

Jaune woke early the next morning and with nothing better to do, he went for a run. Just because he was in another kingdom didn't mean he shouldn't keep up with his usual routine, so after dressing up as if he were about to fight a blizzard, off he went. He charted a route using his scroll, a simple course that took him around several city blocks. The air was like ice, and any remaining cobwebs were blown away as he inhaled deeply, his breathing steady as he began, his body rapidly warming up.

He'd noticed the lack of traffic the night before but even in the morning, when people were rushing to work, the streets were not as busy as those in Vale. Jaune knew that Vale's population was the largest on Remnant, but it was startling to see the stark difference.

Atlas was a relatively new kingdom, as far as it went. Formed after the Great War, it broke away from Mantle before later bringing it back into the fold, this time as the ruling power. It wasn't until relatively recently that the city itself ascended into the skies, and everywhere he turned, Jaune saw that everything was pristine, orderly, and brand new. The roads were immaculate, the sidewalks were clean and free of litter, there was zero graffiti, and every store front looked as if it had only been built that very year. Coming from a rural area, it was unlike anything he had seen before, and so different from Vale.

He didn't dislike it – but there was something strange about it. Sanitized, almost. Every store looked the same, on the surface. The only difference was what was being showcased behind the glass, be it jewelry, clothes, electronics or food, and the sign that hung above. The private vehicles he saw were all the latest models, boasting similar shapes and colors. There was nothing unique to see, just variations of the same thing.

It lacked history. There were no old brick buildings that had seen the rise and fall of Kings, no green areas with trees as old as the kingdom itself, no individuality. Jaune couldn't even spot the differences wrought by culture, be it from different regions of the world or from faunus residents.

By the time he returned to the hotel, he was sweating up a storm, a large billow of steam rising from his overheated body. A long, hot shower followed, and then he studied the clothes that Weiss had arranged for him. After she'd left, he'd moved everything into the provided walk-in wardrobe. It was as big as a small room on its own, and it gave him plenty of space to try things on.

Winter was the one member of her family that Weiss spoke about with fondness, so he wished to give a good impression with her more than anyone. Selecting a pair of handsome gray trousers, he matched them with the black shoes she'd provided, and a white top of his own that he'd brought along. There was a suit jacket that matched the pants, so he also wore that on top, leaving it unbuttoned. Underneath everything, he made sure to wear thermals to keep himself from freezing.

Not too formal, but not too casual, either.

He was just in the process of combing his hair – a long, drawn out battle – when he heard someone knock on the door.

"Room service," a voice chimed as he hurried out into the living area.

Room service? He hadn't ordered anything.

When he opened the door, a young woman was waiting with the trolley.

"Good morning, sir," she greeted. "I've brought your breakfast for this morning."

"Good morning," he replied politely. "I'm sorry, I didn't order anything?"

She appeared confused. "Oh? But we got word from your wife that you would require a meal this morning. Mrs. Arc was very adamant. Do you wish for us to take this away?"

Jaune blinked.

His wife? Mrs. Arc?

His stomach growled, loud enough for the woman to hear. Jaune laughed awkwardly, rubbing the back of his neck before stepping back and opening the door wider.

“Well, thank you. I guess my wife knows best,” he said with good humor. The woman smiled and pushed the trolley inside before giving him a swift bow and leaving, the door closing with a soft click.

“My wife, huh,” he muttered, having a good idea who ordered him food. He shook his head.
“Very funny, Weiss.”

Jaune removed the silver cloche, revealing the dish underneath. It was a simple breakfast; two poached eggs with toast, a couple rashers of bacon, seasoned mushrooms fried in butter, and beans. It was accompanied by a small bowl of freshly prepared fruit; apple, orange, kiwi and pear, sliced into neat little portions, and a cup of steaming coffee.

A small note accompanied it.

Everything has been paid for in advance. Use as much of the room service as you want, there is no limit. Don't be shy. — W

She really was going all out for him.

