

The atmosphere was electric in Vale as the days ticked by, edging closer and closer to the opening ceremony of the Vytal Festival. Tourists from all corners of the globe flooded into the city as advertising campaigns ramped up, athletes hit their stride on the press tour, promoting themselves and their sport, while businesses took full advantage of the increase in foot traffic, slashing prices in an attempt at attracting as many people as possible.

Jaune had never seen anything like it.

Beacon was not immune from the infectious energy.

The confessions continued, though at a more urgent clip now that they were days away. More than a few times, Jaune had encountered girls in the hallways and there was no more giggling to be seen. They were stressing out as they debated who they would be taking to the school dance. The guys were more or less the same, with far away looks in their eyes as they worked up the courage to approach someone, either ending in jubilation or depression. It was a wholesome sight to see a confession land its mark, but it was equally as miserable watching someone get their heart crushed.

The school had gone completely crazy.

A couple of days before the night of the dance, their teams gathered together for a very important meeting – or so his partner claimed.

“We need dresses,” Nora said in a somber voice, as if she were going into battle and wasn’t sure if she would ever return.

The other girls nodded as one, faces grim. It was a little creepy, Jaune sharing a look with Ren who shrugged his shoulders.

“Not just dresses – shoes, accessories – *our nails!* We need to get our nails done,” Weiss stressed. “And our hair! We need to visit a salon!”

“Don’t worry, I’ve got a place,” Yang said, placing a hand on Weiss’ shoulder. “It’s the only spot I’d ever let touch my hair, so you know it’s good. I’ve known the owner since I was twelve, I’ll get us an appointment.”

“I’ve been in contact with a boutique I’ve done some modeling work for,” Pyrrha chimed in. “We can have the place to ourselves, she’ll close it down for a couple of hours so we can shop in peace.”

They were taking this *really* seriously.

Even Ruby appeared to be excited which Jaune was a little surprised about. A school dance didn’t really seem like her type of thing, but you wouldn’t know it with the way she was nodding along with everything that was being said.

“What about the boys?” Blake asked, and suddenly, Jaune and Ren were being scrutinized by six pairs of eyes.

“Don’t worry about me,” Jaune said at once. “I already have a suit.”

Those ridiculously handsome and expensive clothes that Weiss had prepared for him in Atlas had made the trip with him back to Vale. Anything he tried to find himself would never compare, so he was more than set.

“He does,” Weiss confirmed when Nora looked like she was about to argue. “I picked it out myself.”

“That just leaves Ren,” Pyrrha said.

“...Help,” Ren said, completely deadpan. Jaune snorted.

“Renny, we get to play dress up,” Nora beamed.

“Please, help,” Ren said again.

“When should we go?” Ruby asked.

“Tonight,” Yang said. “We’ll get our dresses and our nails done, and then tomorrow, we can get our hair done. I’ll call them now and make sure we get a free spot.”

“I’ll call the boutique,” Pyrrha said, pulling out her scroll.

Though he didn’t need to buy anything, Jaune was tagging along. When it was time, Jaune made his way down to the landing pads with his friends. Airships were running every twenty minutes, carrying students and workers to and from the school, and in the field beside the main avenue leading into Beacon, the area was being prepared for the fair ground that would eventually be erected there.

Other students packed into the airship until it was bursting, ferrying them down into Vale. Once they landed, Pyrrha gave them the directions to the store they would be visiting, and they made their way downtown.

"I've never seen the streets this packed before," Yang whistled, looking around. "There are so many people!"

"I attended the matches in Mistral four years ago," Pyrrha said, smiling. "It was very crowded, much like this."

"I remember watching that on television," Weiss said, thinking. "Vacuo won two of the three categories, didn't they?"

Ruby nodded. "Yep! They won the duo and single rounds. Atlas won the team category. I remember because that girl who won the singles had such a cool weapon! It was a double-headed spear and it used Dust!"

