seven just in case Guld stopped by, although Harry felt his father should still be in the doghouse for how he and their mother had kept Harry's status to themselves for so long.

As he worked, Harry's mind soon cleared of clutter, leaving him to contemplate the events from the night before. And despite the kisses he had shared with Arturia and Tia, the feelings he had finally been able to show openly, Harry was still **very** concerned about where all this could go. Those kisses had let him somewhat work through the fact his attraction to his sisters wasn't a Pureblood thing as he was adopted, his Arc blood far too distant to care about.

But he still felt very guilty about it, specifically about Pyrrha. He was very thankful she seemed okay with it so far. A small ignominious part of his mind even thought that having an understanding girlfriend like that was something he had earned in his past life. But that part of his mind was rapidly buried under the rest, which knew that really, it was Pyrrha being Pyrrha which led her to not wishing that Arturia and Tia be heartbroken just so she could be happier being Harry's lone love.

*That, and probably a good dollop of pragmatism. She knows Tia at least is always going to be by my side, and Arturia was a big part of my life even before that little revelation. That would have remained the case even if I didn't return the form of their affections for me.*

As he thought about Pyrrha and the others, Harry fought down a degree of self-loathing for letting himself fall in love with not one but three girls. *Mind you, I don't know if I could have stopped it from happening, save perhaps in the case of Pyrrha.* Just not befriending her in the first place would have stopped that in its tracks, as anathema as it might seem to Harry now. But his feelings for Arturia and Tia had been building so long, that Harry could only point to a few moments where he could perhaps have been able to turn aside, to stop the attraction building between them.

*Stopping Tia from joining me in my bed when we hit puberty, for one, Harry thought wryly. But I didn't, and I can't use a Time Turner to go back in time to change things. No, I need to stop thinking about what-ifs and why have we gotten to this point. I need to figure out where we go from here. How do we make this work?*

It was as Harry was almost robotically putting a finishing touch on the apple cinnamon mixture for the waffles when he felt two powerful yet very female arms going around him. A familiar hum reached him, although Harry would have been able to tell it was Tia even without that. Not only was the olive color of the arms around his waist distinctive, but there was no mistaking the feel of those large, soft objects pressing into his shoulders and the back of his head. *Yep, I'm lost. Utterly.*

The next moment Tia spoke, her words muffled by the back of his neck, making it seem as if each word was also a kiss. Words did not come easily to her as Harry knew all-too well, but Tia still voiced her thoughts and emotions now. "I love you, Harry. I also know you. I can see you are

still beating yourself up a bit about this. Don't. We will make it work. You. Me. Pyrrha. Arturia. Together. Like we always have been, but different. Better now."

"Heh..." Harry breathed out a throaty little chuckle. "You know, I wish I could say that this, our relationship, was coming at me from left field. But it isn't. I, I've been fighting my feelings towards you, towards Arturia, for so long. It's almost a trained response now. I might have moments where I backslide, so I will apologize in advance for those. But... as long as we all work at this together; I think we can make this work. Although since Pyrrha was my first girlfriend, I'm no expert on how to make that happen."

Harry could feel Tia huff, her nose scrunching up as she said the next word. "Communication." That caused Harry to laugh, and Tia went on, still talking about Pyrrha, even as Harry turned, pulling Tia into a hug. "Pyrrha has dibs on firsts. That covers a bit of ground already."

The two of them looked into one another's eyes, and Harry nodded slowly. "Of course, that also leaves more than few things for you and me, and Arturia and I to do already..."

Humming in agreement, Tia tilted her head, her eyes, those expressive blue orbs, pulling Harry in, and then Harry was leaning in and... contact.

Lips pressed against lips once more as the two Arcs, formerly raised as twins, lost themselves in one another again. Tia clung to Harry, new emotions, new wants flashing through her body, as she clung to Harry as if he was a lifeline. Harry groaned into Tia's mouth, one hand on the small of her back, the other cupping the back of her neck, holding her gently against him. He opened his mouth, and Tia responded, her tongue, smaller, less thick than Pyrrha's, flicked like a snake against his, whereupon Harry responded, deepening the kiss.

Eventually, Harry wanted more. More contact, more friction. His hands moved, cupping Tia's thighs and heaving. The physically powerful Tia squeaked in surprise, something that delighted Harry as he settled her onto the side of the kitchen counter in once more. Pulling her into a hug, Harry kissed her again as Tia's legs lifted up, wrapping around Harry and pulling him in as they continued their make out session. Hips began to move and waists grind, as Harry became aware of how far this might go if he let Tia dictate things.

Luckily (or unluckily) as she humped against Harry, Tia couldn't keep her hips from shifting sideways. And as she humped against him, her thigh moved just enough to smack into one of the mixing bowls, sending it crashing to the ground.

This caused Harry and Tia to pull away, to look down at the noise. Tia smiled happily as Harry gasped, breathing in the scent of her for a moment before reluctantly pushing out of Tia's grip, a hard thing to do considering the strength in her legs. "Sorry, I wish I could, but I can't cook and kiss you or even hold you at the same time, Tia."

"Mmm... Tell me about the moments you realized I was a woman." Tia ordered, remaining where she was sitting between the waffle and pancake batter on the counter. She took the one

she hadn't knocked over and began to stir, but still stared at Harry demandingly as he knelt down to pick up the pancake mix, thankful it hadn't splashed out of the mixing bowl. "I'll tell you the same."

"You first," Harry countered, trying hard not to look up at Tia from this angle, knowing it would be the most momentous panty shot.

This surprise, Tia answered. "MM... fist time, it was when we were thirteen. We were tree climbing, and your shirt tore. Muscles looked so good, I touched them, told you I was giving you a boost." Tia smiled faintly. "They were nice then. Better now."

"I should ruddy well hope so, the amount of work I put into them," Harry quipped, causing Tia to giggle. "As for me, let me see... well, I remember the last time our parents let us sleep in one bed. We were twelve and..."

About twenty minutes later, alarms began to go off upstairs, and Nora could be heard racing around, shouting, "Renny, it's morning, it's morning! Morning means pancakes!"

"That will do for now I think, lovey," Harry said, unconsciously using the term for Tia, causing her small smile to widen happily even as she hopped off her perch, moving to obey Harry's request of "Could you set the table?" before he could get the words out.

The conversation between them had been somewhat cathartic, somewhat hilarious. The knowledge they had noticed the other for a long while, but that Tia had never realized what she was doing while Harry did, made the whole thing somewhat funny as well as immensely embarrassing. But not once did Harry comment on how he had grown to also see Arturia as a woman, how he had fallen for her over time as well. He felt she deserved to be the first one to hear those things from him.

Harry paused a moment to watch Tia walk out of the kitchen, shaking his head, his tone shifting into one both wondering and worried for a moment. "There really isn't any coming back from this, is there? We either succeed or we wreck..."

"We will succeed," Tia answered firmly, her tone the same she would assume in a battle. "We will. Whatever it takes."

Harry could only shake his head at that, but he agreed with her. The alternative, that the quartet would somehow botch this up and thus ruin the relationships they'd already had with nothing to replace it was more than a little horrifying to contemplate. *She's right. I'm not giving up on Pyrrha, I'm not willing to put this genie back in the bottle. Full speed ahead, old boy!*

With that in mind, he spoke up. "Speaking of something else Pyrrha and I have already done, we've been out on more than a few dates. I don't think you and I going on dates on campus would be a good idea. I know you don't care, but we do need to keep our new relationship under wraps here in Beacon or else our school lives are going to become very complicated. But if we go off campus, what would you like to do?"

“Dance.” Tia said shortly, now coming down from her high and becoming shy again about letting anyone, even Harry, see her mouth as she spoke.

“Huh... Okay, I didn’t think you’d go for that? I mean, dinner out I can see as being boring...”

Tia nodded firmly at that. Food was something Harry could provide better than most restaurants.

“And you’ve never been a dress up kind of girl, so something like the opera or theatre is out too, but dancing?”

Shrugging, Tia answered as if it was the most obvious thing in the world. “I like jazz and dance tunes. And dancing with you means being close to you.”

That got Harry right in the feels, and the next thing Tia knew was he had somehow crossed the intervening distance, the first plate of waffles was on the table, and Harry was hugging her tightly and kissing her again. Her lips were rapidly becoming addictive, Harry reflected, as were the little whimpers she let out.

The two parted as the tramp of feet reached them. A second later Nora arrived from on high, having leaped up and over the safety railing of the stairs to land next to the table. “Wahoo! Pancakes for the Pancake Queen! Bow and give her the proper tribute peons or face her wrath...”

She trailed off, staring at Tia, making Harry, who had moved to return to the kitchen, realize this might be the first time Nora had seen Tia without her scarf covering her lower face. “The pancakes are over there, Nora.”

Nora didn’t look away from Tia who stared back, nonplussed. This feeling quickly segued into embarrassment as Nora stated simply, “You’re really pretty, you know?”

Blinking at that, Tia pulled up her scarf, causing Nora to pout.

Arturia was the next to come down. She instantly moved to help Harry transport food, then as Pyrrha came down the two of them claimed seats on either side of Harry, much to Tia’s momentary annoyance. Arturia and Pyrrha smiled at one another at that, and then began a banter about which was better, Rhongomyriad or Milo.

It looked like they had somewhat cleared the air between them, something Harry put into words. “So, it seems as if you two have somewhat buried the hatchet?”

“And not in one another, which is a bonus. We’ll still compete, but the greatest prize is already being shared, so it will be for little victories along the way,” Pyrrha announced, staring at Harry with a very forthright look with her jade eyes.

Harry coughed and quickly grabbed a glass of apple juice, feeling the need to loosen his uniform for a moment. "Ahem, so long as the competitions don't involve bruises, and I have final say on who 'wins' whichever contest at need, I suppose I can go along with that."

Ren had come down with Nora, his own movements so normal and quiet he had barely garnered any notice from the rest of Team ANVL or their two guests. Now he looked between the new quuple (quadruple-couple), shaking his head. He had taken the oddities of Harry finding out he was adopted and Tia and Arturia declaring their love for him last night with some measure of equanimity, astonishing everyone involved.

Now sensing the various undercurrents though, he had to quip, "There is a saying that goes 'he who tries to grasp flowers with both hands comes away with none'. I wonder how that would translate into a man attempting to keep three women happy?"

"Poorly," Harry replied drolly. "Even if the flowers in this case came to the man attempting to do so."

Nora laughed at that, nearly spitting out a spray of pancake bits at Pyrrha, who deftly blocked it with her now empty fruit bowl. "Hahaha, wait until our classmates find out about this." She went on, turning her nose up like she was trying to act arrogantly. "That's disgusting! And a scandal! How could any of you even think of performing something so, so salacious as a harem!"

She then shifted, acting almost like Yang for a moment, her attempt at the blonde far better than her Weiss impression. "Oh man, Harry, you really took the phrase the more the merrier to heart huh? Now that's what I call a Yanging good time, am I right, right!?"

"Please no," Harry and Ren interjected, while Pyrrha blushed rosily. Tia just kept eating, uncaring as usual of what other people thought of her. Arturia tried to appear aloof, after all she wasn't a Beacon student any longer, but there was a faint blush just barely visible on the porcelain skin of her cheeks. Harry went on. "You promised to keep it under wraps Nora. While you might find it funny to out our new relationship, I really don't want to come under any more scrutiny than we already have been."

"Yes, please!" Pyrrha gasped out, her hands over her burning cheeks. "The last thing I want is to have still more reasons for people to stare at or gossip about me. Please, Nora, remember your promise!"

"Oh, fine," Nora grumbled. "I'll keep your secret, I guess. Ugh." She then seemed to do a one-eighty, grinning suddenly. "And having this kind of secret could be cool too!"

Harry looked over at Ren, who sighed in resignation. "Don't worry, I'll keep an eye on her."

"Ooh, but of course you gotta keep one eye on your pancake queen, Rennie, otherwise how will you know when you need to appease her with the fluffy goodness that is the cake of pan!" Nora chortled, pulling Ren into a sideways hug.

Since Tia had helped to set the table and Ren had been forced to cook up another batch of pancakes in a hurry for the bottomless pit, Arturia and Pyrrha were on dish duty, letting the others take turns in the shower and get ready for the day. Harry was the first out, and he sat in the sitting room, looking over into the kitchen to the two girls. "So, what are your plans for the day, Arturia?"

"While all of you poor students are in class, you mean? Ahh, I do not envy you at all. My freshman year was a mixture of extreme frustration, boredom, and annoyance," Arturia snorted in ill-humor at the memory. While she wasn't as introverted and socially uncaring (as opposed to simply antisocial) as Tia was, Arturia had her own issues with letting people get close to her. While a natural leader, the closeness of a Hunter Team had not come easily to her. Mix that with the fact that the first year combat course had nothing to offer her, forcing her to look outside of it for more training – from Goodwitch, a tradition she was pleased Harry had continued - and you got a very annoying, difficult year.

"As for what I will be doing, I am going to go apartment hunting this morning. I will be back here this afternoon with Father, as he and you have some meetings you recall?" Arturia concluded.

"Oh I do. There goes my free time, today," Harry lamented. He then switched topics abruptly. "But I should still have time to take you out on a date tonight Pyrrha, that is, if you want to? To er... make up for everything?"

"I'd love to," Pyrrha declared happily. "But I insist on it being somewhere on school grounds. We really can't afford to waste the travel time into and out of Vale. Plus there's..." she sighed, gesturing down to herself. "The baggage that I come with."

"Bah! That is no one's fault but your parents, girl. They should never have opened your door to those vultures. Give such scum an inch and they will attempt to steal a mile, while you just have to smile and take it," Arturia huffed, nudging the other girl in the shoulder.

"I agree, but at the time I had no say in such things. And now the damage is done, my public persona written in stone. But we have to deal with it in some fashion, so staying on campus is more than fine by me."

"Or find a place the reporters are afraid to go," Arturia hummed thoughtfully. "I will look into this. But might I presume that you will have time to date me as well, Harry?"

"I was thinking of Tia next, actually. Given Pyrrha's point, she and I will have to date off campus so we won't draw too much attention from those who know us. And besides Ria, I think your date is going to have to take a good deal of planning anyway," Harry answered, using the childish nickname he had given her when he was very young.

This did not save him from a puppy dog eyes attack that was both disturbing and incredibly cute all at once. "But I will be the first to get a date, regardless of where we have to take it, yes?"

“GAhh...” Harry grunted, shaking his head. *No, no, don't give in! The Puppy Dog eyes is strong, but if you falter now, none of your sisters will let you hear the end of it.*

To one side of this Nora, who had not moved from the table, snickered. “Arturia used Pout, it was super effective!”

“You hush up!” Harry growled at her, trying to turn away from Arturia’s golden gaze. “Or else I’ll bring up why you were able to tell there was something more than sibling affection between me and Tia. The looks we exchanged sometimes on movie nights and game days reminded you of...”

That was as far as Harry got before he had to duck a wild pancake hurled by a blushing Nora. But despite this bit of reprieve, Harry indeed up caving. Pyrrha and Harry would go out that night, while Arturia would go out next night.

Pyrrha’s date wasn’t anything special, just a night out in the forest. With three out of four of their last meals being with far more than just their team members as well as the huge revelation, Harry and Pyrrha both just wanted to get away from everyone, from the lights of Beacon and the noise of their companions for a night. And as she had said, with Pyrrha being who she was, doing so out on the town just wasn’t going to happen.

“This is how I always envision things when I am meditating prior to a fight,” Pyrrha said thoughtfully as the two of them raced through the woods. Both of them had their weapons, but not their shields or armor. That would quite defeat the purpose of the date, but neither were the two young Huntsman completely stupid, and they both knew that Grimm could be found in these woods even after their initiation had wiped out most of the local population. “A tranquil forest, where I can just let my errant thoughts loose on the wind before concentrating on what is to come.”

“Hah! I never had meditation training like that. In fact, that’s actually the exact opposite of some of my training,” Harry snickered.

### **Flashback:**

“Dad, not that I doubt your training or anything, but this is just a game of Monopoly...” Harry said as he stared down at the boardgame set between them.

“The board is for Monopoly yes, but it is house rules. And you and I will be the only two players.” Guld answered with a grin. “The rest are just spectators and natural hazards. Trust me, I used this method for Arturia too. You’ll get the point quick enough.”

Noting that Magenta did not look happy to be only spectating while the twins wore wicked smirks, matched by ones on Violet and Hazel’s faces, Harry nodded slowly. “Okay, natural disasters. Right.”

“Furthermore, remember I said this is house rules. This game is not going to be like regular Monopoly where you must either outlast your opponent, or bankrupt him. Hidden among these



cards is five cards that will show you how to win. You must get through the other cards, holding out until you can find one that has a winning condition on it before trying to fulfill that condition,” Guld explained further. “Think of this as if you were on a mission and you needed to work out what your goals could be while gathering further resources and scouting the land.”

“All right.” Harry nodded, and then he and his father played rock paper scissors to see who would go first. Guld won and quickly moved his sportscar forward seven paces, buying the property he landed on.

When it became Harry’s turn, Hazel and Violet began to wave their arms over the board. Each of them held fans, blocking Harry’s ability to see what was on the dice or what was going on underneath. Meanwhile, the two twins stood to either side of him, and began to make noises, as Guld smiled at him. “You must learn to block out extraneous noises, you must learn to block out anything that is between you and your goal, and not only block them out but sift through it for information. What is happening, can you see what is most important? Or will you let the distractions blind you?”

“\*Bang\*, \*Bang\* \*Bang\*!” went one twin with a pair of cymbals, while the other shouted, “Doom, doom, despair!”

### **End Flashback**

“It turned out that one of my younger sisters had half of a winning condition card on her arm, while my mother had the other on the bottom of her fan which she would occasionally flash upwards so that I could see it. All while my father was stealing dice and money from me, buying as much property as he could and putting up as many hotels as he could buy,” Harry finished dryly. “It was certainly an interesting way of teaching me to sift for information and keep on target, but I don’t think I’d want to walk into that kind of thing blind again. Which was probably another lesson, come to think of it.”

Pyrrha laughed as she walked opposite Harry, shaking his head. “That sounds like both a lot of fun but also very difficult training. I think I would’ve been very displeased with the very idea that someone would bother me while training or even meditating like that.”

“True, but in my family, you either learn how to do away with distractions, or you’ll never get anything done. And as a leader, you... huh, come to think of it, while we’ve spoken of your training in the past, most of that has been about your combat training. Did you ever ask your parents to modify your training so that you could eventually step up to lead a team of Hunters? What was your big dream for the future?”

Hopping from one tree to the next, Pyrrha frowned pensively. “I don’t think so, at least as far as I can remember I’ve never wanted to be a leader. Being responsible for others is, well it just sounds very difficult to me. I prefer to be an example others want to emulate, rather than be in charge. My hopes for the future...Primarily over the last few years I’ve been dreaming of being my own woman, rather than this made up caricature that my parents had built around me, that

everyone else saw rather than the individual inside. We've made great stride with that, but there is still a lot work that needs to be done."

She suddenly shifted, pulling Harry to a halt and hugging him tightly, their bodies pushing flush against one another, one of Pyrrha's arms wound around his waist, copying the movement of Harry's own arm around hers. Face to face like this, Pyrrha's breath blew over Harry's face as she spoke, mixing with her normal cinnamon-like perfume. "That was something you helped me do from the first, and have continued to help me do ever since. With every conversation, with every joke or word of advice. Even when you didn't know who I was, only that I was a gladiator and somehow famous, you still saw me for me, and then when you got to know me better you helped me find aspects of myself I had pushed aside. That is something I will always treasure, Harry."

"And I will always see you. Whatever happens, I will see Pyrrha, not the Invincible Girl moniker, and not even my Sworn Shield," Harry answered firmly.

Pyrrha smiled at that, leaning in and kissing him gently, before turning and moving away. The conversation continued from there as they wandered through the woods like young lovers on a stroll in a park. The conversation mostly focused on Evig Låga, world politics and training at first then shifted to places they wanted to see or have dates at.

Harry wanted to go to an amusement park, while Pyrrha dreamed whimsically about a romantic boat ride somewhere. "Like in those old movies. A date that would take us up the Mi'strach, leaving it all behind for a time before we can let it float back as we... um..." Pyrrha had blushed rosily, unseen in the dark but still felt, and Harry's chortle had not helped.

