

Recovered Strength

Jane x Lisbon

Von Schneeblume

Kapitel 4: RS ~ Pub night

A/N: It has to be said, I'm afraid. So here we go...

Disclaimer: The characters of The Mentalist aren't mine. And the other ones...well, forget about them.

Chapter four – Pub night

In the following days, nothing dramatic happened. Lisbon and her team tried to pass time as efficiently as possible without getting bored. Lisbon and Grace went riding every day, and afterwards Grace tried to teach Rigsby how to ride a horse. He still feared that Jane would carry out his threat eventually and he didn't want to make a fool of himself. (For that, it was indeed too late. His attempts were quite funny to watch, but his colleagues had to hide that since Rigsby refused to mount a horse when they were watching.)

Cho could be found on one of the porch couches most of the time. He was reading through Alliston's library, which was full of dusty old books. Sometimes, when Jane wasn't on a walk, he kept him company, since he was a passionate reader, too.

Lisbon didn't know what to do with herself at first until she decided to pay a daily visit to Alliston's sister, who had a small shop in town. It was the only place in the proximity where you could find a working internet access, after all.

Lisbon tried to stay current about the Red John case and everything else that was going on back home in Sacramento. Despite her attempts, though, she learned nothing new.

When Alliston couldn't pick her up in his second car, she chose a horse over the old truck for her daily trip. It simply was faster that way. Sometimes she met Jane on her way back, so she accompanied him a short way – until he annoyed her somehow, then she just spurred her horse and left him behind. Pretty handy, such a flighty animal.

xxx

After a week and a half, it wasn't hard for her team to convince her that the Friday's pub night actually was a good idea and a welcome change.

So Lisbon drove them to town in the evening. When they entered the pub it wasn't exactly what they had imagined. The pub was a huge room full of loud chattering, laughter, and cheery music. A pianist was sitting next to the dance floor and playing whatever people shouted to him. Young and old were sitting, drinking, and dancing together, barely taking notice of the strangers.

"Well, *that's* a party," Grace said, surprised.

"That's one way of putting it," Lisbon replied, "Guys, look for a table while Jane and I get some drinks, would you?"

After they nodded their agreement Lisbon fought her way through the crowd of people towards the bar.

When she reached it she was about to say something, but then the bartender turned to her completely and flashed a bright smile at her. Lisbon grew stiff all of sudden.

"Hey, what can I do for you?" he wanted to know welcoming.

When Lisbon didn't answer and just stared at him open-mouthed, Jane lifted his brow and placed their order instead of her. With a nod the bartender turned slightly away.

Jane leaned towards Lisbon and murmured to her ear, "He looks a little bit similar to Greg, doesn't he?"

She blinked in confusion and was back in reality then.

"You're kidding, Jane," she hissed back, "He looks *exactly* like a younger version of Greg! That's creepy." Indeed it was. The guy must have been in his mid-twenties and with his short dark blond hair, two cute dimples and an honest bright smile he looked pretty much like Lisbon's ex-fiancé Greg.

Before Jane could say anything, 'Young Greg' was back again and handed them their drinks.

"If you need anything else, just ask. I would do anything for such a beautiful stranger."

Jane rolled his eyes and expected Lisbon to kick the barkeeper's ass verbally as she would do under usual circumstances, but to his great surprise she blushed slightly and smiled.

"Thanks, we'll do that...?"

"Oh sorry! It's Sammy."

"We will take you up on your offer, Sammy." Sammy grinned and winked at her before

another guest caught his attention.

Still smiling Lisbon looked around and found her team at the further end of the pub.

"Come on," she said to Jane, who gave her and Sammy a wary look and hurried to follow her through the crowd again.

"What was that, Lisbon?"

"What was what?" Her gaze back over her shoulder found Jane before it flickered to Sammy again.

"That!" Jane pointed out. "You have a soft spot for him."

"What – no, I don't!"

As soon as they reached their table, Jane claimed, "Our lovely Lisbon here might get drinks for free tonight."

"Shush, Jane!"

"Why, Boss, did you flirt with the bartender?" Grace wondered aloud, grinning.

"Of course not!" Lisbon huffed as her colleagues tried to get a glimpse of Sammy.

"Yes, she did."

"Jane!"

When her team, including Jane, smirked at her, Lisbon felt her cheeks get hot.

"Oh hush! Are we drinking now or what?" She earned a collective 'Cheers!' and rolled her eyes at Jane who sipped innocently at his drink. Lisbon wasn't sure if already regretted coming here in the first place.

xxx

It wasn't long after when Cho muttered, "Hey Boss, bartender at 12 o'clock."

Everyone on the table was looking up when Sammy appeared.

"Hey guys," he greeted, "you're having a good time?"

They answered with polite thanks and the barkeeper turned to Lisbon.

"You know, I didn't get the chance to ask for your name. I mean, I could still call you like I did before – it's not a lie that you're beautiful – but-"

Judging from the expression on her face, Lisbon was horrified by that option, so she

interrupted quickly,

"My name is Teresa."

And since she didn't want to stay focus of attention, she added, pointing at her colleagues, "And these are my friends: Kimball, Grace, Wayne and Patrick."

"Nice to meet you all," Sammy smiled, "It's great to have some new guests, so feel free to order whatever you want tonight. It's on the house."

Jane chuckled and coughed what sounded suspiciously like 'I told you so.'

Lisbon gave him a dirty look before Sammy caught her attention once again.

"You know, Teresa, I'm having a break at the moment, so I wondered if you would like to dance?"