Jaune did recall watching some of the Vytal Festival last time. Even out in the sticks, it was a big event. Not only for the entertainment value but specifically, the Huntsman tournament showcased future Huntsmen to the world. These were the men and women that one day you may end up hiring for some type of task, and winning such an event meant that you were in high demand. Everyone wanted to know who the best were.

When they arrived at the store, Jaune and Ren were refused entry. Not by the owner, but by their friends.

"You help Ren pick out a suit," Nora told him. "We'll double check it after, right girls?"

They all voiced their agreement.

“But our dresses are going to be a secret,” she continued cheekily, smirking. “So no peeking.”

Jaune didn’t mind.

“Okay, we’ll just...” he trailed off as they rushed inside, already giggling, leaving them alone.
“...go... somewhere else...”

Ren coughed.

“I guess we’re off the hook. Sort of,” Jaune said. “If we don’t pick out something nice for you, we’ll never hear the end of it.”

“At least we’re in the right place,” Ren gestured around. They were smack bang in the middle of Vale’s fashion district. They were surrounded on all sides by clothing stores, all high end, many of them focused on men’s fashion. “I’m sure we can find something.”

“I’ve never picked out clothes for another guy before,” Jaune eyed Ren up and down.

Ren frowned. “What?”

“I think it’ll be much easier than picking out something for a girl.”

They wandered around a bit until they found a promising store. A few other students were already inside; a couple of guys, not Beacon students, but from one of the other schools, and a girl helping her partner – or boyfriend, Jaune wasn't sure which – find something for the dance.

"Where do we start?" Ren asked warily, glancing around.

"Black is always good, right?" Jaune asked rhetorically, making his way over towards a row of black suits displayed on a series of mannequins. "Do you like pinstripes? Or are we thinking just something plain?"

"Plain is fine."

"What about a vest?"

Ren nodded.

It didn't take Jaune long to find something that he thought would work well. Black jacket and pants, with a dark green vest. Ren wore green well, and it went nicely with the black of the suit. There was also a matching green tie, and an ivory dress shirt.

Ren looked it over.

"This is fine," he said.

“Do you need shoes?”

“I do,” Ren quickly found a pair, black leather, nothing fancy. “I guess I better try it on.”

They called over one of the workers, and Ren was shown to a changing room to try on his new suit. Jaune continued to browse through the store, checking out some of the shirts until he was called over.

“How do I look?” Ren asked.

“Sharp,” Jaune replied, grinning. He wore the suit well, and he didn’t even need to get it adjusted. It was a perfect fit. “Here – let me take a picture so we don’t have to wait around.”

Jaune pulled out his scroll and snapped a picture, sending it to Nora. Almost instantly, she began typing out her message. It ended up being a bunch of emoji, lines and lines of them.

They were all positive, though, so she clearly approved.

“Nora is happy,” he showed Ren the screen.

He smirked. “Seems that way.”

Ren went back into the changing room to change back into his normal clothes. When he emerged, they went up to the counter to pay. It was a little pricey but Ren paid without blinking.

“They’ll take forever, so want to get something to eat?” Jaune asked as the clerk took down Ren’s information. The suit would be sent over to Beacon in the morning.

Ren nodded.

“Feel like anything in particular?”

Ren thought about it for a moment. “Noodles are fine.”

After a quick search, Jaune saw there was a highly rated ramen place a few blocks away. When they left the store, they took a right and started walking.

Jaune couldn’t remember the last time he’d hung out with Ren and no one else. He was usually always around one of the girls, so it was nice to have some boys time.

“I know you said you weren’t taking anyone, but is there anyone you want to dance with?”

“Not really,” Ren admitted.

“No secret crush?”

Ren chuckled. "Nothing like that."

"Fair enough."

"I think you've got enough going on for the both of us."

Jaune shot Ren a surprised glance. "Uh..."

Then it clicked.

"Nora said something, didn't she?"

Ren nodded.

"Did you really think she wouldn't?"