Soon, they came out of the woods near where, during initiation, they had battled the giant centipede-like Grimm, along with the horde of other Grimm it had led. There, they raced along the bridge that led to a small ancient tower of some kind. Soon the pair were sitting on the edge of the broken rooftop and gazing up at the stars above. It wasn't the most romantic spot, considering the fact that there was still Grimm out there, and they hadn't brought a blanket to share even though the night was somewhat chilly. But both of them didn't care, when Harry once more wrapped an arm wrapped around Pyrrha's shoulders, and she nuzzled into his shoulder.

For some time, the young couple was silent, simply taking joy in cuddling like this, then Harry decided to broach the one subject they hadn't hit on during a walk out here. "About Tia and Arturia... Are you sure that this doesn't, that you don't want to..."

"I understand why you're bringing it up. I even understand why you're questioning my words from the other night," Pyrrha began, gently ribbing Harry. "Given my oath to you, you don't know for certain whether or not I am staying by your side because of my Shield Oath. Or because I really wish to still be with you despite becoming romantically entangled with not one but two other women." Here Pyrrha paused, shaking her head wryly, the feel of her hair moving

against his collarbone causing Harry to shiver. "And I have to say that is something I had ever thought I would agree with in the past. But I am not going to let you go Harry Arc. Not because of my Oath, but because of my growing feelings for you."

She squeezed Harry briefly, shaking her head with a laugh. "You must be about the only young man in the world who would be so worried about my opinion at this point. Considering that Tia and Arturia seem willing to share you between them, even if I was willing to break up with you, you'd still have two beauties to date. As it is, you have three. I cannot imagine any other young man looking that particular gift horse in the mouth."

"Yes, my gender does occasionally have the tendency to think with their little head. But I am not like that, and I wanted to make sure." Harry said with as much dignity as he could muster, even though his mind had indeed gone down some interesting pathways the night before and just now as Pyrrha mentioned Tia and Arturia.

Pyrrha must've somehow sensed he was blushing (perhaps his face was giving off more heat than it should?) because she laughed quietly, leaning up and kissing his cheek and neck then jaw and finally lips. "I'm not leaving you for this Harry. You don't want to set me aside, you want it to work, you want me and you to work, that hasn't changed with these new complications. And that is more than enough for me to stay. I can't promise that three of us won't compete for your time or affections, and don't ever expect us to love one another as we do you. But I won't let it ruin our relationship."

Harry stared down at Pyrrha's face, visible from the light of the shattered moon above, searching for any uncertainty, for any doubt. Finally Harry breathed a sigh of relief at that, believing Pyrrha's words as he could not before, fearing Pyrrha had been washed along by the raw emotions of the night previous. But she hadn't been. Pyrrha truly felt as she did about their relationship.

"Thank you, Pyrrha." With that simple declaration, Harry leaned down to kiss her ardently on the lips. The kiss deepened, tongues questing into one another's mouths, and perhaps would've gone even further if not for a nearby cawing interrupting them.

Pulling back, the Huntsmen-in-training returned their attention to the world around them and saw several nevermore, small versions, coming towards them from the forest. It didn't look like they saw the couple, but were simply coming back to roost. "Huh. I didn't see any evidence of nests..."

"Don't you remember, Nevermore don't make nests, and no Grimm leaves refuse behind," Pyrrha rejoined.

"Ah, yes, I had forgotten. And people wonder if they are natural or not," Harry snorted. "Still, if you would?"

“Certainly.” Instantly Milo was at Pyrrha’s shoulder, and she fired three shots in rapid succession, downing all three of the incoming Grimm with deadly accuracy.

Meanwhile, Harry had heard a growling from below, and looked over the edge to see that a single Beowulf had come across the bridge. Why this Grimm was there, Harry didn’t know, but, in the words of a scroll game, why it was there, it

With a simple flinging charm Harry sent Caliburn down into the beast, skewering it, then pulling the sword up back into his hand, sheathing it once more. “I think we need to relocate our little date.”

Pyrrha nodded, and then Harry suddenly smiled, touching the roof of the shattered tower for a moment. A portion of the stone there began to swell up, merging into one long piece of stone, shaped like a surfboard and he held out his hand to Pyrrha. “Do you trust me?”

“Of course,” Pyrrha answered without hesitation, taking his hand in hers and letting Harry pull her onto the slab of stone. Harry gestured, and the stone began to rise through the air, hovering there for a moment, before flying up still further towards the distant cliff face above them. Pyrrha kept her balance, a portion of Harry somewhat saddened by that, but he was still able to put his arms around her waist as he magically guided the makeshift hoverboard through the air. “If only I had thought about bringing my scroll, we could maybe play something from Aladar.”

Pyrrha devolved into giggles at that, leaning up to give his chin a kiss again, before nuzzling back into his chest as she watched the stars above and the cliff face growing closer. “While I believe that was an excellent movie, if this was the whole new world you wanted to introduce me to, I would have to complain about the fact there are Grimm still in it.”

Harry laughed at that, and soon, they were stepping off of the makeshift flying device onto the side of the cliff face. There, they sat for a time, with Pyrrha nuzzling into Harry again, and Harry slowly kissing her from her forehead down to her mouth again. Swiftly those kisses became heated, and Pyrrha shivered as she felt Harry begin to trail his hand down from her back to her rear, then forward onto her hip and then up again, pushing her shirt with it.

At that, she backed away slightly. At Harry’s questioning look, she shook her head quickly. “Not here.”

Thinking quickly, Pyrrha grabbed Harry’s hands, pulling him to his feet. Arm in arm, the two of them made their way through the darkened campus, dodging other students, and at one point, one of the senior class’s professors who was on night patrol. Back on Earth, that patrol would have been just to make certain none of the students were up and about to make trouble of any variety you might name. But here on Remnant, there was always the threat of Grimm somehow sneaking through.

The two of them hid from several students and the professor, giggling all the while, and then, Pyrrha led Harry to a small area behind the library, a cul-de-sac where a single tree grew. "I've often seen Blake coming out here after lunch, she likes to take cat naps out here."

Harry barely contained a twitch at that, and seemed to be struggling to not laugh, but if Pyrrha noticed, she didn't comment. Instead, Pyrrha leading him under the boughs of the tree, where she pushed him to the ground, so that his back was against the tree trunk. With that done, she concentrated, reaching out with her polarity powers. Her Semblance also allowed her to feel out nearby concentrations of metal, something that had allowed Pyrrha to escape the paparazzi occasionally. Now, it helped her to discover that there were no cameras in this area, no doubt another reason why Blake liked it so much.

### **lime start:**

With that, she allowed Harry to pull her down into his lap, her legs on either side of his waist, as they began to make out in earnest. The kiss this time started out heatedly, tongues dancing, mouths pressing against one another ardently as Pyrrha's hands moved up and down Harry's back, and Harry did the same, his hands going down to where her shirt was tucked into her jeans, slowly pulling it back up, letting him get at the flesh beneath.

Soon, Harry's shirt found itself being unbuttoned rapidly, and Pyrrha then began to rake her fingers up and down his chest, luxuriating in the feel of his muscles, while Harry did the same, only to start in surprise when his hand wound its way up to her upper back. "No bra tonight?"

"No..." Pyrrha said, her voice breaking off into a whimper as Harry, since they had pulled apart so he could speak, began to suck and nibble at her neck at just the right spot. *We've been together less than two months and already he can play me like a fiddle*, Pyrrha thought, not with any sense of chagrin, only a certain amount of delight. "I, I wanted it to be a surprise."

"Colour me amazed then," Harry whispered into her neck, before peppering her cleavage with kisses as he began to work her blouse upward, pausing and pulling back in his kisses when to finish pushing it up to her shoulders. Whereupon Pyrrha shucked it off and tossed it to rest on his shirt nearby. Naked chest pressing against naked chest, and Pyrrha could feel her nipples harden at the contact, then she gasped as one of Harry's hands moved in between their bodies.

Harry began to play with Pyrrha's breast, fingers flexing, palm pressing at the delightful handful. He didn't play with her nipple overmuch for now, Harry simply went from one breast to the other with that hand, while the other hand gripped her rear firmly, pressing it against his rising ardor. While Pyrrha's panties remained on, they swiftly became soaked through, as Pyrrha moaned and whimpered under Harry's ministrations, dominating the kiss occasionally, but more than happy to let Harry have his way with her for now. Then Harry's hand between them switched to playing with her nipples alone. After several minutes of playing with her breasts and grinding his erection against her panty clad core, Pyrrha came, pulling away from the kiss to moan aloud. "Haar~~yyyy!"

Only Harry's presence of mind of covering them both with a Mufflatio kept them from being discovered as she moaned, only slowly coming down from her orgasmic high.

But when she did, Pyrrha found that Harry hadn't finished yet, much to her chagrin. But the wicked idea came to her. And Pyrrha acted on quickly, before her sense of propriety or self-doubt could rear their heads once more.

She quickly backed away from Harry, leaving him frowning puzzlement until her hands went to his waist, where they began to unbuckle his belt, pulling his pants down a moment later.

"Pyrrha, what are you doing?"

"Being daring," Pyrrha giggled a bit, then finished pulling Harry's pants and underwear off. As she did, she was somewhat grateful that it was so dark out that she could not make out many details, and that Harry couldn't see her blushing.

The first impression she got of her new toy was that it was hot to the touch. Not scalding, but hot. And firm too, like a spear shaft, although thankfully not as thick. It still had some girth to it, but not enough to worry her, and seemed to be about the length of Pyrrha's hands pressed end to end. Harry's tip was softer than the rest of him, and a little bigger than his shaft. Wet too, with pre-cum leaking out and wetting the tip.

Working her hands up and down the shaft for a bit, Pyrrha concentrated on the noises Harry was making, finding out quickly that gripping too hard was a bad thing. Working one hand up and down gently seemed to work best. *Just like I was giving Milo a good polish only without actual polish...*

A sudden burst in inspiration hit her, and Pyrrha pulled one hand away from Harry's shaft, moving it down her body. Pushing it into her panties, Pyrrha shuddered, finding herself a bit too sensitive, but coating her fingers with her juices. Returning her now wet hand to the task at hand, Pyrrha bit back a whimper as Harry hissed in delight, a muted, "Bloody fuck, Pyrrha!" coming from his lips.

When Harry tried to pull her up and away, Pyrrha shook his hands off. "No. You made me cum once, I am going to return the favor. Just lay there and enjoy it, Harry. Just warn me when you're ready."

Harry tried to grumble at that, but Pyrrha ignored it, going back to the task at hand. For several minutes, Pyrrha worked both hands once more down Harry's shaft, one after the other, then one hand began to rub along his tip almost like it was a sword hilt. Then, as more precum leaked out and coated Pyrrha's palm, she moved that hand back down his shaft, replacing it with her other hand.

Deciding to change things up as Harry had earlier, Pyrrha leaned forward, catching Harry's cock between her chest. More than half of his shaft thrust out of it and as she pressed her chest against him, Pyrrha breathed in deeply, then leaned down, her tongue flicking out

experimentally. Deciding she could deal with the flavor, and greatly enjoying Harry's choked off groan of "Pyrrhaa..." Pyrrha craned her neck forward just a bit opening her mouth.

Harry grunted again as his hips pushed off the ground involuntarily, almost choking Pyrrha on his shaft such was her surprise. But she pulled back quickly enough, and then began to kiss the head of Harry's cock sucking lightly, nose wrinkled just a bit. *It's... its musky, and kind of strange, but I think I can get used to it. And I love Harry's reactions!* Normally in their cuddling/making out/whatever-this-was it was Harry who took the lead.

Now that she had surprised him, it was a different story, and Harry's groans and moans enticed her to do more. *Well, those and the fact that this certainly is something the so-called virginal Invincible Girl image my parents forced me into would never do.*

At that thought Pyrrha giggled. This caused both vibrations in her mouth around Harry's head, and for her chest to bounce as well, something she hadn't done yet and Harry groaned even louder than before and proved that for all the size of his Aura reserves, he still had a way's to go to building up endurance in this area. The feel of Pyrrha's breasts were normally amazing. She was so toned and powerfully built, but her breasts were soft, something like a silk-covered stress ball in his hands. Feeling those breasts on either side of his shaft where his balls began on top of her mouth over his head was beyond anything he had ever felt before.

"Pyrrha, I'm going to cum!" Harry hissed warningly as Pyrrha had asked him to.

Pyrrha quickly pulled away, using her hands alone to finish him off. She had heard horror stories from other gladiatrixes about the taste of cum, and had no desire to try any accidentally. The redhead watched in shock as Harry came, great geysers of cum bursting out. Three spurts covered her hands and a fourth hit her on the chin despite the fact Pyrrha had leaned back, his cum drizzling down to cover her upper chest. "Oh my... that was quite a bit more than I expected," she thought dazedly.

"Aheh, um, sorry about that. It's been a few days after all," Harry said semi-apologetically.

Pyrrha giggled at that, then experimentally licked a dollop of Harry's cum off of the back of her hand, before shivering in disgust and spitting it to one side. "Yuck! I am very grateful you warmed me ahead of time. That is far too... too fishy and oily and ugh!"

"Ouch. Considering the much fruit and vegetables I eat I should've been okay. The books, they lied to me," Harry lamented, causing Pyrrha to laugh at his overdone manner, which Harry quickly joined. They then paused, as the sound of footsteps came to them. "Shit, the Mufflatio wore off!"

While wondering where the term Mufflatio came from, Pyrrha quickly grabbed up their clothing then raced with Harry to hide behind the tree, forgetting for a moment Harry's ability to use his Semblance to hide them for short amounts of time. With Pyrrha pressed against the tree and Harry's chest it took Harry a moment to remember too, but he quickly recovered,

placing an invisibility charm over them just before a flashlight lit up the darkness around the corner into the little cul-de-sac.

The man wielding the flashlight twisted around to the into the cul-de-sac, staring hard for several moments. "Huh, I could have sworn that I heard some of those damn kids back here." The man stood there for several minutes before pulling aback and moving away, grumbling under his breath. "I must be hearing things. Freaking kids, they're driving me insane now."

"And on that note, I think we need to cut this date off here," Harry whispered.

Pyrrha didn't respond, simply humping back into him, a breathy whimper coming from her as she felt her nether lips start to moisten again. "Are you sure?"

As Harry had access to spells, and Pyrrha was now grinding her rear against Harry's rising erection, Harry was not in fact certain. And it would be quite some time before they returned to the townhouse.

**End lime**

**OOOOOOO**

Arturia had been surprised to find that in Ren, she had found a young man who shared her enjoyment of old movies, specifically the old action/drama movies. He did seem to have a particular hang up about commenting about hand to hand fights of course, but Arturia was more than willing to put up with that from someone who understood the magnificence of the Star Battle originals or Mistrali Jones.

Both of them looked up as the door opened, and Arturia's eyebrows rose up in surprise staring at them.

In the doorway, Pyrrha and Harry had a moment to figure out how to twist themselves around so that they could enter without actually pulling away from the sideways hug they were currently in, both of them laughing and giggling to one another, high on the endorphins of several orgasms apiece.

"Hmmm... That is a sight to put ideas in a girl's head," Arturia mused, amused by what she was seeing. "It certainly gets my hopes up for what our date will be like, Harry."

Nora snickered at that, then watched as the two of them still holding one another, made their way over to the, then pass them towards the stairs leading upwards. "Aren't the two of you going to stop hugging one another at some point?"

"Nope!" Pyrrha said, hugging Harry all the tighter. "Not now, maybe not ever."

Harry smiled at that, pulling her into a hug at his own, while Arturia smiled, her yellow eyes locked on Harry like a bird of prey. "Oh my yes, I am looking forward to my turn."



Looking down at her scroll, she smiled her normal haughty smile, then got to her feet, moving towards Harry. Seeing her coming and in no mood to start even a tiny fight at present, Pyrrha backed away, frowning very slightly as she watched the two of them exchange a tight hug and a light kiss on the lips. *Hmm... so despite my words to the contrary, I do feel some jealousy there. I am going to have to try to quash that as much as possible.*

"I have to go. The owner of the condo I'm looking to lease has seen reason, and will be coming down to my price, so I need to get in there with an inspector. I will see you on Thursday for breakfast and this coming weekend for our date," Arturia declared.

Harry hesitated, his eyes flicking to Pyrrha, but seeing no reaction from her he nodded agreement. "Sounds good. I'll book us a table at an Italiano restaurant. One with the traditional five courses." He suddenly smirked, hugging Arturia tighter to him. "I know a certain queen is always as hungry as a lioness, after all."

Arturia pouted, then turning saw Ren and Nora had gone upstairs, it being a school night, and Pyrrha was halfway up the stairs as well. *I know she will be with him tonight, but I can have my fun first.* With that thought, Arturia leaned down slightly and kissed Harry again on the lips. But this time, there was nothing light about the kiss. It was a full on snog, Arturia's mouth open, her tongue probing between Harry's lips within seconds.

Harry gave as good as he got, his hands going down to Arturia's rear end, where he began to fondle those amazing globes marveling at their firmness. This garnered a moan from Arturia, and it was several more moments before the two had to break away to breath.

Staring down into her Harry's eyes, Arturia hoped he could hear her pounding heart, could see how much she'd enjoyed that, how much she loved him. "It isn't just food this lioness is hungry for any longer, Harry. Best watch out, lest you be gobbled up."

"Heh... I'm in danger... and I think I like it," Harry said between gasps, then stealing another far shorter kiss. "But go on. You need to get back to your hotel and make plans, and I need to head to bed."

"With the results of our interaction standing at attention as you get into bed with Pyrrha. Tsk. Tsk," Arturia said mockingly, then smirked. "I'll take that as a minor win in my column, regardless of what the two of you do."

"\*Sigh\*, this is going to be a thing then, I take it?" Harry groaned, and Arturia laughed turning away to head to the front door.

**OOOOOO**

Arturia hadn't been entirely honest when she told Harry of her short term plans. Yes, she was really going to get a condo down in Vale. Her money situation was quite good thanks to her work as a Huntress, to say nothing of her access to the Arc family accounts. Accounts which, like those of the rest of the Council which lead Evig Låga, were going to grow quite a bit as more of

Breitenfeld's Fire Dust hit the world market through Vale. But Arturia was not one to simply rest on her laurels. Even training with Tia, Harry (and maybe his team if Harry pampered her appropriately) and dating Harry would not be enough to keep her busy.

No, Arturia was a Huntress, and that meant she had made it known that she would be available for jobs in the Vale area for the foreseeable future. Which, since this was indeed Vale, Ozpin's backyard – some would even say his creation – meant that the headmaster learned Arturia would be staying within twelve hours of her beginning talks with the condo owner.

Ozpin smiled faintly behind his coffee mug as Arturia strode into his office. *Ah, ever the... forthright young woman, Ms. Arc. I wonder what ancient queen you are a reincarnation of to pull off the royal hauteur so well? I would wager Jacques Schnee would kill to command attention and move as regally as this young woman does as a matter of course.* "Ms. Arc. It's barely been eight months since we saw you last, but I have to admit that I am pleased you returned to Vale... even if you and your team did not stay together."

"Our reasons for breaking up were well known even as we graduated from your institution, Ozpin," Arturia waved off that rebuke with an airy wave, shaking her head. "And if you are concerned that I mainly work alone, I am more than capable of determining what mission I can take by myself, nor am I so delusional as to over-evaluate my skills. If I was one to do so, you would not have called me in like this."

Chuckling at that, Ozpin gestured for Arturia to take a seat, although there was some truth to that. *Control, drive, intelligence coupled with truly Arc level Aura reserves is indeed a very hard-to-beat combination, although the Arcs have always produced the finest soldiers. And now Arturia has decided to stay here in Vale, presumably because she wants to be close to her siblings and help train them. While Guld has just bought a ticket back to Mistral.*

As headmaster of Beacon and in many ways the most powerful man in Vale, Ozpin had many ways to learn such things. In this case, a well-hidden eighty percent share in the company that did most international flights. *If only I had more information on who attacked Autumn, blast it! What they look like, what their voices sound like even. But no, Qrow arrived too late to tell me anything but the combat style of one of them, a dual wielding minigunner. Which is not helpful at all.*

Shaking that old thought off, Ozpin concentrated on the here and now: namely, slowly gaining influence over Arturia Arc, one of the five most powerful Hunters alive today. *Including people like Specialist Schnee and Ironwood, which is why James has tried to recruit her so often. But I must learn from his example and be subtle about this.*

"So what have you been up to since last you walked these halls, Arturia?" Ozpin queried, fishing for some information to start with, but using humor to hide the questions slightly. "Other than attacking one of our young freshmen and destroying acres of forestland anyway?"