Simple though it may be, it was delicious. He must have been hungrier than he thought, quickly devouring it, even the fruit, and the coffee was a nice pick me up to finish it all off. Just as he was polishing off the dregs, his scroll started ringing.

When he answered, Weiss' smug face appeared.

"Morning, Mrs. Arc," he said immediately.

Weiss snickered, eyes crinkling happily. "I wasn't too forward, was I?"

"I admit I was a little confused. I don't remember getting married. Can you remind me where we held the ceremony?"

She rolled her eyes playfully. "I thought it best that I don't use my real name. Remember what I said about eyes?"

Jaune nodded.

"Did you enjoy your meal?"

"It was very nice, thank you," he said. "It was just what I needed."

“Good. Meet my car out front. I’ll be waiting. Oh, and bring your sword.”

A different car than the one from the previous night waited for him. It was larger, an SUV, pitch black with tinted windows. The driver stepped out and opened the door for him, and he slid in the back next to Weiss after unclipping Crocea Mors from his belt.

She was dressed in her usual combat attire, though with a few extra layers. Most notably, her thick stockings.

“Hello,” he said, grinning.

“Hi,” she beamed. “Sleep well?”

“I slept like the dead.”

“We’re meeting Winter at Atlas Academy.”

That surprised him a little bit. “Why there?”

“General Ironwood is not only General of the Atlesian military. As I’m sure you are aware, he is also the Headmaster of Atlas Academy,” she explained as their car pulled out onto the road. “My sister works directly under him. Her rank is Specialist, and it is an advanced rank in our military reserved only for the best. Since the Huntsman academy here in Atlas works closely with the military, many of the higher ranked officers are based at the school, even during the holiday season. In fact, it is all but officially military high command.”

It didn't take them long to catch sight of the school. It was built upon the highest point on the floating island, the location placing it right in the middle of the city. It towered above everything else, a series of five, sleek towers with the central one being the tallest, the others of varying heights. Even in the early morning sunlight, Jaune could make out blue rings surrounding the towers up high, casting an odd glow on its surroundings. It had to be at least a thousand meters high but he wasn't sure, built from white and gray stone.

It was very impressive and imposing, as you would expect.

Weiss smiled, though it was wistful. "Quite the sight, is it not?"

"It is."

"I much prefer Beacon."

Jaune nodded. "I agree."

Much like the rest of the city, there was a lack of personality attached to it, no matter how grand it appeared. When they pulled up and rode the elevators up to the ground floor of the school, he got a closer look at the grounds. White paths led towards the entrance, the grass between pathways perfect – too perfect. Artificial. Around them were several landing pads, hosting a series of different aircraft. Jaune spotted the typical Bullhead, but there were other craft; attack vehicles and larger transports for squads much bigger than that of a Huntsman team.

The central tower was the main building, broad at the base with narrowing upper levels. As they approached the entrance, a woman stepped out to greet them at the top of the stairs, and at once, Jaune knew who she was.

There was no mistaking that white hair, nor those beautiful features. Like her younger sister, Winter Schnee was a vision of beauty, her facial features sharp, pointed, her icy blue eyes narrowed in focus. Hair pulled back in a tight bun, a long bang hung loose over the right side of her face, her skin like porcelain. She stood at attention, as straight as an arrow, her arms folded behind her back, her uniform denoting her position as a member of the military, though as Weiss had suggested, she was no ordinary soldier.

An attractive white frock coat sat atop a white collared under shirt and navy blue girdle, and a matching colored tie. Navy blue pants, gloves and boots completed the sharp look, with a Dust pouch around her waist, and a long, slender blade resting on her hip. It immediately reminded him of Myrtenaster, though without the revolving Dust chamber, and it was slightly curved rather than straight as a needle. It was much simpler in design, at least at first glance – the hilt sported a wide, crescent shaped guard to protect the hand, and if he wasn't mistaken, he thought he saw the hint of a trigger...