Jaune opened his mouth and then shut it, frowning. "You know... I never really thought about it, but it makes sense. You are her best friend."

How much had Nora told him? Did she just say they were dating? Or did she tell Ren the whole truth? About Weiss and Blake? And if she did or didn't, what did Ren think? Did he approve?

Jaune suddenly felt a little nervous.

“How much did she tell you?”

“Most of it, I expect,” Ren shot him a curious look. “She said you’re dating her, Weiss, and Blake.”

He rubbed his neck awkwardly. “Aha...yeah, that’s right.”

“That sounds complicated.”

“It is...”

Ren patted him on the shoulder.

“I’ve never seen Nora as happy as she is now,” Ren said seriously.

Jaune blinked.

“Really?”

“You might not believe this but Nora used to be very subdued. Quiet, and shy – even skittish. Over the years, she got better, but... happiness came later. She told you a little of her childhood?”

Jaune nodded.

“Nora was... angry. For a very long time. We both were. In some ways, we still are,” Ren looked up at the sky, Jaune following his gaze. “It felt as if we were both being devoured by it. Burying it deep down inside only made it worse, and it almost destroyed us. Life isn’t easy for a couple of wandering orphans.”

Ren sighed. “We eventually found a place... a place with others like us. A place to call our own. We lived there for some time, and being around others, people that understood... we began to heal. Nora... opened up more, made friends, and experienced what it felt like to have those that cared for you. Not just me. It was good for her. It allowed her to open her heart, but there was always that little bit of darkness... I carry it, as well. We will for the rest of our lives, but...”

Ren turned his head to face him.

“Nora... overcompensated a bit. She went from quiet to loud, from shy to shameless,” there was a fond expression on his face as he said this. “It was like all those emotions she had kept buried for so long came bursting out, amplified by being hidden away... it can be intense. Many of the people we’ve met along the way struggle to deal with her when she gets going, but you’ve always been very accepting of her. Even on that very first day when we met.”

“She’s one of a kind,” Jaune said.

Ren smiled. "She is. It isn't often that Nora feels comfortable around a new person, but with you... she did. And I think because of that, she felt comfortable around the others. You have no idea how much you helped her, Jaune. Just by accepting her the way she is."

At some point, they'd stopped in the middle of the sidewalk. Ren looked forward and started moving again, Jaune joining him.

"I'm not going to pretend that I wasn't shocked when she told me," Ren admitted. "Not about the two of you... but about Weiss and Blake, as well. I don't really get it," he shrugged. "I can't see myself being in a situation like that, but I do know that Nora is happy. I see it, I hear it, and I feel it. And I know that Weiss and Blake, they're both happy, as well. Whenever I see you with them, they just appear so *bright*."

Jaune didn't know what to say.

"So just continue whatever it is that you're doing," he finished. "As long as Nora is happy, I'm happy. Make sure that continues, Jaune. Because I really don't want our friendship to fail because you hurt her."

"I'd never hurt her, not if I can help it," Jaune said firmly, the pair coming to a stop at a set of lights. The crowd built up around them, waiting for the pedestrian light to turn green. "None of this would be happening if it wasn't for Nora. If she didn't agree with it, that would be it. You have my word."

"I know," Ren said quietly.

The rest of their walk was done in silence. When they found the ramen shop, they had to wait a little while before they could place their order. It was packed to the brim, the mouthwatering scent of the rich, flavorful broth making Jaune's stomach grumble.

“What are you ordering?” Jaune asked.

“Miso,” Ren answered immediately. “You?”

Jaune had to consult the menu board. He ended up getting the crispy pork belly ramen, and it was another ten minutes as they waited for their order. Luckily for them, they managed to snag a two person table during that time.

When their bowls were set down in front of them, Jaune leaned forward and inhaled the steam. It smelt and looked delicious, the top decorated with thinly sliced green onion, red chilli, a boiled egg cleanly sliced in half, and slender strips of nori – seaweed.

