

Chapter Thirty-Six



Once back at the Chateau, Sarah and John B left for Tannyhill. Kiara left to go home, and Pope went to go sleep in John B's room. After my much needed and deserved shower, I walked out into the living room, seeing JJ sitting on the couch.

I quickly grabbed two beers from the kitchen before sitting down next to him. I handed him one, and the two of us sat in silence for a moment, both of us taking sips from our beers, before he finally broke it.

"Penny for your thoughts?"

I let out a breath through my nose.

"I'm still trying to process."

He hummed in understanding.

"Like, at first the hunt for the gold was something that I was doing to feel close to my dad, ya know? I wasn't one-hundred percent sure it even existed."

I paused, taking another drink from my beer.

"But now that I know that it's out there, I saw it with my own eyes, touched it with my own fingers, I just, I wish..."

"You wish you're dad was here."

I pursed my lips as tears formed in my eyes and silently nodded in response.

JJ threw his arm over my shoulder and pulled me into his side, pressing a kiss into my still damp hair.

"I miss him so much, JJ," I whispered into the dark room, the only light coming from the candles on the kitchen table.

"I know."

I sighed and leaned my head on his shoulder, returning the room to silence.

"We should get some sleep. Big day ahead of us tomorrow."

I nodded at JJ's words before chugging the rest of my beer, him doing the same. I lead the way into my room, turning around to face the blond as he shut my bedroom door behind him.

"Thank you."

He seemed surprised at my words.

"For what?"

"For everything. You have so much shit to deal with, JJ, but you're always here for me and my shit."

He laughed through his nose before he pulled me into a hug and pressed a kiss into my hair.

"Pogues take care of Pogues."

I returned his hug and rested my head against his chest.

"Right."

"You sound disappointed?"

I shook my head against his chest, not having the backbone to look him in the eyes, and didn't say anything.

Part of was glad that he still saw me as his best friend that he could goof around with, but the other part of me, the selfish part, wanted to hear that I was something more than just a Pogue friendship to him.

Take it slow.

I took a deep breath and pulled away from the hug, smiling up at him.

"You'd let me know if there was any shit that you needed my help with, right?"

JJ's face became unreadable as he brushed a piece of hair out of my face.

"Of course, sweetheart."

My eyes grazed over his face, still bruised from his dad, and I knew, for the first time with one-hundred percent certainty, JJ just lied to me.

I didn't push him, just grabbed his hand and pulled him toward my bed. I made a silent vow as JJ pulled me into his side.

I'd be there for JJ, whether he wanted me to be or not.

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