He was immediately reminded of Professor Goodwitch, for some reason. If she was anything at all like Goodwitch, she was not a woman to be trifled with.

"Winter," Weiss called out happily before sagging somewhat under her sister's stern look. "Sister – I have someone I would like to introduce to you."

Jaune felt the weight of her gaze settle on him, and he fought against the instinct to straighten up. He met her eyes steadily, and inclined his head politely.

"Winter, this is the leader of my Huntsman squad, Team JBWN – Jaune Arc. Jaune, this is my older sister, Specialist Winter Schnee."

"A pleasure to meet you, ma'am," he said at once when Weiss finished the introduction, taking note of how stiff her voice was. Weiss was nervous. He ascended the stairs until they were standing as equals, offering a hand. "Weiss has spoken well of you."

There was a long, suspended beat of silence – and then Winter clasped his hand firmly, giving it a stern shake.

“Jaune Arc – I thank you for taking an interest in my sister,” she said as Weiss joined them at the top of the stairs, Winter turning to observe her for a moment, a slight softening of her features bleeding away some of her harsh beauty, and replacing it with the same radiance Weiss often effortlessly wielded. “She has spoken much of you, and I must admit that I found myself intrigued. It is not often that she levies such praise on someone. It made me curious.”

“Winter,” Weiss hissed, embarrassed.

“Truth be told, I was not sure how my sister would fare, so far from home,” she continued, ignoring Weiss’ embarrassment. “But I am pleased to see that she has made a friend she considers so highly.”

“She has been nothing but an amazing teammate the entire time I’ve known her,” Jaune said truthfully. There had been bumps in the road, sure – but that didn’t mean Weiss had not been brilliant. “My duty as team leader has been made much easier with her presence, and her contribution has been felt by all of us.”

“Jaune,” Weiss grumbled, squirming. “Cut it out.”

Winter released his hand, a slow smile forming on her face.

“That gladdens my heart,” she gestured the pair of them onward. “Please, since you have come all this way – let me show you around. Tell me, Jaune – have you ever been to Atlas before?”

“No, ma’am. Before the start of the school year, I hadn’t been more than twenty miles from my home town.”

Winter escorted them inside. The entrance hall was deserted, which was to be expected. School was not currently in session, so only military personnel were present on site, and the staff that maintained the upkeep of such a large building.

The halls were long and cold, white and gray walls with dark gray pillars. The floor was polished stone, marked with the crest of the academy at regular intervals. Lighting was provided by blue lamps on the walls, designed into the shape of old fashioned torches housed in sconce.

He was shown to a grand hall where the students would gather for official announcements. Large, towering windows allowed the light of the sun to spread across the floor, giving the room a much lighter look. Between each window was a massive pillar, the stone surface of each sculpted into depictions of ancient battles against the Grimm. It was the first such sight he had seen since arriving, of something that hinted at the history of this cold land, and not the current, sanitized present.

After the grand hall came the student barracks, hundreds of rooms designed for optimizing space rather than comfort. They used bunk beds built into the walls to save space, and each had simple bathrooms attached.

The last area on the ground floor were the training facilities, and these were the very pinnacle of the technology Atlas had to offer. Jaune didn’t expect them to be in use, but he was surprised to find that many of the rooms were occupied. At first glance, the rooms did not appear that special – until he saw the floor shift, and large blocks of Hard-Light Dust form to create various terrain. The possibilities were endless.

“Impressive, is it not?” Winter probed. “This allows for our students – and even our soldiers – to prepare for any and all terrain they may encounter in the field, ensuring that they are never taken unaware.”

He even saw they had climate control to simulate different temperatures, hot or cold, humid or dry. In one such room, a woman with olive skin zapped around at extreme speeds, reminding Jaune of Ruby. Lightning sparked off her skin whenever she moved, the air crackling as she blazed a trail around and over each obstacle.

“She’s fast,” Weiss complimented.

Jaune thought they would move on but instead, Winter entered the room, prompting them to follow. The woman inside continued her extreme movements for several more seconds before spotting them, coming to a staggered stop.