“Do you know how to use chopsticks?” Ren asked.

“Better than before. Blake has been helping me with it,” Jaune grinned.

The stock was rich and filled with flavor as he dipped the spoon into it and scooped some into his mouth. Chicken broth with hints of ginger, soy sauce, chilli oil, sesame and more. Jaune hummed in appreciation and had another spoonful, smacking his lips as he swallowed.

“That’s good,” he said.

The noodles were tender with just the perfect amount of chew, Jaune grabbing some with his chopsticks. The pork was also tender, and fatty, the crispy skin crunching easily as he took a bite. It all came together in a delicious mix, Jaune spooning more broth into his mouth.

He was halfway through his meal when his scroll began to ring. Jaune was expecting it to be one of his teammates, but when he checked, he saw that the number was unknown.

“Who is it?” Ren asked curiously.

“I don’t know,” he said, showing Ren. “Whoever it is, I don’t have their number.”

He answered it – and got the shock of his life when the familiar face of his older sister smiled back at him.

“Hey Squirt,” the cheeky voice of Saphron Arc met his ears, blue eyes dancing in delight. “What’s up?”

Jaune gawked at her, making her laugh.

“You better close your mouth or the wind might change, then you’ll be stuck like that,” she teased.

That was one of their Ma’s old fashioned sayings, and hearing it now only threw him off even more.

“Saphron?” he asked incredulously. “What... how...?”

Someone in the background snorted, and then he got another shock. Violet leaned over Saphron's shoulder, her formerly long blonde hair cut short around her ears in an asymmetrical bob, some of the longer strands by her left ear twined into a short braid.

He almost didn't recognize her.

"Hey bro," she beamed.

"Violet? What happened to your hair!?"

They both laughed.

"See? I told you he'd notice your hair immediately," Saphron said smugly.

"Why do you notice these things but other boys don't?" Violet grumbled good-naturedly. "Why is my brother the only one that pays attention to me?"

"That's because he's a siscon," another familiar voice, another familiar face. Olive popped up between them, her expression set into a scowl. "He focuses on his sisters way too much."

Olive still sported the same hairstyle; a pair of long twintails that once reached the middle of her back, but were probably much longer now. The one change was that she'd dyed two long streaks through each of them. The left had a blue streak while the right had a pink one.

Jaune frowned. "I'm not a siscon."

“Psh, as if.”

“Shut up, you brat.”

“I’m older than you!” Olive growled.

“But you don’t act like it,” Jaune countered.

“I see you still have your cheeky mouth,” she snapped.

“Olive, why are you fighting with Jaune already?” someone sighed, and a fourth person wedged their way into the picture. “I’m sorry about her, Jaune. She’s been so excited to see you, she’s been talking about it nonstop for the last couple of days.”

“That’s a lie!” Olive denied instantly, outraged. “How dare you tell him that when it’s false information, Lavender!”

Lavender shot Jaune a look through the screen, as if to say, ‘*Can you believe this girl?*’

Jaune snorted.

“What are you laughing at?” Olive demanded.

“I’m laughing at you.”

Lavender was the youngest of his sisters, a year older than he was. She looked completely unchanged, just as Saphron did, her long mane of golden hair flowing across her shoulders and down her back in soft ringlets.

“How did you get my number?” Jaune asked, confused. “Wait a minute, *where are you?*”

Saphron smirked. “Where do you think?”

“We’re in Vale, *stupid*,” Olive snickered. “Where do you think we are?”

“We came to see you,” Violet said proudly.

“We wanted to see you compete in person,” Lavender said softly.

Wait, *what?* They were in Vale?

“Hey Jaune,” a certain bespectacled woman leaned into view, eyes soft. “It’s nice to see you.”

“Terra,” Jaune exclaimed in shock. “It’s nice to see you too! Wait, is everyone here?”

Saphron shook her head. "Nah. Ma and Pa stayed home, Viridian couldn't get away, she's super busy with work. She sends her love, though. Aqua and Cyan are helping on the farm, and couldn't make it."