Caught off guard Lisbon opened and closed her mouth without saying anything. She would usually decline such an offer and yet again, she surprised herself and her team with answering a short pause later, "I'd love to."

'And why not?' she thought. An apparently nice and definitely handsome man asked her to dance. And the music was light and jazzy, just as she liked it.

...Oh well, and he looked like Greg.

When she stood up and headed towards the dance floor with Sammy she barely heard her team talking.

"He looks familiar, but I can't pinpoint it," Grace mused.

"He's kind of blatant." Jane.

"Really, Jane?" Cho.

"I think he's a nice one. Does anyone else want some fries?" Rigsby, of course.

Lisbon sighed with relief to be out of earshot when they entered the dance floor.

"You have some nice friends over there," Sammy commented, smirking as he pulled her closer.

"You've no idea!"

He chuckled and Lisbon found herself liking that sound.

They danced quietly for a moment until he started again, "So, you're with Jim, aren't you?"

She nodded slightly. "Yeah, we're taking a vacation...well, sort of."

"Don't worry," he smiled at her warmly. "Since Jim has some special guests from time to time, I won't ask any further."

Lisbon couldn't help returning his smile.

The longer they danced and chatted the more it was getting obvious that he closely resembled Greg – not only in his appearance.

The way he talked, his smile, the dimples, of course, and his honest charm, all of it was similar. Maybe that was the reason why it was pretty easy for Lisbon to relax in his arms. Even though they never got married, she still thought very fondly of Greg – so she was unable to do anything but have sympathy for his younger version.

They danced together for a few more songs until someone tapped Sammy's shoulder from behind.

"I'm sorry, I really don't want to disrupt your nice dancing." Jane beamed at both of them and Lisbon raised her eye brows as if to say 'Yeah right!'

"What's up, pal?" Sammy said friendly while Lisbon could barely hide her amused snort because of this name.

Jane stayed pretty serious – even though his eyes gleamed mischievously – and pointed to the bar, where a lot of people waited for their drinks.

"Your colleague over there is quite busy. I'm sure she seriously could use your helping hands."

"Oh, damn it! Got to go. I'm sorry, Teresa."

Before Lisbon was able to say anything Jane pushed himself between them and took her from Sammy's arms.

"Don't worry, Sammy, I'll take care of her," Jane reassured him.

"Thanks, man!" And with these words the barkeeper disappeared.

Jane smirked in a very self-satisfied way until he met Lisbon's gaze. She lifted her brow again, put her hand on her hip and tapped one foot reproachfully on the floor.

Her consultant's grin became innocent when he pushed her zestfully against his body to start a new dance.

"Anything wrong, my dear?"

Lisbon snorted, not buying his guiltless look, but letting him lead her around the dance floor nevertheless.

"So," Lisbon started and watched him with a challenging expression, "Tell me, *pal* ...What did you do?"

"Excuse me?" Another innocent smirk.

"Oh come on, Jane!" She lifted her fist to punch him, but he immediately backed down before she could do him any harm.

"Okay, fine! ... Maybe I *did* tell some other guests that I would buy a round."

Lisbon rolled her eyes, while she finally relaxed in his arms.

"Why?"

"Well, since everything we order is on the house today..."

"Oh no, forget it!" Lisbon frowned at him, "You are not going to use Sammy's offer, but you're going to pay for that round!"

He pouted.

"Anyway, that wasn't what I meant, you know that. Why did you distract him from me?"

"I have no idea what you're talking about. Oh, listen, that's a beautiful song, we should enjoy our dance." Jane pulled her closer and swayed to the music.

Even though she put her head against his shoulder – it was just then when she noticed that he wasn't wearing his jacket and his vest was softer than Sammy's shirt – she whined in protest. She wouldn't give up that easily.

"Don't lie to me, Jane. You had something in your mind and I want to know what it was. You aren't jealous, are you?" she joked, but he just sighed heavily.

"Lisbon, hush, seriously! 'Dream a little dream of me' is a classic. Show some respect!"

She was about to give him a teasing reply when she noticed that the pianist was indeed playing the said song. With a shake of her head she fell silent and listened to the melody.

When Jane started to hum along she found herself smiling and closing her eyes.

Almost unnoticeably, he hugged her closer.

Warm attraction flooded through her body once more and painted a soft rose on her cheeks. Shyly she shifted her face into the crook of his neck and buried it there.

That moment full of intimacy, closeness and peace remained her of that very similar

moment over two years ago. They had danced together before, on the high school reunion.

How much had changed since then?

Although this memory was still fresh in her mind and it felt as it had been just yesterday, everything was different now. So much had happened. Another CBI agent was dead. Red John was so much closer, Jane much more insane and Lisbon herself – she was falling for her consultant more than ever, in spite of the fact that he had hurt her badly by leaving her behind without a single word.

Lisbon felt her cheerful mood turning into glumness all over again and a lump growing in her throat.

Last tones of 'Dream a little dream of me' faded and a new song begun, just as blue.

"You're still sad," Jane suddenly stated with a low voice, whispering directly in her ear. In soft moves he entwined his fingers with hers.

Lisbon stiffened in his embrace.

"I'm not sad."

"Yes, you are. Don't even try to deny it, Lisbon."

"Or what? You're going to leave me again?" As soon as she had spoken these words, she immediately regretted them.

"Lisbon..." he started, but she shook her head. With a sigh she pushed away and stepped back.

"Sorry, Jane, I didn't mean to...Just forget it. I really need a drink now."

Without looking back, she left the dance floor and joined her team, while Jane stayed behind thoughtfully for a few moments.

TBC