“Specialist Schnee,” she exclaimed, her eyes darting across Weiss and Jaune before returning to Winter. “What are you doing here?”

She had a very unique look, her brown hair shaved short around the sides, and left longer on top, the front even longer and died platinum blonde; a type of mohawk. Too old to be a student, she wore a white double-breasted vest with silver buttons and blue accents, a dark blue short sleeve under shirt, a red tie and white shorts. Her toned arms were encased in what appeared to be armor at first glance, but were some sort of robotic exosuit arms. Jaune had never seen anything like it.

“Sister, Jaune – this is Specialist Harriet Bree, a member of the Ace Operatives, a specially formed team of the Specialist branch. Harriet, this is my younger sister, Weiss Schnee, and her squad leader, Jaune Arc.”

Weiss dropped into a perfect curtsy.

“A pleasure to meet one of my sister’s work colleagues.”

“Ma’am,” Jaune inclined his head.

“Uh – hey...” Harriet said awkwardly, tilting her head in confusion.

“I am showing them around for the day,” Winter informed her. “And thought that if you are not too busy, you would be open to training with them for a short while.”

So this is why Weiss told him to bring his sword. He wasn’t exactly dressed for battle, though.

“I shall like to see how much my sister has improved,” Winter continued. Weiss didn’t appear surprised at all. “It has been too long since I have overseen her training.”

“Sure, I don’t mind,” Harriet grinned, seemingly growing in stature as she eyed them both up. “A couple of trainees, huh? Where are they studying?”

“Beacon.”

“Oh? This should be fun,” Harriet clapped her hands together. “Right – two-on-one? We have to make it a little fair, don’t we?”

Jaune saw Weiss’ face tighten slightly.

"I assure you, we are more than up to the task individually," she said coolly.

"Yeah, well – that'll be for me to decide, won't it?" Harriet replied, dismissive. "The Ace-Ops are the best of the best, so that means I'm the best of the best, got it? No little snot nosed trainee is going to get the best of me, I don't care who your sister is."

She was goading them, and Weiss took the bait, unclipping Myrtenaster and giving it a flourish, her expression cold.

"You will regret looking down on us," she said. "Do not mistake our lack of experience for a lack of skill."

Winter remained silent, examining her sister critically.

"So how about it, tall and silent?" Harriet directed at him. "Got a problem with what I'm saying?"

Jaune shrugged. "If you wish to fight us both, I have no problems with it. It only works in our favor."

"You seem pretty confident," she eyed him up before focusing on his weapon, still hanging on his hip.

"I am. Weiss is an amazing combatant. Do not underestimate her."

“And you?” she pressed.

Jaune unclipped Crocea Mors, attaching it to his arm before deploying the shield. Harriet blinked, not expecting it, and even Winter seemed interested as he unsheathed his blade with a rasp of steel.

“I’m okay,” he quipped, feeling the stirrings of competition.

Weiss scoffed. “He is *more* than okay. Don’t let his modesty fool you. He is humble to a fault.”

“I don’t think so.”

Weiss hmph’ed. “Of course you wouldn’t.”

“What does that mean?”

“That you wouldn’t *think*.”

“Hey, that’s a little unfair.”

“I apologize, you are right,” Weiss said, not sounding it. “You do think – you just ignore those thoughts.”

The two Specialists watched the by-play between them with contrasting expressions, Harriet becoming annoyed while Winter's lips twisted into a ghost of a smile.

"Are you two ignoring me?" Harriet demanded.

"Of course not," Weiss said.

"We wouldn't dream of it," Jaune added.

Harriet frowned. "You two are annoying."

Winter made room for them. Harriet retreated several paces, shaking out her limbs while Weiss took up position slightly behind him, to the left.

"This isn't going to be easy," Weiss said quietly, loud enough so only he could hear. "I have never beaten my sister, I have not even come close – and if these other Specialists are as good as she is..."