"But look who made the journey," Terra cooed, holding up her son. Adrian blinked, eyes wide as he spotted Jaune, his face lighting up.

"Adrian!" Jaune said happily as his nephew giggled. "You've gotten so big!"

The shock of seeing most of his sisters was beginning to fade.

"You've been planning this for awhile, haven't you?" he asked them,

Violet grinned. "Of course. We've been talking about this even before you left for Beacon. We knew the festival was being held in Vale, so it just seemed perfect, ya know?"

They'd kept it from him.

"How are Ma and Pa?"

"They're good. Ma wants to know if you've been eating enough," Saphron rolled her eyes. "I don't know why. When have you never eaten enough?"

"I don't eat that much."

All four of his sisters scoffed, and he felt his ears burn.

"If we didn't grow up on a farm, our parents would have been destitute from how much you eat," Olive complained.

"I think having eight kids would be the reason why," Jaune countered dryly.

Violet laughed. "You aren't wrong."

"Where are you right now? Are you at Beacon?" Lavender asked.

"No, I'm in the city. I'm having dinner with a friend," Jaune turned his scroll around to face Ren, who'd been silent all this time but with a curious look in his eye. Ren blinked as he was suddenly greeted with four Arc sisters, eyes widening slightly.

"Ooooh! Who's the hottie?" Violet asked.

"He *is* pretty hot," Olive agreed. "Is he a model or something?"

It wasn't often that Jaune saw Ren embarrassed, the praise causing his cheeks to go a very subtle pink.

“Hello, I’m Lavender Arc,” Lavender introduced herself.

“I’m Saphron!”

“And I’m Violet, cutie.”

“Olive,” she grumbled. “Violet, stop. You’re being weird.”

“What? I’m just being nice,” Violet defended herself. “Nothing wrong with telling a handsome man that he’s good looking.”

“I’m Terra,” Saphron’s wife spoke up as the sisters began bickering. “Saphron’s wife. What’s your name?”

“...Lie Ren,” he managed after a moment of thought. “I attend Beacon with Jaune.”

“Oh, another Huntsman,” Saphron exclaimed happily.

“Are you as strong as Jaune?” Lavender asked, curious.

“Thank you for being friends with my brother,” Saphron said before Ren could even attempt to answer. “He can be a bit of a dweeb but he’s a good guy.”

Jaune flipped the scroll back around.

“Who are you calling a dweeb?” he asked, annoyed. “The only dweeb I see is you.”

Saphron rolled her eyes. “Good one. How long have you been thinking about using that?”

“Terra told me all about how you sing and dance in your underwear when you think no one is aro—,” Jaune began saying before getting cut off as Saphron shouted.

“I *do not* – Terra, what have you been telling him!”

“Jaune, you weren’t meant to say anything,” Terra laughed.

“You only told me because you know I would, though, right?”

“Betrayed by my own wife,” Saphron moaned pathetically. “Bullied by my own brother! What did I do to deserve this?”

Lavender snickered. “What does she sing when she does this?”

“Stop!” Saphron covered Terra’s mouth with a hand. “Not another word.”

“Where are you guys staying?” Jaune asked, attempting to get the conversation back on track.
“We can meet up.”

They gave him the address of the hotel they were staying at, but made plans to meet him at the Memorial Park in central Vale. They were all going to grab something to eat and then have a bit of a picnic.

“Great, we’ll come see you,” Jaune said, smiling. “I’ll bring more of our friends. They’re just shopping right now.”

“Cool – see you soon, little brother,” Saphron beamed, waving. Lavender and Terra joined her. Violet and Olive were still arguing amongst themselves, and didn’t realize the call was ending.

“Bye,” Jaune said as the call went dead.

Ren stared at him for a moment, as if contemplating his words.

“They are... energetic.”