Arturia did not respond to that, simply rolling her eyes. "I was doing missions in Mantle for some time. Two missions down in Vacuo, one of which was to help shut down a strange Grimm-worshipping cult which had risen around a Venus Hypno Killer." Both of her listeners grimaced at that, recognizing the name of, thankfully, one of the rarer Grimm. The plant-like Grimm released hallucinogens around itself as a defensive measure, causing LSD-like symptoms. "After that I returned to Anima, took three annihilation missions around Mistral, and then several missions out of my hometown."

"That is quite the wide range of missions. But what could they have possibly found for you near Evig Låga that required someone of your skill? I recall you saying several times you would refuse missions that seemed to boring or simple," Ozpin observed.

"I took missions from the local council so that I could be close to my family there for a time," Arturia answered blandly. "We have quite a bit going on at home regardless. You know my father's feelings on Faunus rights, and those feelings are shared by the rest of the council. Would it surprise you to know that they have begun a kind of outreach program to Faunus?"

"Which would mean pushing out into Grimm Lands for more farmland and living space," Ozpin agreed, slowly. *But I can tell there is something more to it.* "But I have to wonder how you are going to find work for all of them. And if an influx of Faunus will not cause trouble. I applaud it, certainly, but I recall you had an Aunt who was extremely outspoken about her anti-faunus sentiment. Other such could hide within Evig Låga, not making waves simply because Faunus were such a small portion of the community before this. And of course there is the White Fang."

"The White Fang will not be a problem, and as for jobs, so long as someone is honestly willing to work, that is no problem either. H... our leaders have opened new industries in Evig Låga," Arturia once more tried to not give anymore information than needed.

That, however did give Ozpin some starting points, so he let the subject subside. "Well, you're staying in Evig Låga to spend time with your family makes a good deal of sense. And I understand that you are going to be staying in Vale due to two of your siblings training here in Beacon in a similar manner. I have to applaud that, as both of them are already exceptional for their age, and could use more one-on-one instruction than we can provide in their freshman year."

He watched Arturia nod as if he had said something that was patently obvious before going on, wondering if this hook would gain him any influence, but not assuming it would. "And if you need any help to find a home, apartment or whatever, I can help you on that score. I know many businessmen in Vale, and many landowners. I am positive I could get you a discount."

"Thank you, but that is not necessary. I haven't done much with my wages of late. Unlike most Huntsmen, I do not need to rely on ammunition." Arturia said haughtily, before coughing a bit and looking away. "However, I would like to use Beacon's forges at some point in the next few days. I, \*ahem\* seem to have not kept up on my armor's maintenance."

Ozpin hid another smile at that, knowing that any damage done to Arturia's combat outfit was due to the battle she had with Pyrrha Nikos. "I think we can allow that for such an honored alumni. However, I would like some guarantee that you're staying around does not involve keeping your rivalry going with Ms. Nikos. If it is, I am afraid I would have to limit your access to Beacon grounds. Even your fight in the forest did far too much damage to an area which is technically Beacon property."

"I do not think you will have to worry about that." Arturia smirked very slightly. *We have found another way of competing and something worth doing so for.* She then tried to change the subject, saying, "I would also warn you that at least Tia and Harry will probably not remain here for the full four years. In many ways I would wager they could test out by the end of their second year and receive their Hunter license with but a few months of apprenticeship. Well... beyond the logistics and emergency field medical requirements anyway."

"I can somewhat see that in Mr. Arc's case, but I have to say I do not see it in Ms. Arc the second's," Ozpin said dryly. *He is after all, getting straight As in Laws and Logistics even with the concentration on law, while also helping Greenscale remain afloat. And his Semblance... or his magic... definitely gives him a leg up.* "Her skills..."

"Tia's communication skills are a result of psychological issues that she has dealt with all her life, Ozpin," Arturia bristled, rearing up out of her chair her eyes hard as she came to her sister's aid. "Do not insult Tia simply because she is different or difficult."

"Ozpin didn't mean it like that, Arturia. We both have admitted our mistakes there. But in terms of her combat skills, Tia seems far too reliant on her Semblance at times, and we have not yet begun to work with her on controlling her bestial instincts when using it. Further, while her combat prowess with Tiburon is amazingly good for her age, her long-range weaponry relies too heavily on Aura Gems," Glynda soothed, speaking up for the first time. "At least two of those problems can only be solved in a place like Beacon."

"...True," Arturia grumbled. "I will admit Tia has a hard time remembering that dodging is always better than 'tanking', I believe is the phrase. Still, I stand by my statement."

"Regardless, I wonder if you would be willing to take an actual job here, rather than stopping by occasionally only to train your siblings. I assure you that you would be able to make your own hours, and would still be able to take on side jobs from Vale's ruling Council," Ozpin said.

"No." Arturia shot that down instantly. "If you want me to be a guest combatant for the senior class, I might be able to agree to that. But I am not going to be tied down here. Not when the council has so many jobs waiting for a Huntress of my caliber."

Sighing faintly, Ozpin knew that wouldn't work very well. Still it would have been much easier to influence Arturia if she had been willing to join the regular teachers in Beacon. "Hmm... well, I can understand that of course. I also know that there are some missions that have been on the

books for a while. If you wish to have more information on specific missions, please contact me. I know most of them by heart.”

Arturia nodded agreement at that, and Glynda took up the conversation, making time for Arturia to come onto Beacon grounds and help train her siblings. She also hit while the metal was hot, forcing Arturia to agree to a once a month training seminar with the senior class. Glynda did not expect anyone from this class to really challenge her, but she had faith at least a few teams would be able to defeat the Dark Queen.

Laughing, Arturia shook her head. “Ah, that moniker. Yes, my high school certainly did well there. Far better than I ever could have myself. Although your use of it make me wonder if you had such an appellation when you were young, Glynda.”

Huffing, Glynda quickly looked away, specifically glaring at Ozpin to stop his attempt to speak. There was no need for any of her old nicknames to ever see the light of day, no sir. *No Mighty Thighs, No Super-blonde, no Glynda greatbitch!*

Snorting, Ozpin shook his head, miming zipping his lips, and Glynda nodded.

Rolling her eyes, Arturia pushed to her feet. “Well, as pleasant as this has been, I have things I must be doing. I thank you for the offer of more information, Ozpin, but I will be doing my own research on any mission I am given. I have been annoyed several times over the past few months when missions were misclassified. And if I have to deal with Ironwood’s attempt to recruit me again, it will be too soon.”

Ozpin nodded, and with a wave of his hand indicated Arturia could leave if she so wished. But just as Arturia was about to step onto the elevator, he called out, “I must ask, Arturia: is your decision to not work here because you do not think you would be a good teacher, or because your parents and I do not get along? After all, I would assume that better pay, free living conditions and being closer to your siblings would be a hard inducement to beat.”

“I do not actually know why you and my parents do not get along. Nor do I feel it is my place to take sides in that issue,” Arturia answered, turning back to look at Ozpin, a faint frown on her face. “As for why I don’t wish to become a fulltime beacon employee, I would ask you a question in turn: what does it take to be a leader?”

“I...hmm...” Ozpin paused, wondering where this was going but answering in as honest a way as he felt was appropriate. “I would say two things above all: a plan going forward and the will to follow it, and the ability to discern reality from what you wish to see.”

“Interesting. While that is certainly a viable perspective, I prefer to believe that a leader’s primary goal should be to inspire, to lead by example. Even if you allowed me to take missions from the council, here I would be under your command. And I am afraid you no longer inspire me,” Arturia announced with a shrug before stepping forward onto the elevator.

“...Ouch... I might actually need some cream for that burn,” Ozpin tried to make a joke of it, but that had actually stung him a bit. *Does that mean that Arturia sees herself as such a leader? A leader involved in whatever is going on in Evig Låga? With young Harry perhaps as her second-in-command, and their parents as advisors? Still, she gave me enough clues to look into what is going on there. As for influencing Arturia herself, I think it’s time to delegate.* “I think that it is time for you to take over trying to influence Arturia, Glynda.”

Glynda grimaced at that but nodded her head slowly. After all, Arturia had been one of Glynda’s Special Projects, young women who she took under her wing subtly. As such she had a special bond with those students, like Arturia, Coco Adel, and several others, such as Weiss Schnee or Pyrrha Nikos. “While I feel Arturia would be an amazing addition to the circle, I feel as if we’re spending too much attention to Mr. and Ms. Arc. and not what could be occurring out there. The enemy is still moving far too freely in the shadows Ozpin.”

“True, which is why I had hoped to bring Guld to our side, as he has some connections to the Vacuan underground. But that did not happen. As for the students, although it pains me to say that in any game, pawns too are necessary.”

Grimacing Glynda could not stop herself from barking back, “I wonder if their parents will see it that way.”

Ozpin took a sip from his coffee before answering, turning to look out one of the windows in his office. “I have made more mistakes than any man alive, and made more enemies too. What is two more so long as Salem is foiled in whatever new scheme she has concocted? I will think it cheap for that price.”

Glynda wondered at that, but still nodded, agreeing. Anything was better than Salem grinding away still more of humanity or gaining access to the Relics, or whatever her plan was this time around. Such was the calculation in a war against an enemy who was literally eternal and who had equally inexhaustible resources.

**OOOOOO**

True to form, Harry’s team retreated to their townhome for lunch. This time it was Ren’s turn to cook, and a hearty stir fry with white rice was quickly on the grill, along with chicken and vegetables on skewers. Since Harry and Pyrrha would be out that night, this meant lunch would be everyone’s main meal of the day. Everyone was in a good mood. Today, Ruby and Ren had one of the best matches of the year so far, with Weiss then facing off against Harry. It wasn’t the first time, but Harry and Weiss always pushed one another, which was all Goodwitch could hope for.

Pyrrha was the only one a bit miffed. She had been paired up against one of the other freshman, who turned out to be a major fanboy. He spent half the time trying to flirt with her, and the other dodging while lamenting about how Pyrrha’s skirt was longer than it had been in her gladiator days. His Semblance, Fast Motion (a stupid name, in Harry’s opinion) allowed him

to twist his body like rubber, but the boy was part of the large group of freshman who needed to enhance their Aura reserves for a reason. Eventually Pyrrha had been able to just outlast him.

Still, she was happy the others had such good matches, even Nora, who squared off against Martina, one of the other team leaders. While not a good match on paper, Martina had been able to outwit Nora a few times with adroit use of her weapons and a few borrowed smoke grenades, leading her to stumble out of bounds.

There came a knock as the meal was almost ready, and Harry rolled his eyes. "That will be my father. I swear his timing for when to show up for meals is insane."

It did indeed turn out to be Guld, who had the grace to look sheepish at the glare Harry sent his way. Much more welcome was the sight of Arturia there. "So... I take it you're not happy to see your old man after last night hmm?"

Rolling his eyes at Guld's attempt to cheer up his way out of being in the doghouse, Harry smiled at Arturia, pulling her into a hug, before waving Guld inside. "

Hey, Arturia, seeing you like this everyday is going to be really nice. And as for you, Dad, considering last night I am just marginally happier seeing you than I would seeing Goodwitch glaring at me like I just acted out in her class and she was going to use me as an example."

"Ah, Glynda. Yeah, she's got the whole Stern Headmistress thing going on, doesn't she? Still, who would have known that she would turn out that way?" Guld shook his head. "Heh, she was one heck of a beauty at one point. I remember she was the undisputed beauty queen at one point. Heck, even I had a bit of a thing for her."

"I sooo don't need to know that dad," Harry grimaced while Arturia blanched. "That's not so much stick your dick in crazy, but definitely stick your dick in scary there. And Mom would definitely be able to supply an extra heaping of scary if she heard you talking about another woman like that."

"Considering your own entanglements, pointing fingers at me for just saying someone else was attractive in the past loses a lot of its impact," Guld drawled, shaking his head. "I won't poke my nose in that." He waved one hand at Arturia who contrived to look haughtily smug for a moment. "I've been told in no uncertain terms to leave it to you four to solve, while I take on the duty of explaining your new quartet to your mother."

"Ah..." Harry thought about it for a moment but couldn't honestly figure out how the Arc matriarch would see the romantic entanglements three of her children (one adopted admittedly) and Pyrrha Nikos were in right now. "I have no idea how she'll take it."

"Nor I," Arturia shrugged. "Mother knew of my feelings towards you at least, but while she might have predicted my little fracas with Pyrrha--"

"Oh, is that what we're going to call it?" Pyrrha interrupted the Arc archly.

"I don't know if she ever even imagined us agreeing to sharing you rather than coming into more formal combat." Arturia ignored Pyrrha, before winking her way. "After all Harry is a limited resource, and it would not be the first time mankind has gone to war over such."

Pyrrha laughed at that, and Harry sighed, then led Guld over to the sitting area. "You said you would want to look over the deal I made for local distribution of fire Dust, right?"

Guld nodded, and Harry pulled up the agreement on his scroll, letting Guld read it as Harry explained how the meeting that led to that agreement had gone. As much as Harry's personal life had been rocked by revelations of late, there was still a lot more to said life other than romance and school work.

"Damn, son. You did great here. Especially talking them down to us paying per tonnage rather than percentage of the gross. Both sides will be happy about that, but we'll get a lot more for our Dust this way." Guld signed the deal and sent it off, his position as head of Evig Låga's council giving him the ability to do so." He then whispered a number, into Harry's ear, who gawked at him.

"We've mined HOW MUCH!?"

"Yeah, I know. It's enough to make Evig Låga rich, and empower our growth going forward. And that dust mine isn't going to run out for at least twenty years even at the pace we're working it. Who knew that making mines safe and giving the workers a percentage of the profits would cause them to work so much more efficiently."

For a moment, Guld's eyes darkened, and his hands flexed, reminding Harry that past Arcs had run into major issues in Atlas occasionally for their stance on that and Faunus Rights in general. "Anyway, Rasputin is being paid twice as much as a normal surveyor to find other mines within the area we've designated as the defensive zone. If we even find a small mine of another kind of Dust... We're looking at enough to cut into the international market already, with another Evig Låga would be set for a century or more of trade goods. Enough to fuel our growth for certain."

Harry smiled at that his eyes gleaming in a way that made Arturia's breath quicken for a moment. *Now that, that is the look of a king looking to carve out a nation from the wilderness... hmm... I might have read a few too many Cohen the Wildling books. Especially the unrated versions.*

The conversation was interrupted a moment later as someone else knocked on the door. Harry and Ren looked at one another, then sighed in unison. "Tia, or Yang and Ruby looking to mooch?"

"I think it will be the siblings," Ren said, placing a five lien note on the kitchen counter. Harry did the same on the table in front of him.



With the bet made, Nora bounded over to the doorway, yanking it open so hard Harry winced, praying they wouldn't have to replace the hinges again. "HELLO! Oh, and it's choice C, guys, all of Team RWBY. Although I'd wager double or nothing they're here to mooch food for certain."

"H, how can you even say that, Nora!" Weiss exclaimed. "I was merely here to follow up on rumors that Arturia Arc, Harry's older sister was seen on campus both last night and tonight. There's even a rumor going around that she and Pyrrha had an impromptu spar last night."

"Hah, actually, the rumors say they had a knock-down drag out war in the forest last night," Yang said, pushing Weiss forward into Nora, who laughed as the shorter girl squawked in outrage, letting the other girls in. "One that ended at... hello!" Yang paused in what she had been saying, staring at Guld. "And with that hair you're either a relative of mine, and I know Dad didn't have any brothers, or you're related to Tia somehow."

"I am indeed," Guld stood up. "Guld Arc, Patriarch of the Arc family at your service."

Yang blushed a bit, shaking her head trying to get the phrase *FUCK Guld is a DILF* out of her head. Luckily for her team cred, Blake had not noticed anything beyond the smell of fish cooking, and had seemingly teleported herself forward to the table.

Ruby, Weiss on the other hand had seemingly performed a true partner maneuver: closing with Arturia and going gaga over her, but for very different reasons. "Oh my god, You're Arturia Arc, the Dark Queen! I have read so much about your exploits as a Huntress!/Oh my god that weapon! It's so beautiful!"

Staring between them, Arturia cocked an expressive eyebrow, amusement plain in her voice. "It is so nice to see two young partners in such sync with one another." Weiss blushed rosily, very obvious on her skin which was almost as white as Arturia's, while Ruby just kept salivating over Rhongomyniad. "I believe Harry has spoken to me of the two of you. You would be the Schnee heiress and the 'shortest Rose', yes?"

"Wah, I'm not short! I'm young!" Ruby shouted turning to glare at Harry, while Weiss apologized profusely for herself and her partner, going so far as to grab Ruby by her hood and pull her down into half bow.

Quick introductions followed, and then they were all sitting down to Ren's meal, the portions broken up to deal with the newcomers. Luckily, Ren and Harry always made more than they needed, so there was still enough to go around. Not that Ruby seemed to notice the food at all, still staring at the weapon Arturia had left on the sofa.

"Still, I find it amazing to see a weapon made to refine and direct Aura to such a degree. I mean, Yang's Ember Celica is made to survive high impact blows, and My Crescent Rose is made to handle high wind shear, but this is just amazing!"

“Thank you. It cost me both time and a lot of money to perfect Rhongomyniad,” Arturia accepted the praise gracefully. “I would say however that your being here in Beacon at such a young age is just as amazing. How did that come about?”

“Er... how much did your sister tell you of, um, how she and I met?”

Not much at all was the response, and Arturia listened in some amused surprise as Ruby told about her and Tia’s run-in with Roman Torchwick and some nameless goons. *Beating the goons is no surprise, Tia could have done that on her own blindfolded and without Aura. But to defeat Torchwick is no mean feat.* “I can see you have the skill to be here, Ruby but can I ask what has driven you to be so good? What is your dream?”

“To make the world a better place,” Ruby answered instantly, causing smiles on all her teammates faces, as well as the others around the table. “To be the best Huntress I can be and help people as much as I can.”

“That is... a simple dream. But it is one with great ambition. To make the world better, that is indeed an ambition worthy of a huntress extraordinaire,” Arturia declared.

Ruby blushed, which only deepened as Yang pulled her into a hug, squealing “See, that’s why you’re our leader sis! You can make a few sentences sound so inspiring!”

“\*Ahem\*, well, be that as it may, do you have any advice to give to us? As a Huntress renowned as one of the few strong enough to thrive without a team, I imagine you have a lot of tips we could use.”

With Arturia dominating the attention of most of their guests, Harry and Guld resumed their conversation, while Nora, Pyrrha and Ren listened to Arturia or talked amongst themselves. Soon, the meal was done, and Guld went on his way.

OOOOOO

Like Monday, Tuesday passed without any significant event, just the same semi-boring school classes. And if people noticed how Tia seemed to be even closer to Harry than before, no one commented on it. They even had a spot of luck, letting Harry push up the day of their date to Wednesday night instead of Friday, which in turn would free up that night for Arturia’s date. Glynda had texted, saying she was not going to be able to tutor Harry one-on-one that week. She had a conference she was going to with Ozpin on Vale security.

Ironically most of that meeting would be spent deciding what missions they could ask Arturia to pick up on her own, and which would need a team to handle regardless of her skills. The rest was about the dozens of small and medium scale Dust thefts being perpetrated by Roman Torchwick and his gang. A series of murders had also begun to get some attention, including one of a mid-ranked functionary at the records office.

Ozpin was quite intrigued by this, as the man had died in his office well after work hours. It had all the hallmarks of someone's attempted break in running into a random event that screwed up their plans. The security for the building had responded and even fired at someone who escaped out the window. This was a sure sign of it being someone with his or her Aura unlocked as the break-in had occurred on the twelfth floor.

The reports hadn't indicated anything had been stolen, and computer experts were going through the records to see if anything there had been deleted or added, but for now, most of the speculation stated that the thief had been forced to flee without doing whatever it was he had tried to do. There was also some certainty that whoever it was hadn't been Roman Torchwick.