Then they were in for one hell of a fight.

The room then shifted, Hard-Light Dust altering the landscape. Imitation spires erupted from the ground, changing the elevation of where they stood. Harriet rose up high, and towering walls sprung up around them, creating a maze of fake terrain.

Jaune tensed.

“We can’t be separated,” he said. “If we stick together, we have a chance.”

“You may begin,” Winter called out, her voice crisp like the crack of a whip – and Harriet blurred, thunder booming as lightning sprung from her body.

If possible, she was faster than what they’d witnessed before, coming upon them like the fury of the heavens. The ground at their feet exploded with yellow light, Weiss’ glyph springing to life moments before impact. Jaune moved, raising his arm, his semblance blooming thick and fast. Harriet’s fist slammed into the face of his shield, and it sounded like the end of the world. There was a roar in the air as a shockwave blasted outward from the center of impact, the air wavering from the force, and Jaune felt the recoil roll through his body. His amplified strength shuddered but held, his feet sliding back against the floor a few inches if that, and Harriet’s wide eyes stared at him as her aura flashed brightly, taking damage from the recoil of her own attack.

In that brief moment of shock, Weiss moved. Myrtenaster lanced out over his shoulder, the point thrust at Harriet’s face. It was no more than a flash of silver, Weiss’ speed enhanced by her haste glyph, but Harriet was all about speed, rocketing back in a burst of lightning.

Jaune lowered his stance as Weiss vaulted over him, her Dust chamber rotating to red. Fire spewed from her weapon as she pulled the trigger, bathing the area in roaring flame. It forced Harriet to dodge, and she came at them from the side, a blink of an eye was all it took. She wasn’t just as fast as Ruby – she was *faster*, and it took all of Jaune’s focus to track her, once again raising his shield.

Her fist pistoned into the surface, a loud scream as steel on steel grated horribly. Another shockwave buffeted the area, but this time, she was not surprised by his sturdy defence. She was gone by the time he readied his sword, this time coming at them from their other side,

attacking Weiss from behind. A black glyph formed, tanking the blow but shattering under the force, but it slowed Harriet enough for Jaune to meet her, Crocea Mors lashing out.

She parried with her robotic arms, sparks flying as Jaune amplified his strength even more. He saw her face twitch, her arm shaking from the glancing blow, and then he was upon her. His sword moved swiftly in a well practised dance, his form flowing as he went on the offensive. She tried to dash away but Weiss stabbed her blade into the ground, Dust chamber spinning to blue. Ice erupted from the ground around them, razor sharp, deadly, creating a makeshift arena within the one already formed by the Hard-Light Dust.

She was trapped in there with them.

So long as she didn't go straight up!

Weiss anticipated her move, a black glyph appearing overhead. Harriet flipped and kicked off it, accelerating at them, and Jaune was forced to defend once again, tanking her punch on the face of his shield.

"Jaune," Weiss shouted and he acted without thought, deflecting Harriet away and moving, a powerful gust of pressurized air blasting through. Harriet was tossed back, carried through the air, but she flipped over, feet first into the razor ice before kicking off again, the spires cracking as she vanished.

It was a game of cat and mouse, in a sense. Jaune and Weiss moved together, both hastened by the haste glyph. Harriet was like smoke, avoiding their slashes and thrusts, countering with piston-like strikes that Jaune did his best to defend against. His shield shuddered with every punch, and he felt the negative effects of his semblance begin to creep up as she continued to evade the edge of his sword.

Calm down, he thought, thinking of the times he'd been able to manage his frustration. Remove ego, focus only on protecting himself, protecting Weiss. His emotions mellowed, but he felt the continued pressure in the back of his mind, bubbling.

"Now *this* is what I call training," Harriet cried out in delight, a feral smile stretching her lips wide. She came at him again, but this time, she lashed out with her leg, sweeping low. Jaune grunted as her leg slammed into his, aura protecting him, but the pain momentarily blinded him. Her rising uppercut caught the edge of his shield, blowing open his guard, and it left him exposed.