Jaune laughed. “You have no idea – and that wasn’t even all of them. You should see it when we’re all in one place, I don’t know how we didn’t drive Ma and Pa insane.”

They quickly finished their noodles, slurping them up and drinking the broth until there was nothing left. As they left the ramen store, his scroll rang again and when he answered it, he saw that it was Ruby.

“Heya,” she chirped. “Where are you guys?”

“We just had something to eat. Are you guys hungry?”

“I could eat a horse,” he heard Nora call from the background. Ruby giggled.

“Let's meet up, I have something to tell you guys.”

They ended up at a burger joint, something simple that they could order and take away without much issue. They were drawing a lot of attention on account of being a group of ridiculously hot girls, and the fact that Pyrrha Nikos and Weiss Schnee was among them.

“Hey,” he greeted. “Order your dresses?”

Blake nodded, smiling. “We did. Sorry for taking so long.”

Jaune shrugged. “It's fine. It wasn't that long.”

“It felt like it took forever,” Ruby whined. “And Weiss made me get stilts! Why couldn't I just wear my boots?”

“Because that would look ridiculous,” Weiss scolded. “This is a formal event, Ruby.”

“Girls wear boots with dresses all the time,” Ruby countered. “It’s fashionable.”

“That is for everyday wear, there is a difference,” Weiss said sharply. “Anyway, the heels we picked out for you are lovely. They look good on you.”

“They won’t look good on me if I break my ankles,” Ruby grumbled. “I don’t know how you fight in them,” she directed this at Pyrrha, Blake and Weiss specifically. Though Weiss’ footwear when she fought were wedge heels, a little more manageable than the pairs Pyrrha and Blake wore.

“Practice,” Blake teased with a smirk. “Don’t worry, Ruby. We’ll help you master your heels.”

Ruby pulled a face.

“So what did you need to tell us?” Weiss asked curiously. “Ruby said you’ve got something.”

“Some of my sisters are here,” he revealed. “I thought we could go meet them.”

Ruby hopped up and down. “Whaaat? Your sisters are here? Oh my god, yes, let’s go meet them!”

Weiss and Blake appeared shocked, and he saw their excitement quickly turn to trepidation.

“Yo, what’s going on?” Yang called out as she returned with Pyrrha and Nora, carrying a couple of bags each, filled with food.

“Jaune’s sisters are in town!” Ruby said quickly. “We’re going to meet them!”

Nora perked up, and he didn’t like the smile she sported. Not at all.

“It isn’t all of them,” he said. “Just four – plus my eldest sister’s wife and my nephew. The others couldn’t make it.”

“Just four he says,” Yang laughed. “Cool. I wanna meet them!”

Pyrrha appeared a little nervous at the prospect. “Um – what are they like?”

“Ren spoke to them for a bit,” Jaune pat Ren on the shoulder. “He can tell you.”

“They’re... very boisterous,” he said carefully. Jaune laughed.

“That’s one way of putting it. Come on, let’s go see them.”

It didn’t take them long to find their way to the Memorial Park. Night was beginning to set in, but the park was illuminated with lamp posts every few meters, the pathways very easy to navigate. Even now, as day faded, there were families and couples everywhere, enjoying the evening to the fullest. In the middle of the park was the war memorial obelisk with the names of the fallen,

tourists gathered around it and taking pictures, and further on, more people were gathered around the small lake, sitting on the banks beneath the trees.

It was here that he found them.

His sisters were seated beneath a large oak, their food spread out around them. Adrian sat in Saphron's lap, her knee bouncing him up and down as he squealed. Terra spotted him first, straightening up, an instant smile on her face.

"Jaune, over here!" she called out with a wave.

His sisters turned immediately, and Jaune felt a sudden bout of longing.

He'd missed them.

Lavender and Violet got up and rushed towards him, and Jaune braced himself for what was coming.

"Little brother," Violet yelled in delight moments before the two of them collided with him, Jaune grunting as he wrapped them in a powerful embrace. They tightened their hold, squeezing him with everything they had. "Have you gotten taller?"