Regardless of the trouble brewing elsewhere, Harry was extremely pleased with this spot of good fortune, as was Tia. Thus after a day spent experimenting with his magic and Pyrrha's Semblance, Harry took a shower and dressed up for a night on the town.

In his case, this meant a dark blue shirt matching the color on his armor, with the Arc crest marked out on one shoulder in gold coupled with good black pants. His hair was even cooperating for once, letting him slick it back for the first time Harry could remember. A pair of sunglasses was considered, then discarded with extreme prejudice by Pyrrha.

Harry watched as his sunglasses fell apart, the bits cascading down from his hands as the screws hovered in the air above him. Pyrrha had pulled them out ripping the plastic surrounding them quite badly. "Why? I mean, they weren't expensive, but what did those glasses ever do to you?"

"They hid those gorgeous emerald eyes of yours from me, and that is a travesty by anyone's measure," Pyrrha huffed, pulling Harry into a hug for a second, kissing him lightly on the lips. "Now go on, meet up with Tia and have a good time."

Chuckling at that and having already had yet another conversation with Pyrrha about whether or not she was fine with this, Harry stepped away from her and bowed floridly. "As my lady commands."

With Pyrrha's laughter still ringing in his ears, Harry left their townhome, and headed off to the dormitories, where he would be picking up Tia. Convincing her to try and meet him in town to keep this entire 'dating his former not a sister' thing a secret had been a lesson in futility. Tia just did not care about other people's opinions and hadn't seen the point to missing out on traveling the bullhead together, which in her opinion was precious cuddle time.

Instead, he had mentioned offhandedly in front of Yang, Ruby and several of the other freshmen that he and Tia would be going into town to attend a dinner party as representatives of their family since their father had to head home early. What reason the party had been set up Harry didn't specify, but that didn't matter. The lie would hopefully be enough to ameliorate any rumors about how well they were dressed while doing so, or the fact that they were going out

together rather than he and Pyrrha, who most of the freshman class by this point knew he was dating.

The whistles that he got when he entered the freshman dormitories, however, did not speak well for his attempts to not spread such rumors. "Oh give it a rest you lot!" He shouted back at Yang and a few others who had been doing the whistling. "Unless you want to answer to Pyrrha the next time any of you spar with her?"

"Are you saying she's possessive Arc? Does that mean she wears the pants in your relationship?" Yang teased. "But if she's possessive, why is she letting you go to this shindig with Tia rather than having you wrapped around her or vice versa? Especially when you look like that, hot stuff."

"I rather think that's none of your damn business," Harry shot back, ignoring the girl from now on, acting irritated about the whole thing as that played into the story he had come up with. "And as for your question, Pyrrha hates stuff like this, whereas I, since my father set it up in the first place, can't get out of it."

Yang stared after Harry, then turned to Blake looping an arm around her partner. The girl had also been staring, her own thoughts not on Harry's mode of dress (or how good it made his rear look, no matter who asked) but on the fact that she had forced herself to call her parents this past weekend. It would still be a while before she told them about Harry's offer, but it had gotten the ball rolling.

Breaking out of her thoughts as Yang hung an arm around her shoulders, Blake flushed a bit at the contact and tried to squirm away with just as much success as Ruby would have had in a similar situation. "Do you ever get the impression that Harry, and the rest of Team Anvil, have a LOT more going than we do?"

"Considering how even with Weiss tutoring her, Ruby's barely keeping up in math and science, I think that's probably a good thing for our team, don't you?" Blake asked, then blushed even harder as Yang chuckled, her chuckles sending her breath skittering across Blake's neck. "Now let me go!"

"Never!"

From above Harry heard someone whine almost like a cat mewling, but put that observation to one side as he came to Team GART door. Knocking, he only had to wait a moment before the door opened. As he took in the sight revealed, Harry gulped, keeping his jaw from dropping by clenching it so hard Harry felt he was in danger of having a tooth crack under the pressure.

Tia had decided to dress up just as well as Harry had for a night on the town. Her outfit consisted of a dark grey, form-fitting skirt that only went to her knee combined with an upper... blouse thing? Harry wasn't certain, as it looked like it was all one piece, but bits were missing and other bits looked as if they were tied together at the front and... The important thing was

that it covered her very well from knee to waist, but did so in a way that her hips and undoubtedly rear were delineated in all their glory, before leaving her ripped stomach bare, and set her olive skin color off to perfection.

The thing (*Could it be called a dress when its like that?*) then came back and around Tia's chest, covering those prodigious mounds but leaving a lot of under boob for one's viewing pleasure. Along with the grey dress she wore good flat shoes, perfect for dancing, and a small dark blue choker with the Arc crest on the front. *Damn you Mother! Why did you have to teach all your daughters how to weaponize sexuality even when out of their Huntress outfits?! What the hell was the point of that!?*

Behind Tia, her three teammates were looking at her as if they were not quite certain what to make of this vast transformation of their normally silent, seemingly antisocial teammate. Apacci looked like a dog who had just seen a bone, while Mila Rose was shaking her head, muttering about how 'it' was a waste. At the same time, Sung Sun was watching both Arcs, her eyes narrowed slightly.

"Harry," Tia said, her lips curving upwards and her blue eyes sparkling with unvoiced emotions as she looked Harry up and down as Harry had been unable to stop himself from doing to her. "You look good."

"Thank you, Tia, you look good too. I think between us, we can stop any of these old fuddy-duddies higher brain functions, regardless of gender" Harry drawled, holding out his arm to her. "All the better to make the deals my father wants us to."

Tia remained smiling as she turned and waved at her teammates. "See you all later."

"Okay, but seriously! Wear that this weekend and come with Mila and me clubbing, Tia! Please!?" Apacci ground out. "I am not above begging, babe. Even if you're not my date, having a hottie like you with Mila Rose and me would bring me so much street cred it isn't even funny!"

Very firmly closing the door behind her, Tia linked her arm with Harry's, who did the same. Neither Arc deigned to take notice of Ruby and Weiss, who were staring agog from the door to their dorm room nearby.

Weiss was blushing, staring at Harry in particular as if he was a steak and she was dying of hunger, while Ruby was staring between them, her face almost as red as her cloak. "D, do people normally dress like this when they meet business partners?"

"It, \*ahem\* it depends on if the business partners you're meeting are both those you want to take advantage of, and the type to be, \*gulp\* distracted by such a move. I can remember my father bringing my older sister or my mother with him to a few such dinners," Weiss muttered. "Still, who knew Arc could dress up that well?"

Shaking his head and deciding enough was enough, Harry led Tia not toward the elevator back down to the first floor but the staircase. There, he covered both of them with the Remnant

equivalent of a Notice-me-Not. It wouldn't last long, but Harry hoped it would last long enough to get them outside. "Stay quiet for now, Tia. I am done dealing with people staring at us."

Tia shrugged unconcerned, but kept her arm wrapped around Harry's and the two of them made their way outside. There, Harry redid the spell, having to do so twice more before they were on the bullhead which would take them into Vale.

Once they were sitting down, he leaned in, whispering, "You do truly look amazing, Tia. Sorry if I had to say it in such a roundabout manner before. You normally look gorgeous, but when you dress to impress it really makes that even more obvious." He watched as Tia smiled her little smile, and kissed her on the side of the chin, murmuring, "And no scarf or mask tonight?"

"No. I can't promise to speak a lot, but I wanted to be brave tonight." Tia leaned in quickly, stealing a kiss from Harry that quickly deepened as his arms went around her pulling Tia into a hug.

When they finally pulled back to breathe, Tia murmured, "You make me brave."

"And you will make hundreds of men angry at me. You normally draw a lot of eyes, but without a scarf to hide half of your beautiful face? I'm going to have to beat them off with a stick!"

"And if any other girl looks at you, can I hurt them too?" Tia's question was not an idle one. She had understood now why she had been feeling mildly jealous of Pyrrha, why that jealousy had died down dramatically after Harry had promised to not let his time with Pyrrha cut into his time with her, and of course discovered the real type of relationship Tia wanted to have with Harry. She was fine with seeing Arturia with Harry, and of course was more than fine with Pyrrha and Harry having time together. But she wasn't certain how she would react if someone else flirted with Harry in front of her.

"Only if you can figure out a way that it won't leave marks," Harry replied dryly. "Nothing lethal of course. Hiding the bodies is really difficult when you're in a city."

Tia nodded, taking that comment at face value, and Harry laughed quietly, pulling her into another hug. "Oh, I do love you, Tia!"

She hummed happily at that, nuzzling against his neck. The two of them stayed wrapped around one another until they could feel the bullhead slowing down and descending to land, whereupon very reluctantly Tia let Harry go, letting him pull her to her feet. "Kissing and stuff is even more fun than cuddling." She said, her tone one of discovery and wonder rather than someone simply making a statement.

"Yeah, they can be quite addictive. At least that is something all three of you have in common, my dear. You could all be labeled drugs given how much I want to keep kissing and... other things with you."

To his astonishment Tia actually blushed very lightly, looking away. Harry stared at her, and feeling his stare, she murmured, "Books mom bought me, things I wasn't so interested in when she first introduced them... they make a lot more sense now."

*Dammit Mom!* Harry yelled in his head again.

Despite knowing that he was adopted, he was in no way prepared to stop calling Hazel his mother, or Guld his father. Indeed, the very idea was repulsive. It would seem a gross insult to them, given their care for him since they had adopted him. It did make certain moments like this one kind of awkward admittedly, considering he was now dating two of Hazel's true born daughters. But Harry was willing to put up with that.

Soon, they were heading off of the bullhead and into town, with the two of them walking side-by-side. Since it was late at night there wasn't much of a crowd, although because it was Wednesday rather than the weekend, the fact that the two of them were dressed for a night out on the town did draw some looks. Thankfully, Harry hadn't been so memorable on his own when he was out with Pyrrha, and although both of them were attractive that wasn't enough to cause issues as they entered a small café, where they would be eating a bit before heading to a local dance club called Hei Days.

"It's been closed down for renovations for a month and a bit now, and is just having its inaugural reopening, so I was able to actually join a poll for what kind of music they would be playing throughout the night," Harry explained as he pulled back Tia's chair for her.

Tia hummed at that, then asked, "Jazz?"

Harry nodded, and she smiled her small smile once more at him, causing Harry's heart to beat a little faster. "Thanks."

The two of them had a nice conversation over the meal, with Harry doing most of the talking, admittedly. They had known that coming into the date, and Tia's small smiles, her slight frowns, and her eyes were more than expressive enough for Harry to understand what she wanted to say, or how she was responding to what he was saying.

Most of what they spoke about was Beacon, their teams, and how Tia was getting on it now that Sarah was leading the team officially, rather than Tia herself. There, they segued naturally into a discussion about their relationship, and Pyrrha and Arturia.

"I just want each of us to understand what we want out of this relationship you know. Pyrrha and I, we're not in love yet both of us can see that coming. I want her at my side, and she, Pyrrha, wants to be my champion, to be my órkos aspídas while I, well, in her words, change the world."

In another lifetime, saying something like that would've made Harry possibly die of embarrassment. Even at the height of the war against Riddle, he had never been one toot his own horn like that. But in this one, Harry knew that was truly what he was aiming to do. Not

only was there the overall job he had been given by Death to somehow erase the force behind the Grimm out of existence, but there was also expanding Evig Låga, a project that Harry knew would've been impossible without his magic. *Or as the locals call it, my Semblance.* And Pyrrha's positive thoughts on that score hadn't changed since the moment she had heard about those plans and she had given him her Shield Oath.

"But more than that, I want her beside me as a **woman**, not just as a shield. And, well... the \*heh\* opposite is also true. We haven't talked about anything else though. Marriage, kids, all that stuff. But I don't think it is unfair to ask you what you think of that kind of thing, considering everything. What do you want out of the future? We've talked about the future before, but does this, our relationship I mean, change that? Do you still want to be a Huntress as long as your body can take it? Or do you see something else for the two of us in the future?"

Tia did not have to think about it, and she shook her head firmly. When she spoke, it was clear Tia was thinking about her words, and fighting her psychological need to hide her mouth while speaking as well. It was almost cute how hard it was for her to do so, and Harry quickly reached out to take her hands in his as she spoke eliciting a sparkly eyed moment from Tia that had him smiling despite the seriousness of Tia's words. "I am not a leader, or a figurehead. Arturia and Pyrrha, they are women who wish to inspire others, paragons of what a Huntsman, man or woman, should be. I am not like that. Being with you like this has not changed anything. I still wish to be a Huntress as long as possible. I will be a sword, a monster, or a sacrifice, whatever is needed. I could not stand being seen as an example."

She squeezed Harry's hands, looking into his eyes earnestly, still pushing through her problems with communicating, her tone earnest to Harry's ears. "I could never see myself without you. Now, I want to be with you. **Full stop.** I **will** be by your side, whatever happens. Just like Pyrrha." Harry nodded at that, and she went on, still speaking clearly but with difficulty, forcing the words out despite her rising embarrassment and mental issues. "Beyond that... I do not think I would be a good mother. I know I cannot communicate normally and I..."

"Enough of that!" Harry interjected harshly, squeezing her hands so hard he would have bruised any woman without Aura. "I have known you our whole lives, Tia. I know you can't communicate, can't speak or show emotions like other people. I have **never** thought that didn't mean you couldn't think as well as other people, or didn't have emotions underneath. The only question is, do you think in the future you would like to settle down, retire, have children?"

Tia paused, looking down at the joined hands and nodded slightly. "Mmm."

"Then that's fine. I... I rather think I'd like to be a dad eventually too. When we're in our forties or later," Harry hastened to add. With Aura, a lot of the problems older women would run into having children did not occur, so Huntresses could have children well into their fifties. It wasn't just because Guld and Hazel were so... prolific that they could have as many kids as they had, after all. "And whatever she says now, I think eventually, Pyrrha would want that too. She's just scared because of the semi-horrible examples of her own parents." He then smirked, winking at



Tia. "I'd wager between the four of us we could get parenting right... even with all the other demands on our time."

"Demands on you and Arturia's time," Tia mumbled. Then, unable to stop herself any longer, she pulled one hand away from Harry's grip and raising it to hide her mouth.

Her eyes were still locked on Harry though, and they twinkled as Harry smiled proudly at her for the several moments of courage she had shown. "True. I can't see either of us stepping away from leading, both Team Anvil and with pushing Evig Låga to grow past its old boundaries. Still, it might be interesting to try. Far into the future."

"Mmm, far into the future. I want to concentrate on being a Huntress first." Tia actually let her hand drop again to let Harry see her little smile once more. "I will leave all that complicated leadership, logistics and business stuff to you. I will just concentrate on being the Harribel of the Arcs."

Harry pouted at her outrageously, and Tia laughed. From then on, the conversation shifted, leaving behind any serious talks about the future. They became just another young couple, talking about movies they wanted to see, laughing at what the public thought Huntsmen were like, and sharing laughs about their past training. Since most of that training had been with the pair of them together, the stories were well known to both, but that didn't make it any less fun.

Soon the meal was finished, and the two of them left arm in arm, with Tia leaning her head on Harry's shoulder, reveling in this new type of relationship they had entered. There was a closeness now beyond even what had been there before. The way Harry touched her was different, making Tia more aware of Harry as a man than she had been before with every look and touch.

Similarly, Harry found being around Tia like this utterly intoxicating. Although he had tried his hardest to leave the emotions and feelings he had begun to have towards his closest 'siblings' to the darkest depths of his mind, Harry could not deny that he had begun to react to Tia as a girl almost from the moment puberty hit. But with the revelation of his adoption, rather than pushing those thoughts away, Harry could revel in them. Could revel in Tia's body pressing against him, in staring into those blue eyes, in the thoughts and reactions her curves and those eyes evoked.

And yet, Harry kept control of himself. He only occasionally looked down into Tia's chest, and mostly kept his eyes on her own as they walked. Tia could not say the same. Her eyes wandered over his body several times, and more often than not rested on his lips as he talked. A certain amount of heat that she had rarely felt before was building within Tia, and parts of her Tia had rarely explored were beginning to yearn for things she had only read of before.

The two of them walked through the streets following a map Harry had downloaded to his scroll, eventually finding themselves outside the club Hei Days. There they found a large crowd

outside, with music blaring out from the open doors, which in turn were guarded by two bouncers dressed in black suits with red shirts.

Ignoring the crowd, Harry marched up to one of the bouncers, holding out a card to the scowling man. The man took it, and held it up to a reader which he plucked from his belt for a second.

Seeing this Tia cocked her head, and Harry shrugged. "I told you I took part in that online poll. Doing so gave me a reservation for tonight in case they were busy." He gestured to the crowd of people outside that they had just bypassed. "It looks as if it was a good idea."

"Too damn right. We're packed today, the bar, the restaurant area, even the dance floor's been packed at different points tonight." The bouncer muttered. His card reader beeped at him, and he stowed it on his belt, handing the printed tickets back, and going into a rote response he must have been drilled in by someone with a very large club. "Thank you for coming to Hei Days and taking part of our one-time promotional special. This has given you access to Hei Days but be warned that any drinks will still have to be paid for up front. There is no credit being offered. At the first purchase, your credit card will be scanned along with a photo ID, and if it or your photo ID come up as being false or declined, the owner reserves the right to kick you out promptly. Furthermore, if you are a Hunter or Huntress, or a Hunter or Huntress in training, and start any kind of violent action within the club, Vale law states that we will be able to sue you to pay back any damages. If someone else starts something with you, please contact one of our bouncers, the manager, who will be behind the bar, or one of our waiters, and we will deal with it."

"..." The two Arcs stared at the bouncer, then one another. A second later Tia began to clap, nodding her head sagely. "That must've taken a lot of work."

The bouncer grumbled that, but Harry's comment of, "It was also extremely precise. Almost enough to make me think that you've had trouble with Hunters in training before," made the man wince visibly.

"Yeah, very up close and personal kind of trouble," the man muttered, waving them inside, his eyes going down the twosome's body, not lingering on Tia's as many a man's had so far tonight, simply looking at her arms and Harry's. "Just don't start anything, okay?"

Harry nodded equably, took Tia's arm in his own, and entered the dance club, where the loud sounds of music, only hinted at outside, began to assault them almost immediately. Harry winced a little, before shaking his head and gesturing with a twitch of an eye back to the bouncer. "Is it just me, or did he sound almost pleading at the end there?"

Beside him, Tia paused, not listening to him at the moment, but rather trying to place the song. Her eyes were also locked onto the dance floor, where several dozen people could be seen dancing either in couples or clumps around the area. Well, dancing in a way, at least. Club

dancing was nothing that someone like Weiss would call real dancing. But it would let Tia be close to Harry, and that was all she cared about.

Instead of answering Harry, she pulled on his arm, easily tugging him forward down the steps and past the walkways which led to booths. These booths were the restaurant area of the club, and they encompassed the dance area on three sides, leading up to a second floor balcony area which also overlooked the dance floor in the center of the club. To one side of the second floor was the DJ, who for some reason had a head that looked taken from a mascot outfit, one of a bear. At the far end of the club, there were a few more tables and several bars, with one large bar and several smaller ones.

Laughing, Harry let Tia pull him along until they reached the dance floor, then pulled back just enough to set Tia off balance, then twirled her in place, until they were face-to-face again. Her eyes, those ocean blue eyes that Harry had seen practically every day of his new life, looked at him, and Harry's hands fell to her hips as he grinned at her. Tia smiled that small, oh so warm smile back at him, and the two of them began to dance, first facing one another, then with Tia's back to Harry, then with Harry shifting around her in a circle as jazz thumped in the background.

The two Arcs (one adopted) stayed out on the dance floor for four songs, getting a good sweat on. While Aura was good for a lot of things, and particularly for building up resistance, it was still extremely hot underneath the lights above in the club, and there were a lot of other sweaty bodies all around them.

As they danced, Tia had felt a few foreign hands touch her, and one man shout, "Hey babe, why don't you leave the loser, and come dance with me!" But ignored them all, slapping the hands away lightly so as to spin their owners around in place tossing them into other people, and completely ignoring the man who shouted at her, although Harry did not. Instead, he glared at the man keeping his eyes on the man like a gun turret for a song, before the man looked away hastily.