Harriet had to abort her attack, though, when Weiss' rapier flashed in, attempting to skewer her through the throat. Weiss engaged her as Jaune recovered, her form perfect, though her speed could not keep up. Harriet quickly overwhelmed her, a punch landing, clipping her shoulder. Weiss cried out as she spun, and Harriet's follow up kick sent her flying.

Gathering his aura, he breathed deeply, centering himself. Stepping forward, he brought his blade low, across his body, the point directed at the ground before launching himself forward. Exhaling, he slashed upwards in a reverse strike, aura exploding from his sword effortlessly in a powerful aura slash.

Thanks to his reforged blade, it was much more powerful than he could manage before, with the older Crocea Mors. Golden light rushed at her, and Harriet dodged at the last moment, his aura slicing cleanly through the wall of ice behind her.

"Woah!" Harriet said as he met her in a flurry of steel, her arms whistling as they blocked each sword stroke. "That was close!"

"Not close enough," he grunted, planting his foot and kicking out. Again, she moved, stepping in behind him, his back exposed. Channeling his semblance, he concentrated entirely on his aura's defensive properties as she slammed a fist into his back, a bright flash erupting as he took the brunt of her power. She cried out in alarm as he spun, suddenly airborne, using the momentum from her forceful punch, and slashed at her face.

She leaned back as quickly as she could but Crocea Mors found her jaw, her head rocking to the side from the force. Pain filled her expression as she was launched away, aura shuddering, though she recovered before he could take advantage. Cartwheeling, she exploded into motion.

“That hurt!” she roared, and Jaune braced himself as they clashed.

Her fists were nothing more than flashes of steel, pounding into his shield in a blistering combo. Every time he attempted to counter, she parried and continued the onslaught. He tried to create space but she followed him relentlessly, and he had to keep his semblance up or she would break through.

She was applying the pressure, and Jaune felt as if he were being held over an open flame. She brought the heat!

He caught a flash in the corner of his eye, and he ducked wildly. Her fist missed his head by less than an inch, his hair ruffled, and then Harriet swore loudly as a block of ice slammed into her from behind. Several more followed, Harriet pelted with ice, but after the first couple, she began meeting them with her fists. They shattered against her knuckles into millions of shards.

Weiss’ face was twisted in annoyance.

There was a brief stand off, the tension rising – but before any of them could move to re-engage, Winter’s voice cut through it like a knife.

“That’s enough.”

For a moment, it looked like Harriet was going to disregard the call to stand down – but then she sagged, straightening up with her hands planted on her hips.

“We were only just getting started!” she whined, sounding a little like a child being denied their favorite toy.

A massive glyph appeared under their feet, stretching the entire width of the arena Weiss had crafted with her ice. It spun, turning as red as flame, and the ice melted rapidly as a refreshing warmth buffeted them from below. It felt like standing in front of a fireplace, comforting, the heat seeping deep into his body.

The Hard-Light Dust blocks shifted back into the floor, leaving the room flat and spotless. Weiss was still on guard, her rapier held steady in front of her body, but as her sister approached, she gradually relaxed.

“You guys are pretty good,” Harriet praised, and there was a new found respect in her eyes. “There aren’t many trainees here at Atlas that could hang with a member of the Ace-Ops – even two-on-one.”

Her speed had made her an absolute monster to deal with. Speed equaled power, and some of her punches had felt like Yang or Nora pounding away at him, and he knew how insane their physical strength could be. She was definitely one of the strongest people he’d ever fought. If he had to rank her, it would be below Raven – he’d gotten lucky with Yang’s mother, the room they’d fought in had hampered her ability to open up, and it had given him an advantage. But she was as good as Pyrrha was, he thought. Though he’d love to see them go head to head. Somehow, he thought that maybe Pyrrha could pull off the victory.

The fact that Pyrrha as a first year could hang with an elite was... well, that was why she was the best, wasn’t it?