"I think you've just shrunk," he teased, hugging them both back.

That wasn't true. Violet was tall for a woman, almost as tall as he was, perhaps a hair taller than Pyrrha. In comparison, Lavender was a little thing. Not quite as short as Weiss and Ruby, but almost.

Lavender stepped away first, smiling happily before glancing behind her. "Olive, are you coming?"

"As if," his foul tempered sister scoffed.

Violet let go, and Jaune stepped by them. Olive was standing but had her arms crossed across her chest, brow furrowed.

"Aren't you going to give your brother a hug?" he asked.

"You'd like that, wouldn't you? Well, tough luck!"

"Fine, you can hold Adrian, then," Saphron said before passing her son over, Olive scrambling at the sudden weight.

"Hey, wait, no," Olive spluttered but it was too late, Saphron sprinting over with a laugh and leaping at Jaune.

He had to set his feet to catch her, rocking back as she leapt completely into his arms so he was carrying her in a princess carry.

“Saphron, what are you doing?” Jaune asked, shaking his head.

She kicked her legs happily, her arms wrapping around his neck as she leaned back with a cheeky grin.

“What do you mean? I’m just happy to see you,” she said before reeling him in, nuzzling her cheek against his. “Oh, I’ve missed you so much, my little dweeb of a brother. You’ve been okay all on your own, right? You’re wearing a clean pair of underwear? Brushing your teeth?”

“I’ll drop you,” Jaune deadpanned.

Saphron laughed and pecked him on the cheek before wriggling out of his grasp, setting her feet on the ground. Taller than Lavender but shorter than Violet, she was of average height, her blonde hair a slightly darker shade than that of Jaune’s and the rest of their sisters. While they all had the brighter, golden locks of their father, Saphron’s darker hair came from their mother.

Once Saphron was out of the way, Terra replaced her, leaning in and giving him a firm hug.

“It’s really great to see you, Jaune,” she said warmly.

“It’s great to see you.”

They’d only met a couple of times when they’d made the journey back home to the farm, but she was a wonderful woman who was a perfect match for his older sister. While Saphron could be a bit of a goof, Terra was the more serious of the pair, and was an only child. When she married Saphron, she gained almost too many siblings to count. They complimented each other well.

"You guys are being ridiculous," Olive muttered as she wandered over, Adrian squirming in her arms. "Here, look – your nephew wants you."

She held him out for Jaune to take, and he took him gladly. Adrian giggled as Jaune hefted him up, bracing him against his side.

"Hey little guy," he said softly.

"Oh my god," he heard Weiss whisper behind him.

Saphron peered around him, her expression full of mischief. "So – who are all these people? Wait, they're all girls..."

"Except for Ren," Violet pointed out. "Wow, and they're all hot as hell."

"Oh, uh, right," Jaune stepped back a little. His friends were staring at his family, a little gobsmacked. He couldn't blame them. "Guys – these are my sisters, Saphron, Violet, Olive and Lavender," he introduced, pointing to each one. "Terra is Saphron's wife," he gestured to her. "And this little tyke is Adrian, their son."

Adrian babbled happily.

"Saph, Vi, Olive, Lav, Terra – these are my friends from Beacon. You've already spoken to Ren," Ren nodded. "The one with the cute ears is Blake."

Blake flushed, her 'cute ears' flattening in embarrassment. "Jaune..." she warned.

He continued. "The one next to her on the left is Weiss."

Weiss dropped into a perfect curtsy, "Pleased to meet you."

"And I'm Nora~!" his partner interjected, nudging Weiss out of the way and almost making her fall over. "Jaune's parnter~!"

"Hey~!" Weiss snapped, regaining her balance. "What are you doing?"

Jaune tried not to laugh. "The one with the blonde hair is Yang – and this is her little sister, Ruby."

Yang raised her hand. "Yo, what's up?"

Ruby beamed. "Hi~!"