After the fifth song, the two of them started to move out of the crowd of dancers. The two of them sat down at the bar, where a large heavysset man with a glorious beard stared at them, his eyes narrowed suspiciously at Tia. "You wouldn't happen to have a sister who gets really pissed off if someone touches her hair, do you?"

Tia blinked at that, looking over at Harry, who shook his head as he spoke for her. "Nope. None of Tia's family members are that crazy about their hair."

He could feel Tia looking at him as he ordered a pair of waters, which caused the man to roll his eyes, but nod and turn around to grab two ice cold waters from behind him. As he turned away, Harry leaned in, whispering, "I couldn't say 'our' family, since we're here on a date, and given how we've been dancing, there is no way that knowing we're family would have ended well. So unless you want me to explain the whole adopted thing every time we turn around..."

At that, Tia nodded, and leaned her head against Harry's, before twisting quickly and bringing her lips to his. Harry kissed her back, and they only stopped when the large heavysset man coughed, pushing the ice cold waters against their cheeks. "I run a clean club here you too. Cool off. Unless, that is, you want to pay extra for one of the special rooms on the third floor?"

Tia pouted at that, but accepted the water, as Harry thanked the man politely while declining his offer. "We're not quite at that level of our relationship yet."

Again the man grunted, and moved down the bar, letting the two of them finish their waters. By the time they had, the crowd of dancers had slowly begun to break up a bit, and Harry grinned, hopping to his feet and holding out his hand to Tia. "Come on! It's time to show these guys how we really dance!"

Tia's eyes lit up, and she hopped off the stool after Harry, willingly letting Harry pull her along this time. All of the Arc children had been put through dance classes with their mother and father, both for its own sake and because dance was amazing for keeping fit. Harry had gone to several birthday parties and celebrations as Arturia or Tia or even violet and Saffron's plus one, because all of them knew he was a fantastic dancer.

The onlookers watched as these two unknowns danced across the floor, with Tia twirling around Harry then vice versa, and both of them moving in time with the music and one another. Among the onlookers were two young women, one dressed all in red, the other dressed all in white. Their outfits were a strange mix of Gothic Lolita, and those used by swing dancers. How wide the skirt flared came from swing, as did the flat boots. But everything else came from the Gothic Lolita school of fashion, complete with long gloves and a lot of lace.

The two of them were moving through the rest of the club, watching out for danger. But the two girls, twins for certain, found their eyes drawn to the twosome on the dance floor. Finally, the two girls couldn't stand it any longer. The red one looked over at the white one, who nodded her head, and both of them jumped upwards, flipping in midair, up and over the heads of many of the crowd, to land on the dance floor. There, they too began to dance, first with one another, then pushing into Harry and Tia's dance.

"Hey stud! You can't show off moves like that, and expect your little girlfriend here to hog you all to yourself you know?" the one in white said.

"Share the wealth, please?" The other one almost asked in a softer tone. "Do you know how few guys around here can really dance?"

"Not willing to share anymore," Tia said, shaking her head. "Dance time is okay, nothing else." After all, Tia reasoned, she already had to share Harry dance time with six other girls, and that was with their mother didn't want to join in. Say what you would about their father, but he had never been one to dance as much as lumber along to the music like a trained bear, as their mother had once put it.

The white-wearing girl blinked at that, then grinned. "Sounds like we got a deal."

The red-themed girl let herself get tossed through the air by Harry, to be caught by her sister, who twirled around with her, holding out their hands towards Tia, who did the same, then all three of them were around Harry, who took turns with each of them, rolling his eyes at Tia who shrugged her shoulders. "Like sharing you with the twins back home," she said by way of explanation.

Harry simply laughed at that, and wondered if the two girls, who might well be two of this club's bouncers, and perhaps two of the more dangerous ones, would like it if Tia considered them about as dangerous to his and Tia's relationship as two preteen girls who he still considered his sisters. *Best not to find out. One of these girls looks like trouble, and the other one looks like she's an easily offended sort.*

Four of them spent at least three more dances out on the floor, until a pause between songs and a change of DJs allowed the man with the magnificent beard to shout, "Come on you two, get back to work. You can't spend the entire night dancing."

"Oh yeah, watch us," the red-wearing girl taunted back, but she sighed as her sister pulled on her hand, and the two of them waved at Harry and Tia, who were more than willing to take another break by this point. Those kind of dances after all it took a lot more out of view than the regular sort.

"What do you think Tia, should we chance some alcohol, or some dessert of some kind?"

Tia cocked her head thoughtfully, then smiled, and held up two fingers, and Harry grinned, feeling his jaw and cheeks beginning to hurt from how much smiling he was doing tonight. "Both it is."

Soon enough, they were sitting at a booth, and to start Harry had ordered a beer for himself and a hard lemonade for Tia. It was one of their mother's favorite drinks when they went out once in a blue moon and Tia had never been allowed to try it. Harry, on the other hand, had snuck out one night with a few of the plantation workers to have some guys only type fun (it wasn't all it was cracked up to be, much to his chagrin) and had tried beers that night as well as several times since.

They also ordered a large ice cream sundae, complete with chocolate cherry and cookie dough bits, which were Tia's favorite. Harry was just thankful that she hadn't ordered the entire thing made out of cookie dough, and was willing to stick to hard lemonade rather than going right to rum or fruity concoctions, whose alcoholic content was quite a bit more than one might expect by their taste.

*Going out with Arturia is going to be expensive enough without having to pay for a lot of drinks for Tia and I tonight. I also honestly have no idea what kind of a drunk Tia would be, and have even less of a wish to find out,* Harry mused.

After recharging themselves and having been told it would take thirty minutes for their sundae to be ready, and with Tia proving that one hard lemonade was enough to get her just a tiny bit tipsy, the two of them were back out on the dance floor. There, they were quickly joined by both of the twins, who were eager for more dancing. At this point, it was a little past eleven, and a lot of the partiers had left, meaning that even though there were still quite a few people in the club, there was also still room on the dance floor for all four of them to get back into the swing of things.

Two songs later, just as Harry spotted a waiter coming out of the back with what looked like their sundae from a distance, a man in a bowler hat walked through the front door. He moved as if he owned the place, waving aside two of the men by the doorway, whistling cheerily as he smoked on a cigar, ignoring a sign nearby that politely asked people to not do so. He made his way down to the main floor of the club, looking around for a brief moment, seeming to sigh as he did not see his quarry.

The man then spotted the two Gothic Lolita girls. Hooking his cane onto one arm, he waved the hand holding his cigar grandly, as he walked onto the dance floor just as the song ended, patting himself on the back for his sense of perfect timing. "Melanie, Miltia! If it isn't my favorite checker-colored duo."

The girls, who had been about to race over and request a song from the DJ, paused, turning to glare at the man as one. Seeing this, Harry cocked his head thoughtfully to one side as well, frowning pensively while in his arms, having just been caught in a twirl, Tia hiccupped, blinking and trying to stare down at her mouth in surprise. This caused Harry to look away from the man and back down to her, where he smiled faintly. "Note to self, Tia is a lightweight," he teased. "I think we've found the one thing that your defense-oriented Aura can't help with."

Tia mumbled something, poking Harry in the chest, then letting her hands play out across his abs, a loud, "MMm~~..." Coming from her as she leaned heavily against his shoulder and pectoral, the sound causing Little Harry to twitch in Harry's pants for a second.

Meanwhile, unaware of the momentary scrutiny from Harry, Roman Torchwick made his way towards Melanie and Miltia.

Melanie growled, suddenly standing a bit taller, as long blades appeared from the bottom of her fee full of daggers. Beside her, claws came out from under Miltia's long, gothic-style gloves. "What do you want this time, Roman? To lead more of our boys to their death?"

"Now, now. That's an exaggeration. Their unconsciousness certainly, and incarceration, yes. Those I'll hold my hand up to. Although, seeing as I paid top dollar for that group, and they were barely fodder for an underage Huntress and a pre-Beacon student, I'm wondering if I should get a discount on my next order, or demand my money back." Roman's voice was light, but his face stern as he answered this, flicking his cigar out and blowing a whiff of smoke into Miltia's face,

who coughed, backing away. "Now, get the boss down here. Just because this place opened again, doesn't mean that he can shut down the rest of his businesses, you know."

Looking up from Tia, Harry saw the scowls on the twins faces, and decided to step in asking politely, "Is this man bothering you, girls? I have to say, his face is bothering me a little. It looks awfully familiar for some reason."

Roman frowned at that, shaking his head. "Listen Blue Knight, please don't make this any more difficult than you have to. I'm just here to conduct a business transaction I..." Roman paused as Tia turned away from Harry to stare at him. "Oh, hell! Not you!"

Tia although somewhat tipsy, was still able to recognize Roman from their run in on the night that she had met Ruby. "Roman Torchwick. Wanted criminal." Her eyes narrowed, and she slowly pushed away from Harry to one side, raising her fists. "He got away from me once."

The amount of anger and annoyance in Tia's voice at that had Harry scowling as he readied his 'Semblance'. "Well now, I suppose as a concerned citizen, I shouldn't let you go now that I've recognized you. Even if I will get in trouble for using my Semblance in public."

Harry's smirk disappeared as he felt something impact his back, nearly breaking through his aura with a single strike. He twisted around, stomping one foot on the ground causing a ripple to go through the dance floor. Behind them, there was the shattering of glass, and several dozen feet to one side, a small woman was flung off of her feet by the sudden reverberations in the ground. She righted herself instantly, looking at him thoughtfully, then down at her sword as she held it in front of her face as if it had personally betrayed her.

She wore what Harry would term a mix between a woman's work suit, and a dress, not that he was an expert. Her hair was multicolored, pink, white and brown, and her eyes were also two colors, pink and brown, somewhat matching her hair, as did the colors of the rest of her outfit. In one hand she held a long parasol, the end of which had sprouted a knife blade.

Tia growled, and suddenly, her arms began to be covered by Horrible Belle, her Grimm-like armor Semblance. That caused both Roman and the girl's eyes to widen, and Harry attacked. The ground obeyed his command, spikes flowing up from the dance floor towards both Roman and the unknown woman.

The woman disappeared again with the sound of tinkling glass, reappearing a moment later, but Harry was already turning, readying another batch of spells, while Roman had desperately dodged the first group of spikes sent his way. Mindful of the fact that there were a lot of civilians in the booths beyond the dance floor and even a few still on the dance floor, Harry kept the spikes blunted and made more use of hands and grasping maws. He also made certain to aim them only when he felt he had one of the two dead to rights, but their mobility flummoxed him.

When he saw both criminals dodge again, Harry grimaced, and decided to break out more of his tricks.

Meanwhile, Roman scowled angrily, smashing through one stone spike, cursing his luck as the girl he'd tangled with years ago charged towards Neo. *Her armor's going to shrug off anything Neo can do, although Neo should be able to run rings around her. As for this guy, some kind of ground transfiguration SemBFFUCCK!*

Just as Roman had smashed the last stone spike, Harry switched tactics, and a blinding light came from his hand as if he had been holding a flashbang. Both Roman and the rest of the people around him reeled, but somehow the woman with multi-color hair had realized something was happening. Between one second and the next, she had closed her eyes then opened them as she moved to close in once more, slowed by the reverberations going through the floor.

As she tried to jump up towards the ceiling, the criminal suddenly found Tia in her face. The girl attempted to dodge, but was still struck by one of Tia's punches, the darkly tanned Arc able to somehow predict where she would be, having noticed how she dodged using her Semblance before.

The woman flew through the air, landing against the far wall and bouncing off, disappearing with another crackling pieces of glass falling to the floor second later. Tia saw that, and likened the glass to Ruby's rose petals, which the speedster left behind when she used her Semblance. Then she felt a strike on her armor, and the girl appeared to one side before disappearing again, only to show up elsewhere, her parasol blocking a sudden spike of rock going towards a still-blinded Roman. Roman then twisted around, and the top of his cane came loose.

But before he could fire the missile hidden within his cudgel, Miltia shouted, "W, wait, stop it!" grabbing Harry's arm as she did, looking worried.

Melanie got between Tia and the girl, holding our hands in either direction. "Yeah! This place just reopened, there's no way we can let the four of you keep fighting here!"

"That's right!" Shouted a new voice, and Harry became aware that the bearded man had returned from wherever he had been. He was now carrying a large bazooka on one shoulder, and all around him the rest of the waiters and barman had seemingly pulled out large machete-like swords and handguns to go with them.

Tia groaned now, shaking her head. Her earlier buzz was gone, and she was remonstrating with herself. *I hadn't noticed how they were dressed when we entered dammit! I was too interested in dancing and kissing and everything else with Harry to remember the idiots that Roman had with him last time.*

"This is my place Roman! And I am not letting any of you wreck it. Whoever throws the next Semblance attack, punch, kick or whatever, my boys and I are going to screw up majorly!"



“Ah, there you are, Junior!” Roman stated, regaining his poise quickly. “I’ve been looking for you. If only your associates here could have simply told you I was here, this wouldn’t have happened.”

“It would have the moment my date here recognized you,” Harry drawled, looking around him for a moment, and realizing with a sinking feeling that while he and Tia could probably wreck this place and might even be able to win against these odds under normal circumstances, they wouldn’t be able to do so with the number of bystanders that were all over the place. *Not without someone dying in the crossfire.* To his astonishment very few people had actually ran for the exits when the violence began, and now were crawling out of the woodwork.

Most were simply looking on as if this was a normal event, a show put on for their viewing pleasure. A few were even pulling out their scrolls. *Which is the last thing I want.* Beacon was death on anyone starting trouble in Vale, regardless of the reasoning.

“...But my date and I will stand down,” Harry said, glaring over at Roman. “The two of us were here for a good time anyway, not to apprehend a thief who acts more like a flamboyant and somewhat idiotic bon vivant than an actual criminal.”

“Excuse me, I take offense to the word idiot. Bon vivant I will give you,” Roman said, bowing lightly towards Harry, thankful that things had simmered down. He’d been blind for a few seconds, and his aura had taken several strikes there before Neo had gotten into position to guard him. He was an experienced Huntsman, and knew that another few moments might well have put him down for the count despite his little tricks with Melodic Cudgel.

*The two of them seemed to be able to handle my little friend, which is not an easy thing to do. I’ll need to know more about these two. I thought that the blonde one was just a Beacon student with a monstrously strong but straight forward defensive Semblance of some time. But she might be something more. That Grimm armor is... weird. And how was she able to figure out where Neo was?*

*And what was with that guy’s semblance!? First, he manipulates the ground, then he summons up spikes, shields using the ground, and then nearly grabs both myself and Neo in stone hands? A Semblance that lets him manipulate the earth in so many different ways is beyond unusual.*

Despite his concerns on that point, Roman’s tone was affable, and he bowed grandly towards Harry as Junior strode towards them across the dance floor. “Still, it is always nice to meet someone who recognizes fashion when he sees it, and is willing to step down rather than cause still more trouble for the common folk around us.”

“That sounded so fake, if you were Tinocchio, your nose would have just gone through the wall and out the other side of Vale’s mountain range.” Snorting, Harry shook his head. “And I think all of our food tonight will be on you for the inconvenience.”

For his part, Junior was also contemplating events and scowling at how random events seemed to want to fuck him and his business in the ass. The last thing Junior wanted was the notorious criminal Roman Torchwick to be apprehended on his property. That would open up a lot of questions, the kind of questions shouted at a volume that his contacts with the police and with higher authority would probably not be willing or even able to squash.

Now, if the two Huntsman were able to apprehend Roman while away from his establishment, Junior would be fine with that. But letting them do so here would be bad for business. Just as bad for business as letting the fight continue and do even more damage to his club.

“That sounds like a good deal. In fact Roman, considering the amount of bribes I’m going to have to hand out tonight, I’m thinking all of the drinks and bribes should be on you,” Junior growled, keeping his tone low. “And now, do your thing. You know you love it, you attention whore.”

“Agreed, on all counts my finely bearded friend,” Roman said, waving his hands. “Ladies and gentlemen, drinks are on me tonight!” He declared loudly, turning and bowing grandly, pulling off his bowler hat and waving Melodic Cudgel in a circle in his other hand. “Food as well if you fancy it. I hear the ice cream here is amazing, though you might have to fight my young companion for it.”

While his companion barred her teeth in, that won a cheer from the crowd, the vast majority of whom decided this could not really be Roman Torchwick. It had to be some kind of stage play. A real thief wouldn’t just walk into a business establishment like this so brazenly, right?

Well, the actually law-abiding sorts among the crowd did anyway. Most of Hei Day’s regular clientele, which there were a significant number of tonight, were the not quite lawful sort, and so were more than happy to not have any more heat brought down on their favorite drinking or dancing establishment. They also weren’t so stupid as to get between Neo and the ice cream, so there were few orders of that valuable commodity made in the next few moments.

Completely sober by this point, Tia moved over to Harry, looping an arm around his waist and looking at him quizzically. Harry understood what she was asking, and he shook his head, a finger flicking out and down, as he began to use his ‘Semblance’ to repair the damage done to the floor. Luckily the fight hadn’t lasted long enough for much damage to be done to the walls or anything else that wasn’t connected to the ground.

During his repair efforts, Harry hit Roman with a tracking charm, whispering what he had done into Tia’s ear as he did. *It won’t last long, but maybe it will last for long enough...*

The two of them retreated to one of the booths, with Miltia following, thanking them for listening and looking at the two warily. Harry noted that and shook his head. “I’m not going to tell anyone I saw Roman here. I will however bank a favor for it, alright? I might ask your boss, I assume he’s some sort of gang member given how Roman wanted to talk to him, about some information sooner or later.”

*Shame, the man runs a great dance club. But I've ransacked the library at Beacon, and I'm no closer to finding out the source of Grimm, or the mind behind them. So maybe it's time to start working the legends, rumors and underworld stories side of things,* Harry thought, as Melanie and Miltia both scowled, but nodded. *And then there's Roman. He... really doesn't come off as a master criminal here, more a showman. And no proper criminal can be a showman like this and get away with it unless they're the Robin Hood type, and Torchwick isn't. But there's a mind under that bowler hat, so what's he planning? Or is he planning at all? Could the woman be the power behind the white-suit? Questions abound.*

Tia and Harry sat down as the twosome reported back to Junior, finding that someone had eaten half of the sundae they had ordered. Tia was quietly furious about that, glaring around the club for the culprit. But Harry kept his eyes on Roman, frowning for a bit before Tia got his attention by the simple expedient of stuffing a spoon of sundae into Harry's mouth. For the next ten minutes, Harry concentrated on Tia again, but a portion of his mind was on the tracking charm, which worked by basically pulling at a bit of his attention in the direction of the person being tracked every few seconds, the more distant the harder.

When the tracking charm began to pull at Harry's mind, he winked at Tia. "Time to do a bit of human hunting."

Tia blinked, finished the last spoon of sundae, and nodded. A Notice-me-not covered them quickly, and a few adroit dodges through the crowd had them by the door leading into the kitchen area. There, Harry hit them again with a Disillusion spell just in case, and the two of them slipped through the number of cooks and waiters there, following the tracking charm out the back of the club where he had gone carrying a folder of some kind under one arm, while his companion bounced along beside him. What it contained Harry didn't know, but it looked like a lot of papers.

Still covered by the pair of spells Harry and Tia leapt up onto the rooftops as Roman did the same, moving away rapidly from the club. However, between one rooftop and the next, he seemed to pause, then turned back to them, shimmering almost in midair as he held up a finger to his lips. Harry's eyes widened, and he and Tia watched as Roman came down on the other roof, the image shattering as he did so.

"Damn! That woman already had replaced him with an illusion at some point before I hit him with the tracking charm. And she was able to control the damn thing for that long? While covering her and the original Torchwick with another set of illusions? That...that is one scary Semblance."

"What now?" Tia asked, frowning a little.

"Now? Now we go back and keep on partying. It's only around twelve o'clock, and that guy did agree to pay for our drinks and everything for the rest of the night," Harry said with a sigh. *Well, we might not have caught Roman, but we did learn quite a bit. One, Roman isn't working on his*

*own. Two, he might not even be the one giving the orders, considering that woman is more dangerous than him. And three, said acquaintance has an illusion Semblance. And such things can be overcome if you plan for them well enough.*

Shaking his head at that, Harry pulled Tia into his arms, gave her a light kiss, and then turned, leading the way back to the club. "I am not letting that popinjay ruin our night, Tia. Come on."