Jaune sheathed his sword and collapsed his shield, returning it to his hip as Winter joined them.

“Thank you for taking some time to test my sister, Harriet. It appears that Beacon has been training their Huntsmen well.”

Harriet smirked. “The Vytal Festival should be a treat this year. I can’t wait. Hopefully I don’t get sent out on a mission right in the middle of it.”

“Indeed,” Winter nodded. “I believe our students will have their work cut out for them.”

After some small talk, Harriet returned to her training. Winter led them out and directed them towards the library. Bookshelves laden with books stretched far and wide, built around the central elevators that ferried people up the tower. The room was circular, a single path that met back up at the entrance, flanked on either side by books. Two floors high, large white pillars with cloaked statues stood vigil at regular intervals.

Winter found them a table, and she gestured for them to sit.

“You’ve gotten stronger,” Winter said warmly, addressing Weiss. Weiss flushed lightly at the praise, trying not to preen. “Your movements are sharper, and your decision making is more decisive. I was also impressed by how well you worked with your teammate. You are not partners, and yet the both of you felt well at ease with one another. That speaks of trust and constant training, and I was glad to see it. Many focus too much on individual growth, forgetting that we are placed in teams for a reason.”

“Thank you for your kind words,” Weiss said happily.

"But I noticed that you did not summon," Winter pointed out, and Weiss' good mood fell a little. "Are you still having trouble?"

"I – yes, I have not been able to successfully complete a full summon," Weiss sighed, and Jaune could tell that she was annoyed with herself for it. "Only partial manifestations. It has been... vexing."

Jaune remembered Weiss speaking about summoning once. Any Grimm she defeated – *killed* in battle – she could summon them to come to her aid. A powerful ability to be sure, but apparently a difficult one to master.

The Schnee semblance was unlike anything else he'd encountered so far. It had so many different applications and abilities, from hastening your movements to creating physical barriers to being open to Dust infusion. It was so incredibly versatile – and no doubt the reason why Beacon was studying it, and helping her to understand it better and grow it.

"You've been keeping up with your meditation exercises?" Winter pressed.

"Yes, of course," Weiss answered at once. "Every day."

"At your level of skill, at your level of mastery of other elements of our semblance, this should be relatively easy for you to attain," Winter said quietly. "The fact that you have such problems with it is very confusing indeed."

Weiss didn't look pleased to hear her say it, but could not refute her words.

"Perhaps I could help," Jaune offered. "We've been meaning to test the limits of my semblance. It may help you push through this barrier."

"If you don't mind me asking, what exactly is your semblance?" Winter asked, interested. "I took note that your aura was fluctuating on the scanning systems in the training facility."

"Aura amplification."

She blinked.

"That is... certainly a powerful tool," she murmured, taken aback. "I see now why you were able to stand your ground against Harriet's assault. There are not many people who could take such strikes, even on a shield, and not be moved. Amplification of aura..."

She considered him for a moment, nodding.

"My praise is not only for my sister. I am glad that she has such a skilled, dependable leader whom she can follow these next four years. It sets my heart at ease."

Jaune felt a little embarrassed, especially when she looked at him with such warm eyes. He had a feeling that much like Weiss, she wasn't a woman to dole out praise lightly, nor warm up to someone quite so quickly.

He supposed he'd made a good impression then.

"Winter," Weiss squirmed, ducking her head. "Stop teasing."

"I am doing nothing of the sort," she replied, voice even, though the way her eyes glittered told him that maybe, just maybe, Winter was teasing her little sister a bit. "Is it so out of the ordinary for an older sister to be worried about her younger sister? To want someone to watch over her, and help guide her during such an important time in her life?"

"That is enough!" Weiss pointed at her dramatically. "I know what you are doing!"

Jaune smiled.

Despite all her problems with her family, it was nice to see that the love between these sisters was undeniable. No doubt, Winter was reserved and had endured the same type of upbringing as Weiss, but it warmed his heart to know that they had each other.