"And finally, this is Pyrrha," Jaune finished.

"Hello~!" she greeted, waving.

His sisters were delighted.

“You’re all so pretty!” Violet said, clapping. “Bro, what the hell?”

“What did you mean by partner?” Oliva grumbled.

Lavender’s eyes widened. “Are you his girlfriend?”

Jaune froze.

Oh no.

“We’re separated into teams at Beacon,” Pyrrha explained. “And within those teams, we have partners.”

“Oh,” Lavender calmed down.

Jaune watched Nora, saw her mouth open to say something but before she could, Weiss’ palm slapped over her mouth.

“Mmmrrph~!”

His sisters looked confused.

Weiss smiled charmingly. "Apologies. I just need to speak to my good friend here for a moment."

She dragged Nora away, which was... an incredible feat, actually. Nora struggled but Weiss must have been possessed by a sudden bout of strength because she managed to keep her under control.

Blake palmed her face. "Sorry about them."

"That's Weiss Schnee, isn't it?" Saphron asked. "I mean, yeah – it is. What am I saying?"

"What, like – the Schnee Dust Company?" Violet asked, shocked. "You're friends with someone like that?"

They clearly hadn't seen the tabloids. Thank god for small mercies. Jaune supposed those sorts of things didn't make it out home, but there was always a chance that Terra or Saphron would see them.

Olive was staring at Pyrrha, and he saw that Pyrrha was getting a little uncomfortable.

"I've seen your face somewhere," Olive muttered.

“Stop staring, it’s rude,” Jaune said. His sister turned on him.

“Shut up, idiot.”

“Good one,” he smirked. “You got me.”

She scowled.

“She’s familiar because that’s Pyrrha Nikos,” Saphron said, as if it were obvious. Pyrrha looked a little worried but Saphron just smiled at her. “We live in Argus. You’ve been the pride of the city for as long as I’ve been there.”

Pyrrha blinked, surprised. “Oh! I didn’t realize you lived there.”

“We’ve bumped into your mom a few times,” Terra said. “She’s really proud of you.”

Saphron nodded. “Yeah, she’s such a sweet lady.”

Pyrrha flushed. “Oh, um... thank you.”

“Are those two going to be okay?” Lavender asked, pointing.

Some distance away, Weiss and Nora were bickering.

"They'll be fine," Blake sighed. She could probably hear everything they were saying. "They're just dumb."

"How about we go sit down and eat?" Violet suggested. "Our food will go cold if we just stand around."

"Now that's what I'm talking about," Yang said. "Lead the way, big sis."

Violet squealed. "Oh, I like this one. Don't call me anything else!"

Jaune handed Adrian back over to Saphron, and they all started making their way over to their spot under the tree. At least, Jaune would have, if something didn't latch onto him from behind. He paused, standing still as a pair of arms locked around his waist, a head pressed into his spine.

"...Olive?" he asked quietly.

"...It's quiet without you," she said softly.

Jaune smiled.

"Really?"

“...Quieter,” she amended.

Jaune turned in her hold and embraced her, her fingers bunching in his shirt.

“I miss you,” she said.

Jaune squeezed her. “I miss you too.”

“Guys, come on – oh,” Saphron grinned evilly. “Oh, so cute~! Olive is telling her little bro how much she loves him.”

Jaune closed his eyes. “Saph... why...?”

Olive pushed away from him angrily, glaring at their eldest sister. “Saphron, shut up, you idiot!”

“Ahaha – you’re so cute when you’re honest~!”

Olive’s face turned bright red. “Hey, everyone! Do you want to hear about the time I caught Saphron in Jaune’s bedroom with—,” she started shouting, only for Saphron to rush them.

“Don’t you say another word!” she roared.

Yeah... it was great to see them again. Jaune sighed as Olive sprinted away, Saphron hot on her heels. His friends laughed, and Jaune felt his cheeks hurt from how hard he was smiling despite himself.

He was just lucky the twins weren't here.