**OOOOOOO**

"Well, while tonight didn't go as smoothly as I could have hoped, thanks to you my dear we were able to get away cleanly despite Lady Luck's attempt to do her business onto my head," Roman murmured, looking at his partner expectantly. "Did those two would-be heroes try to follow us like I thought?"

When the short murderhobo that was his best partner and friend nodded, Roman sighed theatrically, holding out his arm to her. "In that case, I owe you two gallons of ice cream before the night is too much older. Honestly, thinking I wouldn't know they'd follow us at the first opportunity. What are they teaching Huntsman these days? No finesse, no subtlety."

Neo smiled at that, rolling her eyes, before becoming serious, flashing Hush, her dagger, out of her parasol. She mimed stabbing twice and her blade bouncing off something, scowling.

"Yes, that one with the Earth Semblance had massive Aura reserves. Not certain about the girl. That armor is a bit..." Roman frowned, then pulled out another cigar, having lost his previous one during the fight. Lighting it he took a drag, still frowning. "It almost looked like Grimm armor. Very strange. I've never seen a Semblance like that. The Earth Semblance too has got to be an Aura guzzler, just like Glynda Greatbitch. But even so, those kids are a bit too overpowered, so much so I don't know if we would have won that fight even if Junior and his group stayed neutral. I don't like the fact that students like that and the Little Red gal are around."

Once more Neo mimed stabbing, this time at her eyes, and Roman shrugged. "Hmm... keep that in the back pocket for now, Neo. I think I want more information first. Not just those two, but any other 'students,'" he mimed parentheses around the word students, shaking his head. "Let me work some numbers, Neo. For now, keep hitting the small time Dust stores for now. I want to set up the big heist a month from now, and discover as much as I can about the Beacon students and any new Hunters or Huntresses in Vale. Twice bitten, thrice shy, right?"

Smiling, Neo nodded, then was suddenly holding the illusion of a spoon, and Roman chuckled, before leading her down the street. "I know just the place..."

**OOOOOOO**

Once covered with Harry's illusions once more, he and Tia reentered the club, and sat down where they had been before. A pair of Strawberry Daquiris followed, and the pair went back to dancing and drinking the night away. Melanie and Miltia came over and flirted with both of

them occasionally throughout the night, but got nowhere. Although to Harry's amusement, this didn't seem to surprise them or annoy the girls in any way. Rather, the twins had seemingly taken to flirting with them as simply a fun way to pass the time.

It was pushing two in the morning by the time they decided to call in a night. The bullhead back to Beacon had long since stopped running, and they would have to find a cab bullhead of some kind to take them back instead, or fly the slow 'Harry Semblance' way. Harry explained all this to Tia, who nodded.

But when Harry finished speaking, Tia leaned in, grabbed his head with both of her hands, and pulled him down into the most serious kiss of the night they'd had since arriving in Vale. As she pulled back, Tia slowly licked the underside of Harry's tongue as it tried to follow after hers in midair for a moment. When she had gotten her breath back, she murmured, "The nights not over yet."

### **Lime Start:**

Harry stared at her, somewhat dumbfounded, but he followed on as Tia tugged at his hand. The two of them soon found themselves back on the rooftops, but this time, Tia was taking them towards a special restaurant she had seen on the way to Hei Days. It had a rooftop seating area with soft chairs and umbrellas. The umbrellas were gone, taken indoors for the night, but the chairs were still there.

Wondering what Tia had planned, Harry followed after her, but decided to take charge a little bit when they reached the restaurant area. Pulling back on her arm, He hugged Tia to him, kissing her just as thoroughly as she had him. Tia mewled a little into his mouth, trying to take control of the kiss, but still unused to the feelings that kissing Harry like this evoked. She could feel her nipples harden, and her core getting wet under her dress. It was only when Harry had to pull back to breath that she started to move again.

Picking Harry up, Tia carried him protesting over to a chair, where she pushed him down and then climbed into his lap, kissing him again. Her eyes closed instantly and Harry dove in, his tongue invading Tia's mouth and she began to mewl once more. Now that she was there, though, Tia didn't really know where to go from here. She'd read a lot of books her mother and Violet had suggested to her over the past few days, but that didn't help her now that it came to it. She knew she wanted more, her body was literally throbbing with it, but how to go about getting that more eluded her.

Harry sensed her indecision, and slowly pulled back from the kiss, kissing down to her neck, where he laid gentle, light kisses and licks for a moment as he spoke. "How do you take off the top of your dress Tia?"

"Oh." Tia blinked, then nodded, wondering *It is that simple!? You just ask!? Why did the books go on and on about tearing shirts off or demanding gazes then!?* as she reached behind her. With Harry's help, the top of her skirt was quickly untied, falling behind and in front of her,

where she quickly pushed it down, letting Harry see her chest for the first time since they had been young teens.

In the light of the streetlights around them, Harry couldn't quite see as well as he would in daylight, but it was more than enough to pull a heartfelt "Gorgeous" out of him, causing Tia to blush, her dark skin darkening further under her blue eyes. But for once, those eyes could not compel Harry's attention.

Tia's chest was large, at least three sizes larger than Pyrrha's, possibly as large as Goodwitch's. They were also utterly perfect, drooping just a bit, looking soft and full despite how toned Tia was otherwise, much like her hips. Freed from their confines, they bounced and swayed as Tia shifted in Harry's lap. Each breast was capped by a light pink nipple which stood out sharply against Tia's skin. Each was the size a bit larger than a quarter, hard with Tia's arousal.

"M, may I?" Harry asked, looking up at Tia, suddenly remembering all the times he'd had to push dreams like this away, dreams of Tia's body, of being with her like this making him almost shy.

Tia however had never been shy in her life. Not about her body anyway. "MmMMmm!" she practically ordered, and Harry chuckled as he brought his hands up from where they had been resting on Tia's waist.

Hefting a breast in either hand, Harry whispered "perfect," as he began to play with them. Tia's moans showed him that her breasts were just as sensitive as Pyrrha's or perhaps a bit more so. When he flicked one of her nipples with a thumb Tia nearly lost it her waist humping against his causing Harry Junior to stand at painful attention. Harry had to take a moment to free his cock, which popped out of his pants and underwear quickly.

Staring down, Tia moaned again, bringing her hands down from where they had been on Harry's shoulders to start playing with his shaft. First she touched his sides with her fingers, then began to stroke it, humming in interest as she did before the sound broke off into another load mewl as Harry leaned down.

Taking a light pink nipple in his mouth Harry began to suck, working his tongue around it at the same time. He felt Tia twitch, but kept working on her nipple, both his hands working on Tia's other breast, one fondling her breast, the other flicking, tweaking and pulling at her nipple.

Tia had rarely gone into any form of self-exploration. She honestly hadn't seen the point until she found out that her and Harry could become involved in this way. Now that lack of experience came back to haunt her as Tia only lasted a few moments of this attention before she could feel something building up inside her. "H, Harry, I, something, something's coming, she hissed, one hand rising to cover her mouth, her psychological need to cover her mouth while speaking overcoming her self-control as that feeling within her built up. "AHHHHH!!!" she cried into her hand, actually squirting, ruining both her panties and the bottom portion of her dress – and Harry's pants – as she came.

Blinking in surprise, Harry pulled back, letting Tia's arousal slowly subside, simply exploring her chest once more, then her abs, shoulders, and armpits, causing her to giggle and swat his hands away. It took a while, but Tia came back to herself eventually, and realized quickly that Harry's shaft was still hard and throbbing, pressing into her now wet dress, which she had practically torn as she hiked it up her legs.

"Mmm..." reaching down, Tia began to push Harry's shaft harder against her wet skirt, humping her waist against it, an urge rising in her to push aside the final barriers between them, to sheathe Harry's length into her.

Seeing Tia's desire ratcheting higher, Harry remembered the girls' promise with Pyrrha and decided to take charge a little bit once more. "Tia, there's something I want to try. Would you mind?"

Cocking her head to one side, Tia nodded slowly, hopping that Harry meant the same thing her instincts were urging her toward. Unfortunately, instead of pulling her panties and skirt aside, Harry gently pushed Tia off his lap. He then switched positions with her, pushing his pants down as he did.

Tia blinked as she was able to see Harry's cock for the first time. It was a good bit larger than she had thought before, and thicker too. She watched as Harry guided it into her cleavage, thrusting up between her chest. The friction of this was unusual, but it felt good. Not as good as Harry playing with her breasts, but still good. Still, Tia wasn't willing to just let Harry do all the work. She pushed up against him pressing her breasts together as her hands moved to his rear, grabbing his butt and pulling him in.

"GUHH..." Now it was Harry's turn to make nearly mindless noises. *God damn!* Harry had felt Pyrrha's breasts before in similar circumstances, but even Pyrrha would admit Tia had far more up top than she did. And where Pyrrha's breasts were as soft as a stress ball wrapped in silk, Tia's skin was equally as soft, but her breasts were like pillows. Now that Tia was actively working them, it was like being trapped in a pillowy vise, and for several seconds Harry was afraid he would explode in an instant.

Giggling quietly, Tia continued her ministrations, moving her chest up and down Harry's shaft, watching his head disappear into her cleavage than reappear as if it was winking at her. "Cum, Harry. Cum."

Grunting, Harry held it in, then reached down and began to play with Tia's breasts again. The gasp she let loose at this caused Harry to smile, and she looked up at him. His fingers found her nipples, tweaking them before going back to fondling Tia's breasts as he breathed, "I love you, Tia."

"Love you too, Harry. Love you," Tia said, moving her breasts even faster around Harry's cock. "Love you!"

Not having fully calmed down from her first orgasm, it didn't take Tia long to begin to ascend to another. How long it took, neither knew, but eventually Harry hissed, "Tia, I'm coming!" At the same time, Tia cried out, a loud, wordless cry quickly muffled by Harry's lips. Once more, Tia squirted, further ruining her dress, while Harry's cum fired out, load after loa coating Tia's cleavage, bursting out both below and above, coating Tia's breasts liberally.

Gasping, Harry pulled away, his legs wobbly from the power of his orgasm. Tripping over his pants around his ankles, Harry might have fallen back onto his rear, but Tia grabbed him, pulling him into her, twisting around until they were both sitting on the chair side by side.

For several long minutes, Harry and Tia kissed languidly, hands and fingers gently exploring, not trying to arouse any longer but familiarize. Eventually, it fell to Harry to remember the rest of the world existed, and after a moment, Harry stood up, pulling his pants back up. "Come on, Tia. It's late, and we need to head back. I'll call us a bullhead, and then get us cleaned up a bit."

"MMm... none of the books mentioned how sticky things can get. Sweaty, yes, sticky no. I wonder why?" Tia mused as she looked down at her club dress. "And it had best be more than a bit of cleaning."

### **End Lime**

To both Tia and Harry's surprise, they found that someone was up waiting for them despite it being nearly four in the morning. Arturia had stopped by sometime after the two of them had left, and she and Pyrrha were at opposite sides of the sofa, a large bucket of popcorn and the remnants of a pizza between them, while on the TV that Weiss had bought as payment for eating Harry's food some old movie played.

"Well, what time do you two think this is for you to be coming home, Hmmm?" Arturia asked haughtily, so much so even Harry couldn't tell if she was joking or not. Regardless, he moved towards her, leaning down and giving her a kiss while Tia slumped to the floor by Pyrrha's feet leaning her head against Pyrrha's hip, causing the girl to laugh and start to play with Tia's hair.

"Mmm... you know Harry, you seem to be getting into this whole dating three girls thing quite well. My expectations for our date are rising," Arturia murmured as Harry pulled back.

"Heh, I look forward to seeing if I can live up to your expectations. Although I didn't expect to see you tonight, or you awake waiting for us, Pyrrha," Harry said, moving over to give Pyrrha a similar kiss.

Smiling happily, Pyrrha kissed back, one hand still ruffling through Tia's hair beside her knee almost automatically. "Well, Arturia and I wanted to clear the air a bit, and then she decided to stay here after Nora joined Team RWBY in a sleep over. Arturia has amazing taste in romance movies! I was never allowed to watch the genre much as my parents said it was a waste of time, but the movies Arturia had on her scroll are grand. After that..." Pyrrha frowned a bit then, having seen the time showing on the clock. "Oh dear, I didn't realize we'd been up that long.



Getting up tomorrow is going to be quite annoying. I think I'm going to put my foot down and say no more dates like this one on school nights."

"Agreed, but what happened to Ren," Harry asked quizzically.

"Oh yes!" Pyrrha shook her head, stretched her arms and gently tapped Tia's head, indicating she was going to move, standing up as she answered. "I was going to say that Nora came back halfway through Arturia and my second movie and raced off with Ren tied up in his blanket for some reason. Neither of them has returned since."

"...I'm going to make a command decision here and now that we need to limit how much time Yang, Ruby and Nora can spend together. That way lies chaos, and Blake and Weiss can only do so much to control it," Harry announced,, bowing his head in prayer and hoping for the soul of his only male friend.

Not that he was in any rush to discover what horror Ren was being subjected to at an all-girls sleepover with Nora running things. *Papa Arc did not raise a fool, nope...*

"Well, I suppose Nora won't hurt him too badly." *Emotionally scar him, that's a different story.* "But if you're here so late, Arturia, does that mean you're spending the night again?"

"I had begun to plan to do so after the second movie ended and you two had yet to show up," Arturia said once more in her haughty manner. "Now that you have finally remembered that there is school tomorrow, I think it is time we all head to bed, yes?"

"Agreed." With another round of kisses, Harry left the girls there, heading up to his own room. Pyrrha, Arturia and Tia stayed in the main sitting area, with Pyrrha following Harry up for a moment to return with two of the school's slim mattresses. Harry stole a few kisses during this, but eventually succumbed to the need for his own bed, falling asleep as two sets of giggles below announced that Tia's interrogation had begun. *Yes... I think we can make this work,* He thought, with a smile as he fell into a dreamless sleep.

**OOOOOO**

In a small hideaway that was part of a smuggler's den on the shores of Mantle, a seemingly young woman of around twenty frowned as her scroll went off. Her breath coming out in a plume of fog, she turned to her two companions, gesturing them over. Her scroll number was not very well known, and if any of the people who knew it was contacting her right now, that was not a good sign. When she pulled it out however, her eyes narrowed dangerously as she saw who was on the line. "You know you can't just contact me out of the blue like this, Candle. This had better be important."

"Depends, really. Would the presence of the Dark Queen in Vale matter to you, Queen?" Roman Torchwick, who had rolled his eyes hard enough to almost cause himself injury when being given the codename Candle, asked of his current employer/scary bitch boss.

Cinder scowled, while her two companions both took the news in their own way. The green-haired, dark-skinner girl flinched, while the gray-haired young man looked mildly intrigued. "What do you mean the Dark queen is in Vale? Surely there are as many demands for her attention elsewhere. Does she know something somehow?"

"I don't know. All I know is I ran into... some troublesome Beacon Students. And while the Semblance and IDs of Beacon students are impossible to access, I was able to find out Arturia Arc is living in Vale relatively easily. Now, I don't mean to tell you your business, but I for sure am not going to try to fight that gal for you. Neo might be able to get a drop on her, but how many times would she need to in order to get through the Dark Queen's Aura? I've no way of knowing."

Roman allowed his face to harden, knowing that the lord bitch almighty wouldn't like this. "Ice Cream would just need to be unlucky once against that gal. And I am not risking either of us in any kind of operation that might run afoul of her. And since the latest news I've received is she's going to be patrolling the city randomly, that's almost a given."

Biting her lip, the woman on the other end of the call held back the words she wanted to shout at the irritating little man. *He's got a point, damn it. Even I wouldn't want to fight the Dark Queen. Like Goodwitch or Ozpin, I would need the Maiden's full power to fight such as her. But fighting her isn't the only option.*

"Very well. I will send Jade to you while I keep Metal with me. We're nearly done here, then from here we're going to collect some paperwork. But I can send Jade ahead on her own now. Between them, she and Ice Cream should be able to at least guide Arturia away, if not deal with her entirely."

"... that could work. But I'm going to stop my crime spree until Jade arrives. I've already had two close calls, I am not going to dance a jig naked on a copper roof and dare Lady Luck to do her worst, Chimney" Roman warned.

"As... graphic, as ever, Candle," the woman codenamed Chimney drawled. "Please keep any mention of your nakedness to yourself from now on. That should be something you should be used to."

With that she clicked the scroll off, looking at her two companions. "You heard?"

"I heard, but I don't like it," the man grumbled. "That bitch Neo is too damn slippery. Sending Emerald there might make sense when we're talking about the Dark Queen, but we can't forget Roman and Neo aren't exactly trustworthy."

"So says the mercenary," Emerald scoffed. "Still, Mercury has a point, Cinder."

"True. But... I wonder... a Huntress as good as Arturia could be said to be a strategic target all on her own. Even her well-known pro-Faunus status could be used against her if we're careful." Cinder thought for a few moments, then nodded. "Make your travel plans, Emerald. I will

forward you the money so you can travel first class, if you wish. Mercury, keep working on our mission here. We might need to change the plan around a bit, but we need to keep laying the groundwork regardless.”

OOOOOO

The date with Arturia was next, and occurred that Friday. Arturia picked up Harry this time, dressed to the nines in a cocktail dress that fell off one muscular if undeniably feminine shoulder. The dress fell to her ankles, but hugged her figure all the way down, even if at the waste the slinky thing became, well slinky, letting Arturia walk unencumbered.

Arturia smiled at seeing Harry ready to go, wearing a good suit, black pants, white shirt and dark blue jacket. He wore a cravat, adding a bit of an old-fashioned culture to the look. “Harry. I knew you would clean up very well indeed, but seeing you do it for my sake makes the sight even better.”

“Well, I could spout on about how gorgeous you are, but I think that actions speak louder than words, Arturia.” He then held out a rose to her, one that he had very obviously used his Semblance on to make it both yellow and red, the yellow fading into the red in a way it looked like the whole flower was on fire. Harry stepped forward and gently tucked the rose behind one of Arturia’s ears, where she would normally be wearing the iron tiara that was part of her Huntress outfit. Leaning in, he whispered, “You make that rose pale in comparison, Ria.”

Arturia blushed, practically melting in place for a moment. It was all she could do to not just push Harry back into Team ANVL’s townhome, kick out Pyrrha and the rest and spend the entire night cuddling and other things with Harry hearing him being so sweet, so romantic towards her after having tried to suppress, ignore and avoid thinking about Harry in those terms. *And failing. Oh yes, failing badly. Still, that’s all over now. No more repression for me, or for Harry.* “Thank you, love.”

Harry twitched at the use of that term, but after a deep breath he smiled tenderly at her kissing her forehead gently. “Shall we go?”

Looking past Harry Arturia caught Pyrrha watching them. The two champions stared at one another, then Pyrrha smiled, and if this was a tad bit strained, Arturia reckoned that was because of their rivalry rather than Pyrrha feeling jealous. “Have fun you two, and don’t do anything I wouldn’t do.”

*Or haven’t done,* was the unspoken caveat there, and Harry and Arturia both heard it. While Arturia’s eyes narrowed, Harry nodded firmly, moved over to his ‘official’ girlfriend, and gave her a kiss before asking her to make certain that Nora remained on punishment detail for what she and Team RWBY had done to Ren. “They really went too far. There are just some lines a man should not be forced to cross.”

“I know,” Pyrrha laughed, shaking her head as she remembered the look Ren had Thursday morning, and the guilty faces Blake and Weiss had worn. “I am just glad Goodwitch decided to not get involved once Yang and Nora deleted the photos. If they’d really been able to upload them, I’m afraid both of the girls would have been expelled... or used for shooting practice by Ren for the rest of the year.”

“Yeah. I’ll take Ren out and we’ll throw axes, practice with explosives or something else to get his man-energy back,” Harry announced, his lips twitching.

“Man energy,” Pyrrha and Arturia drawled, both of whom felt that kind of thing just sounded fun.

“Eh, it’s a work in progress. Either that or getting him so blind drunk he forgets his trauma,” Harry admitted.

At that, showing again an odd moment of synergy, both former tournament champions nodded. And after a moment, Pyrrha kissed Harry again, then pushed him towards the door, saying, “I’ll put on one of the Spruce Willis movies before calling Ren down here to watch it with me. And if she tries to come down and join us, I’ll force Nora to apologize again, or call Goodwitch to terrify her into obedience.”

“You might be better to ask Port to ‘take Nora under his wing’ as he puts it,” Arturia advised. “He’ll bore her into a compliant pile of mush, believe me. And without further ado we will see you later Pyrrha.”

Harry waved one more time before he walked out the door with Arturia. Pyrrha stared after them for a moment, then looked down at her everyday wear with a faint scowl. “Next time, Harry and I will find a way to do a ritzy type of date, drat it.” Promise made, Pyrrha sighed and turned back to the kitchen, grateful for the cooking lessons she’d been taking from Harry, Ren, and surprisingly Yang, who apparently had taken over the cooking her family the moment she was old enough to lift a pan. Because for the first time since moving into the townhome, Pyrrha would be on her own for a meal. “Alright, now, where is the rice...”

**OOOOOO**

Unlike Pyrrha, where Harry had suggested a romantic night out in the woods, or with Tia, where she had to do all the work after Tia expressed her desire to go dancing, Arturia was the one who had planned out their date from start to finish. This included the fact she had bought her own bullhead for personal use, a low-slung, sporty two-seater, the equivalent of a Porche made into a hover car.

Harry took one look at it sitting in Beacon’s landing area and declared, “The most foolishly impractical bullhead I’ve ever seen. I love it. And you do know I have my own bullhead license, righhht~~?”

Chortling, Arturia shook her head. "I do know that, my Harry, but I am afraid that I spent too much of my own hard-earned money on this little toy to let anyone drive it, not even you or our dear Tia." She paused, and resolutely looked away, not letting herself get caught in Harry's gaze. "And we are both too old for your puppy dog eyes to work on me."

"Heh, well, it was worth a try. Sorry to let a bit of machismo show, but it just feels off for the guy to be the one in the passenger seat," Harry snickered, looking around. *Thank goodness it's Friday night, and there aren't many people around. This would just look weird. I don't think we could get away with using the same excuse as I did with Tia.*

"Hah! Well, considering I was the one to plan this whole date out, I think you had best get used to following my lead, hmm?" So saying, Arturia climbed up into the bullhead, with Harry going over to the passenger side, the older girl gently removing her flower and placing it in a cup holder between the two seats. Moments later, the Ride of the Huntress, this worlds version of the Ride of the Valkyries but with guitars and electronic piano, boomed out, and the pair of them zoomed up into the sky and out towards Vale.

The ride was quiet, both simply enjoying being near one another, the background music, and the feel of the wind in their hair. Bullheads couldn't move quite as fast as planes back in Harry's old world, but it was still faster than a broomstick in a straight line. Soon enough the sporty bullhead was setting down onto a private landing area that was part of the apartment complex where Arturia was now living. "I wanted to show you my apartment first, and give you one of the spare keys. I've already given Tia one," Arturia said by way of explanation.

Harry nodded at that, but paused, plucking the rose out from the cup holder, recasting the color change charm on it. Because it was dead plant matter, the color change charm worked longer than it would on a living thing, but not as long as it would on something like stone or metal, so it was better safe than sorry. *I don't want the charm to fade on our date, after all.*

Moving around the bullhead, Harry touched Arturia's hand, halting her in place where she had already turned to lead the way to her apartment. Turning back, she was surprised when Harry put the rose back into her hair. "You seem to have misplaced your rose milady," he said mock-pompously. "Although you are fairer by far, pray keep the token of my affection upon thee?"

Biting her lip, Arturia nodded. "Good sir, I do apologize for my oversight. Pray take this as a token of my contrition." With that she leaned in, and they exchanged another kiss, with Harry enfolding the slightly shorter Arturia into her arms.

The kiss lasted for a while until they heard a cackle from a nearby elderly woman. "Ah, young love! Still, you two might want to take it someplace a bit more private, hmm?"

Blushing faintly, Arturia nodded, and quickly grabbed Harry's hand, leading him to her apartment, which was on the fourth floor of the eastern most apartment block. It had a great view of Vale Bay, but other than a king sized bed, it didn't have much furniture yet. Indeed, the only other things in the apartment were the appliances and two large stands on which Arturia's

Huntress outfits, her everyday wear and her outer armor resided. Along with Rhongomyniad resting between them were several dozen other weapons, mostly gun-shields of various types. Harry knew Arturia was still trying to find a proper gun-shield to give her a bit more of a long range punch that didn't require her Aura.

Still, Harry liked the layout and said so before Arturia handed him a spare key and then led the way back out to the bullhead. Taking to the streets, Arturia drove them to a high class restaurant called Le Petit Fromage, which had Harry shaking his head in amusement. Since Arturia had made a reservation, the two were soon sitting at a private booth in a corner, although the position did not stop the pair, or rather, Arturia, from drawing gazes from all around.

Not that Harry could say the looks weren't warranted. Arturia was a rare beauty, with her porcelain skin, arched neck, gorgeous face and body, to say nothing of the hypnotizing nature of her golden gaze. Still, no one commented loud enough for either to take notice of, and they were soon sitting down. There, the two began to talk about a few adventures they and Tia had while younger, with Arturia talking about some of them from her perspective.

Soon the appetizer and a bottle of wine arrived. Arturia sipped at it gently, then nodded haughtily, sending the sommelier on his way. Harry just looked at her, and she blushed. "Well, let's just say that I have developed some understanding of wine since I went to Beacon."

Snorting at that, Harry shook his head, and continued the conversation. The two had a great time just talking and joking, but as the date went on, Harry worked off one of his shoes and began to work it up and down Arturia's legs. She in turn flushed a bit, very visible on her porcelain skin, and began to do the same. At that point, Harry asked Arturia the same question he had previously posed to Tia: what was she looking for in their new relationship. Where did she see them going as a couple?

"Hmm... I suppose that is fair enough. As for our relationship, well, I want it to be a relationship: Companionship, cuddles, kisses, with the promise of more soon..." Arturia answered, her golden gaze becoming somehow sensual as her eyes narrowed slightly and her lips curved into a sensual smile.

This look sent Harry Junior to attention, and he licked his lips, his own eyes flaring with desire as he looked Arturia up and down, or at least as much as the table allowed. That look made Arturia very grateful she was wearing paddies over her nipples, even if she wasn't able to wear a bra in this dress. It took her a moment for Arturia to recover her train of thought and go on. "More seriously, Harry, in terms of a relationship, I have been looking for a man who is both able to stand beside me in battle and whose mind I can respect. Like yours."

She waited for Harry to downplay that to try to hide his pivotal role in Evig Låga's expansion, but Harry didn't cause her to blink in surprise. Catching this look, and being able to read Arturia almost as well as he could Tia, Harry supplied, "Heh, um, Pyrrha and I have been talking about

my thoughts for the future, and I, well, I can't really hide from the fact that a lot of what has been going on with Evig Låga came from me any longer. Trying to do so would simply be a waste of time."

Arturia watched Harry for a moment as he said Niko's name, frowning internally for a second before admitting defeat on that score. *They might not have said the words just yet, but it is very clear that Harry and Pyrrha are well on the road to loving one another. Which means I can no longer even consider that the pressure of Harry's relationship with Tia and myself will force them to break up. Which I am somewhat sad about, I will admit. I have nothing against Pyrrha as a person, but sharing my man even with Tia was not something I hoped to do. Still, it is far better than the alternative, that our fighting over Harry would simply drive him away from one or all of us.*

This was a very philosophical thought, and one that most who knew Arturia would probably gape at her for having in the first place. But Arturia had gone into the meeting with Harry and Tia knowing that Tia probably had feelings for her adopted twin, and thus had already begun to prepare herself mentally to share Harry's affection with her sister. This had... equally opened up Arturia to sharing with Pyrrha, especially once she knew that Pyrrha would be involved in Harry's life one way or another.

"It is good for you to acknowledge that, Harry. But to continue, I have always wanted a... a king to my queen, so to speak." She smiled thinly at the snort Harry let out at that. "Yes, I know that leans into my attitude and the nickname it has garnered me, but while I can lead, I need someone to advise me at need on many levels, and more importantly who can be... be soft and approachable in ways I know I am not. I know I come off as aloof, uncaring and even arrogant. I will not change who I am, but my man should be able to show those soft feelings for the both of us, but not be soft... if that makes sense?"

She ended on a questioning note, but Harry nodded at that. "I can see that, and you're right, I am far better at the people side of things than you. And I would never ask you to change on such a fundamental level. And..." he smiled at her, reaching across the table taking Arturia's hands in his own as he had done previously to Tia. "I would be more than happy to be king to your queen. In any way you want to take that..."

Arturia blushed, laughed and shifted the topic quickly, being uncomfortable with this topic suddenly. The two of them spent most of the night talking about Grimm and fighting of all things, but the atmosphere remained somehow flirtatious throughout thanks to the use of innuendo and the continued footsy going on underneath the table. It became more so when they turned the conversation to places Arturia had seen out in the Grimm Lands, areas that would be incredibly romantic and beautiful if not for the threat of the Grimm. Harry was impressed by how many different areas in Anima and Mantle Arturia had fought in, and came up with several new strategies and ideas for how to use his magic listening to her.

The pair of them finished their meal still flirting and talking about the Grimm Lands, and this time, as they got back into Arturia's bullhead, it was Harry who decided that the date wasn't quite done. He helped Arturia into her seat, causing her to smile at his gentlemanly attitude before her eyes widened as Harry leaned over, kissing her tenderly. Arturia's eyes closed and she kissed back, pushing up out of her chair, but Harry didn't try to open his mouth to deepen the kiss, simply pushing against her gently, his hand going down her back and into her hair, gently playing with her hair.

How long they kissed, Arturia didn't know, but eventually Harry pulled back, leaning his forehead against Arturia's. "So, it's Friday night, and we can both sleep in tomorrow... is there any reason why the date should end just yet?"

Arturia's golden eyes smoldered as she threaded her fingers through Harry's hair, pulling him into another kiss. This one was shorter, and she pushed him away quickly. "Get in the car, Harry."

They may or may not have broken several speeding laws as Arturia drove them back to her apartment. There, the two of them kissed several times as they moved from the parking zone to her apartment, but those were like candles to a flame to what happened when Arturia opened the door. Between one minute and the next Harry found himself pressed against the hallway wall so hard he heard something creak in the wall itself while Arturia kissed him hungrily, her mouth open, her tongue questing for Harry's.

Unlike Tia, Arturia had known she was somewhat attracted to Harry for years. She'd pushed it aside, fought it down as much as Harry had although for not quite as long. But she was also more experienced than Harry, having dated several boys (and even one slightly older Hunter) both before she consciously acknowledged that attraction and after. Whereas Tia's time with Harry had been more about exploration and finding out just as much about herself as about Harry, Arturia knew what she wanted.

"Clothes off, now!" Arturia growled like a lioness, her golden eyes demanding as she pulled back, reaching behind her to her dress.

But just as she did, her scroll rang. "*\*Bring\*, \*Bring!\**"

Gulping Harry pressed himself into the wall as best he could as the most murderous look Harry had ever seen crossed Arturia's face. But despite her desire to commit murder and continue where they had left off, she was a professional Huntress. If someone was calling her this late, it might well be an emergency, and Harry could see her self control take over. *Oh, I pray whoever is on the other end of this call has a real emergency, for their sake.*

"Yes!?" Arturia snarled.

"Miss Arc, I'm calling for the Vale council. A Terrordactyl has been sighted in the air near the Vale Mountains. A bullhead from Vacuo has already gone missing along with two personal



bullheads which were out past the defenses for some reason, and a convoy from Vacuo is due tomorrow morning early. We need you to either kill it or chase it off," a male voice came. "We've assembled a team, but they lack striking power and leadership, so..."

"Thus you called me. Very well, Send me the coordinates for the rally point, and I will be on my way in five minutes." Arturia's voice was no entirely professional, but her face told the real story as she looked at Harry, her face wan and about as close to crying as Harry had ever seen.

She hung up, sighed, and looked at Harry soulfully. "Harry, I'm sorry but..."

"I know. Duty calls. We wouldn't be who we are if either of us were the sort to ignore it's call." Harry shrugged. "I can't say I'm happy about it, but we can always make more time for one another some other time." He then smiled wickedly. "But for now, let me help you into your Huntress outfit..."

Arturia turned up at the rally point a few minutes late. But everyone there took one look at the Dark Queen's red face and angry gaze and decided not to comment on this.

**OOOOOO**

Alas, Harry's hopes on making more time for another date with Arturia was quite harshly dashed over the next few days. Not only was she away the rest of the weekend, but schoolwork and Huntress work took the teens' time once Monday hit with a vengeance. There was after all only so much time they could set aside for their relationship, and Arturia needed to take on several jobs in a row to make up at least a portion of the money she had spent on her apartment and bullhead. Then too, Glynda was once more available to push Weiss, Harry and Pyrrha with one-on-one lessons Wednesday. Combined with tests in both Peach's and Oobleck's classes, and Olive's becoming much harder in general, Harry had no real time for major dates. Lunch and dinner type dates became the norm, with Arturia stopping by twice a week.

What little free time beyond meals Harry had he put toward team training, getting to know Nora and Ren better, and helping the other freshman team leaders. He even began to help the sophomore team leaders occasionally on group tactics and terrain-based strategies. Regardless of his unusual relationship, Harry couldn't let himself drift away from his teammates.

Although, this didn't mean those two weeks were without drama. On the semi-comedic side of things, Ren finally forgave Nora for The Night That Shall Never Be Mentioned, while Team RWBY were also let off the hook for the same event after appropriate kowtowing from the ring leaders and were welcome once more at Harry and Ren's table. Pyrrha dealt with an online stalker, three companies trying to claim they had prior agreements to use her face, and Arturia, Tia, and Harry had a... special call from home.

Considering the time difference, the call came around nine local time and it was just their parents this time, although at first Guld was so silent he might have been a statue, which didn't have anything to do with it being past midnight back in Evig Låga. Because it turned out that

while she was happy her two daughters hadn't fallen out with one another over their adopted brother, that was a far cry from approving of their relationship.

"While I know that polyamorous relationships are not all that unusual in Anima, Vacuo and even Vale, I just do not see this as something that can be sustained long term," Hazel began, staring through the scroll's cameras at her three romantically entangled children.

That was the way she would always see Harry regardless of anything else, one of her children. Even if he was currently dating two of the girls she physically gave birth to. *This is also going to be confusing as heck and just plain weird to keep thinking about. Ugh. Why couldn't Arturia at least have moved on? Tia... even as her mother I don't know what makes that girl tick. So perhaps the best thing would have been for her to stay an occasionally cute asexual introvert... No Hazel, don't think like that, your kids do need to grow up. But being together like this? Really?*

"Actually, I've been most pleased by how this has all worked out so far. Pyrrha has been an interesting mix of accommodating and territorial, and by this point I am pleased to call her a friend. Tia and Pyrrha both have understood that my schedule is so chaotic that anytime I can make to be with Harry in a romantic sense should take priority. I... also have learned to compromise at times, as difficult as that has been," Arturia finished looking away from the knowing gazes of family members and paramour alike.

"Hmm..." Tia hummed, looking over at Harry, nuzzling into his shoulder as Pyrrha chuckled from his other side. Arturia was in her bullhead at present, flying back from another job. But she had been able to put down for this conversation, or so she claimed. Harry wouldn't put it past her to be able to fly and take part in a conversation via video scroll at the same time.

"What Tia means to say is that for the two of us, it's been just another step in our relationship." Harry shrugged, looking a little bemused for a moment. "We were always close, this has just... made us closer. I can't say that there haven't been awkward moments of... mental dissonance I guess, where my old mental instincts get in the way of things, but it's worked out pretty well. Don't let Arturia fool you though, there have been a few thorny arguments about how to spend our time occasionally. Or do I need to remind you how you and Pyrrha nearly trashed the sitting room arguing about whether we should stay in and watch a movie with Ren and Nora, or go out try to get to that fancy bar you wanted to go to."

Arturia huffed while Pyrrha looked away guiltily, before adding her own thoughts into the conversation. "But, but really that was something of a minor event despite the, um, histrionics. I can't say this kind of relationship is the kind of thing that I would ever have seen myself being a part of before this, but I am happy with the amount of time I've gotten with Harry. And having another friend in Arturia has been grand."

“Two weeks isn’t long enough to tell you if you can make your relationship work,” Hazel protested. “And while polyamorous couples aren’t unusual, one entirely made of Huntsmen like yours is. And there’s a very good reason for that, one you all should be aware of.”

The four youngsters fell silent, and although that wasn’t unusual for Tia, the other three were more introspective. They did understand what Hazel was talking about, although none had made the connection not how it would impact their relationship.

Aura didn’t just protect a Hunter or Huntress from physical damage. Connecting to one’s Aura meant an individual had awakened their deepest selves, their souls. It made them far more passionate, more emotional. It was part of why those with Aura attracted Grimm more. But it could also make what should be small arguments or at least arguments based on logic and talking things through turn into fights, shouting, and a lot of hurt feelings. It was also part of why most societies on Remnant frowned on having non-Huntsmen having their Aura activated.

*That’s honestly part of why I appreciate having Ren on our team so much. Nora’s... Nora, and without someone like Ren around to calm things down, I don’t know if even Pyrrha’s even keel attitude would be enough to keep the peace if someone like Weiss, Arden or Thomas were on the team. Arden and Thomas were two other freshmen, both of whom were known to be a bit hot tempered.*

“We understand that mother, but, you must understand, this is something we all have decided on. Pyrrha isn’t willing to give up on Harry or vice versa. As for Harry and I, well, once you told me the fruit I had thought forbidden was not, I could not stop myself even if I tried.”

“Don’t care. I’m with Harry. That’s enough,” Tia announced firmly.

“Ugh...” Hazel scowled, but then sighed and shook her head. “If I had any of you three, you’re fine Pyrrha dear, I hope you and Harry keep making one another happy, I would shake you until some sense entered those noggins of yours! Ugh. Not only is this going to be extremely strange from the family’s perspective, but if it gets out, there will be a lot of questions, scrutiny and rumors abounding that can wreck our family’s reputation. I hope you all realize that.”

Arturia and Harry both winced while Tia was her typical uncaring self. While it would possibly not matter much to those within Evig Låga once the reality of Harry’s adoption came out, outside of their hometown, well, there was a reason why some reporters had brought up the fact Harry was adopted in the first place. Other Huntsmen clans would have major issues with it, and the public of Mistral would no doubt be against them. Especially if someone tried to make it seem like he was ‘sexually enslaving’, cheating, or otherwise using Pyrrha. Harry might well face a lynch mob in that case.

“We... we understand that, yes. But we cannot make decisions of our personal lives by trying to satisfy the public,” Arturia answered firmly, although honestly it hadn’t really occurred to her until well after she and Harry had gotten together.

"I am not without my own means of combating those rumors or even fight against such things in the court of public opinion," Pyrrha added, drawing eyes to her. She smiled somewhat wanly. "I will be more than willing to enter the arena for keeping people from judging us by our relationship."

Hazel stared hard at the redhead, then watched as Tia reached across Harry and squeezed her hand, while Harry put an arm around her shoulder. She also looked at Arturia's face, before sighing. "I can't stop you. I was worried about something like this long before we told you about Harry's adoption, so in a way we, Guld and I..." she mock-glared at her silent husband who made a warding gesture with both hands, "are as much to blame if this does hurt our family's public reputation. But with everything going on with Evig Låga and our expansion it had to be mentioned."

She then glared at Harry. "Fine. You treat my girls and Pyrrha right, or you'll answer to me, son." She paused, and waited as Harry, Guld, Pyrrha and Arturia both laughed in various ways before going on. "Just all of you remember to talk things out and don't go for your weapons, and you might make it work."

Sensing that his wife was finished (for now, when she had the quartet physically in front of her, Guld knew she would have other things to say) Guld cleared his throat, and changed the subject. "Well, now that the personal is over with, let's switch to the professional."

Everyone nodded, and Guld manipulated the scroll on their end for a bit before a map jumped onto the screen, taking up half the screen. "So, we have had Rasputin continuing his efforts in the Grimm Lands between Evig Låga and Breitenfeld. We also have expanded our farms around the town as much as we can now. We're to the point where we need to start really clearing land so..."

"So defensive emplacements need to be put up now, in the territory we're looking to expand into," Harry mused, staring at the map, pensively scratching his chin. "The two towers nearest the mine look good, I can see why the one nearest Evig Låga is there, that looks like a really good defensive position with how the river twists there, and with my Semblance, there's not going to be a problem with the foundation. But the two in the middle..."

Guld nodded, and he, Arturia and Harry began to dominate the discussion while the others interjected only when it turned to what kind of weapons the guards in those hard points should have and training. Surprising both the Arc parents, Pyrrha also had some suggestions about ways to keep people with Aura in hand. She had spent a lot more time immersed completely in the Gladiator sub-society of Mistral than Arturia and knew both the written rules and unwritten social mores that the gladiators followed both among themselves and while out around normal people.

Harry and Guld argued vociferously about the need for more anti-air cover, while Arturia was equally adamant that the first story of the towers not have access points. "It's a simple enough

concept. The majority of Grimm cannot climb. If they have to make ramparts of their own bodies, Grimm will have a far more difficult time of things. The Grimm horde we faced at Breitenfeld didn't reach the walls, but even if they had, the lack of natural weaknesses would have slowed them down. And recall Grimm do not leave corpses behind. There is a reason why Vale's natural defenses or Vacuo's Wall of Stone and Iron has worked so well.

Vacuo the city was protected by a rise of natural stone reinforced by slabs of iron that Harry would liken to that found on a battleship back in his old world. That, and guns. Lots of guns, both automated like those found scattered throughout Vale's mountain ranges and manned. That, the fact most Grimm needed water just like other more natural beings had helped to protect Vacuo the city for decades even as Vacuo the nation remained a three-way fight between the elements, Grimm and humanity.

But the problem, as always when expanding into the Grimm lands, would be the sheer number of Grimm they would have to deal with. While construction was going on that meant Hunters, several teams of them on guard duty or making extermination circuits around the area in question. The river Grimm would also need to be dealt with.

To that end, it fell to Arturia to recommend a team. "Team Raisin, despite their strange name, will get the job done. Especially in terms of wiping out the river Grimm that would otherwise continue to be an issue. After that, we'll have to set nets down into the rivers to keep further Grimm from moving in, and even in the future when we are well established, roving patrols will probably be a necessity."

"We already had thought of that, but the major point will be that we'll need to set up defensive positions quickly, both the towers and the surrounding defenses. Which means, Harry, that you're going to be very busy when you return," Guld pointed out dryly.

"True. But I already knew what I was going to be signed up for there. Beyond that, I would really like us to expand our knowledge out beyond the area that we're looking to actually defend. One thing that the city states have done right is create a system where Huntsmen go out and cull Grimm before they can become a threat. Doesn't always work, but I think it's a good idea overall. Heck, without Arturia's warning, the battle around Brighton felt would have been much worse."

"Ah... Long term missions out in the Grimm lands are not easy," Arturia winced shaking her head. "I would not trust Raisin or even a few of the other teams I respect for their professionalism to that kind of thing. Extermination missions once we have a target yes, but scouting is a very different kettle of fish. I know for fact I would've never been able to perform that mission if I hadn't gone to Beacon, and unfortunately, acing Professor Peach's senior class is not mandatory for graduation."

Guld and Hazel exchanged a glance, then the married pair shrugged. “We can do it. We aren’t scout specialists, but we can at least push back out to that area where you ran into the Dreadwolf, Arturia. Then make a loop around the territory we’re thinking of expanding into.”

“Remember, we need to secure supply lines to every defensive position as it goes up,” Hazel warned. “That might be just as difficult as anything else we’re doing.”

“True, but the foundation of that logistics trail is in place already, and once we have the manpower shortage dealt with, I think we’ll be able to start the expansion quicker than you might think.” Harry hummed, looking down at the notes Pyrrha had written out.

She was a much faster writer than he was, and far neater too, reminding him strongly somewhat of Hermione, and he sent her a warm smile before turning his attention back to his parents. “I think that covers most of the business end too. So unless we want to turn the conversation back to the familial stuff, I think we can cut off here so us poor students can get some sleep. Unless anyone else has anything they want to bring up now?”

Guld frowned pensively, his hand coming up to rub his jaw in a manner that told Pyrrha that was where Harry got that thoughtful expression from. “You mentioned once that you had a classmate who was a Schnee?” When even Arturia joined in the nodding at that, he went on. “I don’t want to make any trouble between you and her, but if you could subtly ask her at some point why someone in the Schnee Dust Company has begun to hike up prices to Evig Låga I would appreciate it. It isn’t at a level where most individual civilians would notice, but since we’re a buying certain types of Dust in bulk, and paying for it in Fire Dust, it’s noticeable when we’re not getting a proper quid pro quo.”

As he went on, the Arc patriarch’s face head slowly hardened, reminding Harry once more that his father held views, ones that he fully agreed with, about proper business practices, how a company had to treat its employees. “I think we all know how underhanded they might become if they think we’re going to start cutting into their monopoly on Dust. So if a quiet word with your acquaintance would help, it might be a good idea.”

Harry winced and exchanged glances with Pyrrha and Tia. “I do not believe that Weiss has anything to do with her family’s company, or any influence with them. We can ask, but you might need to start using official channels. After all, monopolies are supposed to be against the law in Mistral, aren’t they?” Mistral Law was often the only law many of the other communities throughout Anima could agree to. “And certainly Mistral would not like it if the Atlas-based Schnee Dust Company was throwing its weight around like that.”

“I think you underestimate how much power that company really has. But we will at least try official channels if it gets worse,” Guld announced. “And now, yes, I think we are done for the night, kids.”

Arturia smiled thinly. “Excellent. Trust me, you three will need a good nights rest.”

Tia sat up from where she had been nuzzling into Harry's side, staring into the pickup at her sister. Harry's face closed down, and Pyrrha giggled uncomfortably. "Oh dear, that sounds quite ominous."

"It was meant to be. Professor Ozpin and Glynda believe that your entire class is getting a little too big for their britches, particularly considering the issues with Team Garnet, and someone from the Winchester clan, which should have served as a reality check?" Arturia shrugged unconcerned, dismissing the other clan of mixed Huntsmen and businesspeople with an airy wave of her hand as if they were no fit topic of conversation, which to her, they were. "Anyway, the Remembrance is coming up, and your whole grade is going to take part."

The three students all frowned in confusion at that, but Arturia simply shook her head, as Guld and Hazel grew serious, nodding their heads firmly. "She's right. If that's the case, then you will need your sleep tonight. It will be the last you get for a few days"

"Oh, now you're just piling still more ominous onto ominous," Pyrrha quipped, shaking her head. She quickly stood up, waved good night to the two Arc elders, and left the family to their good nights. She wanted a few moments extra to make certain that Milo was in working order.

**OOOOOO**

The next day at around nine o'clock, the entirety of the freshman class as well as two senior teams, two junior teams, and two sophomore teams were called into the auditorium. There, they found Professor Oobleck, Professor Goodwitch and Arturia standing beside Professor Ozpin.

Tia led Team GART over towards Harry and his team, with team RWBY quickly following, and the other teams from the freshman class moving in his direction.

From where he stood on the stage Ozpin noticed this, reflecting that Harry had a certain magnetism to him, which had begun to come to the fore after the events that had led to Cardin's expulsion and the shakeup on Team GART. It was somewhat surprising to see a single team becoming the center of an entire grade like that.

*I anticipated something of the sort, but I had thought that it would be Ruby who would be the center. But while Ruby's tactical ability, and, to take a page from Arturia's words, her ability to inspire is magnificent, Harry seems to be something of a more natural leader. All the better to eventually convince him to join the circle. Perhaps after this mission I will call him in for another talk.*

*Yes, I will have Glynda and Bartholomew there to observe. Hopefully, Harry will finally stop holding back enough for me to call him out on the fact that he is using magic rather than a simple Semblance. Despite researching it whenever I could, I still have no idea where an Arc could acquire magic from, and that, and the attack on Autumn is enough to deeply concern me.*

When the last of the students were within the auditorium Ozpin waited, patiently staring out across the crowd, letting his presence and silence suck away all the noise inside conversations. It accomplished this quickly, and then he tapped his cane lightly on the platform below, the noise echoing through the now silent auditorium.

“To be Huntsmen, we must always be striving forward. To learn and to grow. To build on what has come before. Part of that is knowing history, knowing the mistakes of our fellow man. Today, all of you have been chosen to remember such a mistake the only way Huntsmen like us can. You freshmen will note that among you are teams from the upper grades. Each of your teams will be assigned to a larger group, a combat company under one of our professors or our young visitor. I doubt she needs any introduction.”

Ozpin did not smile as he went on. Rather, his face remained locked in a serious mien. “But should any of you think to question her authority... Don’t. This is no place for children and their egos, you left those at the door when you became beacon students.”

Arturia smiled grimly, crossing her arms in front of her chest, her dark armor gleaming dully in the light from the auditoriums roof, but she said nothing, simply staring out across the younger (if not by much in the case of the senior teams) crowd, watching as those who did not already know her learned of them from those that did. *And I am very glad that Ozpin allowed me to choose my own combat company for this. It will be fascinating to see if any of the other team leaders are of any kind of quality beyond Harry or young Ruby.*

The pint-sized reaper had impressed Arturia over the past two weeks with her knowledge of weapons craft and tactics, the last being somewhat of an intuitive thing for the young girl in a way that made Arturia a little jealous. She’d always had to work on that kind of thing, so to see a much younger girl grasping it quickly was a bit of a wrench. Not that she ever allowed that to color her interactions with the short girl, who, much like Weiss, had taken to treating Arturia as if she was an idol on par with Pyrrha and her so- young called Invincible Girl status.

“Team leaders, your scrolls should be going off any moment now. When they do, congregate with your assigned company. You will then board the bullheads assigned to you, and be on your way. Any further information will be given to you by your company commanders.” With that, Ozpin nodded at them all, turned, and walked off of the stage.”

Looking down at his scroll, Harry nodded, holding it up for both his team and team RWBY and team GART to see. “Command Black.”

Shockingly, both Ruby and Garnet also were in command black, an organizational moment of serendipity that Harry knew he had his older sister to thank for. It was very obvious that she had pulled some strings here to make certain that the teens she knew (and loved in the case of at least two of them) would be under her personal eyes for this Remembrance, whatever that meant. However, as he looked around, Harry saw this meant that they wouldn’t be going into



battle with two senior teams, rather only one senior team, one junior team, and two sophomore teams.

“So you’re Harry Arc? I’ve been hearing some rumors about you and your skills. Now I’m wondering if that’s all they are and you need the Dark Queen around to wipe your ass for you,” One of the other team leaders, a junior that Harry had never interacted with before, snarked.

Before Harry could come up with an appropriate response, the senior team leader growled out, “You have a death wish or something!? Whether not either of the younger Arcs are any good, they’re still the Dark Queen’s family, and that means she will come down on you like a piece of the moon if you taunt them in her presence like that! Besides, the Dark Queen isn’t the sort to wipe anyone’s ass. She’s too busy kicking them.”

“True. She certainly handed me my head several times when we were younger,” Harry said, while Tia just stared back at the first team leader who had first spoken, crossing her arms under her chest, something that Harry tried hard not to notice. With their new relationship, Harry was having even more difficulty than he had before to avoid noticing how damn sexy Tia was, just like Pyrrha, if in a very different way.

That was as far as anyone got before Arturia strode down to them, Rhongomyniad raised and whirling in a manner that said they should form up on her. She led the way outside, where Harry quickly saw one of the other teams was already being shimmied towards the waiting bullheads, while a second ‘company’ were being given com beads of the sort that Harry had been looking into buying for his own team. They had finally arrived the week before, and Harry had enthusiastically put them to work, greatly helping their team coordination.

“Now, while the other teams are busy at the other stages, we will be establishing the command structure of the company. I am obviously in command, my name is Arturia Arc. If you do not know me, speak to those who do. I have neither the time nor patience to explain why I am trusted in the command position.” Arturia let her golden gaze flick around the group in front of her, before pointing to the Senior team leader. “Your name is Timothy Crystal correct? You are my second in command.”

*I would very much prefer Harry to be my second in command, but I understand that he needs more formal experience before other people will allow that,* Arturia grumbled. Her grumbling was only half because as her second in command, Harry would have been sitting up front in the lead Bullhead with her. Arturia was still extremely sore about how their date had ended so abruptly two weeks back. “Our junior officers will be Harry Arc, and Coco Chanel.”

Garnet nor the other freshman team with them objected, although the junior team leader scowled a bit, and raised his hand, before being shut down by Arturia glaring at him. “Yes, I know Harry Arc does not have the experience, but this is not favoritism. His semblance lends itself to a command position in a way that yours, which I believe is listed as long stride, does not, Mr. Oglevalo (Mirror).”

“What is it then?” The other sophomore team leader said, scowling a bit as he also thought that putting Harry in command of his team as well as the junior team in a pinch would be asking for too much of a freshman.

In Beacon, the majority of the grades rarely interacted with one another outside of the cafeteria, and even then, they kept to themselves. There was no push by the professors to have the grades intermingle, and precious few of the students ever tried to network outside of their grades.

“I have an earth manipulation Semblance. It allows me to manipulate both the ground and anything directly connected to it that can be termed as nonliving material,” Harry answered crisply, showing no signs that he cared one way or another about anyone’s opinions.

“Damn... okay I can see that now. In a cityscape, that kind of Semblance is going to be worth your weight in gold Arc,” the junior answered in shock, nodding his head.

Once everyone on Company Black had com beads and they’d been tested and could both hear and talk into them, Arturia led the way to their assigned bullheads, two large transport types. The school had twelve such, although three of them were on near constant duties elsewhere in Vale, and one was always going back and forth with foodstuffs and other supplies. Now each makeshift company was being assigned two of them, although Harry noted that the one company that had already lifted off was waiting for the rest of them. *So we’re all going to the same location?*

Soon, Company Black was in the air, and Arturia from her position at the front, crossed her legs, leaned back, and began to explain through the coms, staring out ahead of them through the cockpit. “While I am certain that some of you from Vale know what we are about to do, I also know that there are many of you from outside the city state who might not. Tell me, does anyone want to explain about Mountain Glenn?”

With a start, Coco realized that she was the only team leader from Vale itself, and it fell to her to explain a portion of the city state’s dirty past. “You will probably all know at least one instance of some community or even one of the major city states trying to expand their borders. Mountain Glenn was Vale’s. It was about two hundred, maybe two hundred and twenty years ago if you’re counting the time spent building it, when Vale tried to enlarge its borders past the mountains.”

Monstrously high with deep snow year round along with ice and few paths that even Grimm could move through, the mountains of Vale were a natural defense. Even Grimm evolved on mountains were unable to move in that terrain. They also couldn’t tunnel through. Most of the mountains around Vale were pure granite, with lots of metal scattered through them.

“Surveyors found a large defensible valley inland, and the counselors of the time were of the opinion that they could safely remove the Grimm from within the valley, and set up a defensive zone around it much like Vale itself has. And to avoid the intervening distance and aerial Grimm

getting in the way, they decided to build a massive underground railroad to handle the logistics of the new city linking it back to Vale.”

“However, after construction it turned out the Surveyors hadn’t mapped everything as they had said. There were several dozen small entrances and ways around or over the mountains there that hadn’t been discovered in the initial planning of the area.”

“Oh, I don’t like where this is going,” Timothy murmured from beside Arturia.

“Yeah. You get it. Grimm attacks began to increase over time, to the point that it wasn’t all that unusual to have one every week. People began to feel scared, frightened, and either moved back to Vale, or worse, stayed where they were, bringing down more Grimm on themselves. The Huntsmen at the time did their best, and more than two thirds of Vales Huntsman were stationed within Mountain Glenn.”

“It wasn’t a good way to live for certain, and a lot of the Huntsmen demanded the city evacuate. But there were tens of thousands of people already there, and evacuating them was just not going to happen. Then, someone thought up the bright idea of maybe expanding the underground railroad network to include underground bunkers for the people in times of trouble.”

“Wait, that makes no sense. Why not build the bunkers within the city itself, as defensive points of nothing else,” Harry interjected.

“It was thought that being closer to the final evacuation point, the railroad back to Vale, was a good idea. And you have to remember, only Huntsman can fight Grimm. Grimm cause fear in normal people who don’t have Aura and it is the very unusual individual who doesn’t have aura who can stand to fight them,” Coco explained.

Harry bit back a retort on that point, letting Coco continue to its inevitable conclusion. “But in enlarging one of the sections of the underground railroad to serve as a bunker, they opened up a subterranean cavern full of Grimm. Of course, the fear that the workman felt brought in still more Grimm from outside. Attacked from both below and all around, Mountain Glenn... Well you get the picture. It wasn’t quick, and it wasn’t without some major heroism on the part of this Huntsman or that Huntress, but with the railroad tunnels full of Grimm, Vale decided it couldn’t keep pouring bad money down the drain.”

Coco sighed. “They blew the tunnels on their end, and the people left in Mountain Glenn were either evacuated by air, or died where they were. Far too many of them did that second thing. It led to the Council at the time being completely replaced, and a few of them even lynched by mobs. But it was too late for the people of Mountain Glenn. Or many of the Hunters and Huntresses who had been stationed there.”

“It was one of the worst disasters in Vale’s history, and is why we have the Remembrance. Every six years, teams of Beacon students are sent into the city of Mountain Glenn to clear it of

Grimm for the day when the last bullhead lifted from the city, and the city itself fell silent. For that day and the next, we hold the city. We place flowers and other memory markers all around the city, to remind ourselves of the folly of hubris, and those who died there.”

Harry had a lot of questions at this point. Primarily, what the defenses of the city had looked like, how they had become overrun, and why no one had thought to awaken the civilians Aura so that some of them could fight alongside the Huntsman! But Harry understood the social stigma against that, and so bit his lip, staying silent for now. *It is safe to say that the push to awaken people’s Auras is just as important as my ability to create the defenses that our expanded country will need. I don’t like the fact that no one thought of it at the time, even in emergencies. But I’m not going to shout at Coco or Arturia about it right now. But I will for damn sure be looking at those defenses, and making certain that we can take whatever lessons they can give us.*

Sung-Sun had heard of a similar event in Vacuo’s history, and was able to shake off the shock and horror at the story quickly, asking politely, “Why every six years might I ask? Is there some significance to that?”

“Because it is well known that there were at least six Huntsman still alive in the city fighting to defend the last of the civilians when the last bullhead was ordered to lift off without them,” Arturia said coldly. “Civilian historians will say that all those that could be were evacuated, that the Council at the time was right to cease the evacuation efforts, even those by air. But we Huntsman know the truth, and know that they traded the lives of several thousand civilians for the bullheads that were being destroyed in the attempts. Remember that, gentlemen and ladies. By their very nature, politicians will always look to what they see as the bottom line, and often times that will differ with what you see.”

Arturia let that sink in for a moment before going on briskly. She explained that each company would be given a segment of the city to clear of Grimm, and then to hold against other Grimm who might attempt to move into the vacuum they created. “But there are some Grimm out there that we simply cannot fight. If those Grimm move into the city in large enough numbers, it will be up to the company commanders to decide what to do. This is not just an extermination mission. This is a reconnaissance mission as well. Before we start to destroy the Grimm, we need to know what kind of Grimm we are dealing with, what strength, and the general layout of the city. What has changed in six years? Are there any S-class Grimm around? Further, what type of Grimm we deal with will have a tremendous impact on the difficulty of our mission, remember that. We are first to explore, to reconnoiter, not just to slaughter them all. That will come in time.”

Again Arturia paused letting her orders sink in before finishing. “Now, talk amongst yourselves, get to know one another, or rest as need be. We will be there soon enough.”

With that, Arturia closed her eyes and leaned back, ignoring Timothy for the moment, wanting to get a few more hours rest before they arrived on sight. For some reason, she had a feeling that this was going to be interesting, in the traditional Asiatic meaning of the term.

### **End Chapter**

So this was the chapter of semi-awkward conversations. I feel that many of these conversations had to happen, and needed to happen soon. I also will admit that while some of it might be awkward or rehashing things, that is always the way with emotional conversations, especially as Harry, Tia and Arturia have this new dynamic working between them. Regardless, this will be the last chapter that is romance centered. From here on, the plot will begin moving much faster, while the romance will still be there in the background. I hope you all enjoyed this despite it's slow speed.