

Recovered Strength

Jane x Lisbon

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Kapitel 23: Vois la vie en rose

Warning: Lime

Vois la vie en rose

The morning was quiet and peaceful. Light was streaming through the open window of her bedroom, while the brisk wind was playing with the curtains.

Lisbon blinked sleepily and simply stared into space for a while, her mind empty in a blissful manner. She was lying on her side, the covers loosely draped around her. The crisp air raised the tiny hair on her skin, but she felt so warm and cozy that it didn't bother her. Perhaps it was because of the tailor-made shirt she had put on sometime during the night. It was too big for her; she could hide her hands in its long sleeves. The white, patterned fabric looked rough, but it was soft against her bare upper body and smelt like a soothing promise.

Or maybe it was because of the sleeping figure right behind her. How could she feel cold with a nude man enticingly pressed against her back? His elbow was resting on her hip bone and his fingers, which had sneaked beneath the shirt, were spread on her stomach, closely below her breasts. It was intimate and made her curl her lips as she sucked them between her teeth.

A quiet snoring came from where he had buried his face in her hair and she smiled. Who would have thought that she would end up in Patrick Jane's arms eventually? To be honest, she had given up hope already – until the dilemma with Jane, Marcus and D.C. had finally reached its breaking point. Her bags had been packed and she had been ready to go, more hurt than happy, but determined to make the best of the situation. Just then Jane had made up his mind and all her plans had collapsed like an unsteady house of cards.

It had been a deeply cutting downfall in more ways than just one, and not only for Jane and herself, but for Marcus as well. However, it had also united her and Jane in the end – and in more than one way, too.

Blushing she remembered how all the twirling, wearing emotions and the far too long hidden passion had gotten the best of them last night. Jane had made love to her

several times, remarkably and stunningly so. Apparently it *did* make a difference when true love was involved.

However, now that she was able to think with a clear head again, she realized that life was no Hollywood fairytale. It wasn't all happy ending and rose-colored glasses. As happy and satisfied she was feeling, guilt was preying on her conscience. Furthermore, she shouldn't feel awkward, but fact was that she did. Awkward, not necessarily in a mere negative way, and insecure. Jane and she had been friends for so long, pushing boundaries but never crossing – until now. She loved him, still so very much, but finally being able to react on it frightened her a little.

Lisbon sighed. The inner turmoil made her tense and she decided to get out of bed even though it was still early. She moved carefully, not intending to wake Jane, but she didn't get very far. The arm around her waist suddenly tightened its grip and forced her to sink back with a small gasp. She grunted under her breath and tried again.

This time she almost managed it to the edge of the bed when she was suddenly pulled backwards and bumped into Jane.

"Jane...!" she complained, after swallowing a surprised laugh. "What are you doing?"

"Keeping you from fleeing the country." To emphasize his words he wrapped her into a tight embrace and pushed one of his legs over hers.

"I am *not* fleeing." Realizing that he wouldn't let her go anytime soon, she relaxed and allowed him to nuzzle the back of her neck as well as to nudge the shirt out of his way while doing so.

"Liar," he whispered and pressed a sweet kiss on a sensitive spot behind her ear. She shivered pleasantly.

"Fine," she said quietly but not without affection. "It's just...I don't know, I feel a little restless, I guess. This—" She made a vague gesticulation. "This is just... new and *bizarre* somehow."

He didn't answer right away but let his hand on her belly stroke her gently, and she suddenly was very aware of him practically surrounding her. Keeping her warm and safe.

Guiltily she added, "I'm sorry, that's probably not a very considerate thing to say after spending the night together."

"s okay," he mumbled into her hair while his teasing fingertips continued their wandering.

"You're not upset?"

"Of course not." She felt him moving behind her as he rested his head on his other hand so that he was able to look at her face. "Feeling insecure is not a shame, Teresa. Although it *would* be a shame if I let you leave without acting on it." Lisbon turned her head to meet his gaze and was rewarded with a little peck on her nose before Jane went on, "We've been comfortable in our cozy and friendly relationship for about a decade. A drastic change like this can be awkward at first. It just shows that we care. I'd like to say, *don't be afraid* – but that would be hypocritical, because I'm scared as hell."

"You are?" Relief enfolded her like a warming blanket and so did her hope not to be

alone with it. "What keeps you from running?"

He smiled at her, brightly. "You."

She rolled her eyes, but blushed nonetheless.

"I'm serious!" he insisted. "It's not just because I love you. Believe me, I do! But I also have faith in you. I trust you with my heart, Teresa. And that's keeping me from running over the hills. That, and the embarrassment I would feel over leaving your house stark-naked. "

Lisbon snorted with amusement. "I'd like to see that."

"Sure you would!"

She chuckled at his smirk and after a moment of silence she finally turned in his embrace to face him. Taking her time to settle against him, she cracked a small, rather shy smile.

"Hey," she whispered as a greeting and bathed in the beaming response, feeling the awkward tension leaving her body in refreshing waves.

"Hey yourself." Beneath the swiped shirt he let his hand move from her belly to trace her side until he ended up on her hip. Playfully his fingers tickled their way down to her bare derriere, causing Lisbon to make an abstracted noise.

She arched closer and pressed her face into the crook of his neck, inhaling deeply.

"Anything else on your mind?" he asked softly, probably already knowing the answer, but she appreciated that he left the acknowledgement to her. She sighed, trying to settle her thoughts and make sense of them.

"I don't know," she said again. "It's as if I can't believe just yet that this is *real*. The past few weeks have been..." She struggled to find the right words and Jane moved his palm soothingly along her spine. "An emotional nightmare. I've been *so* hurt that you would let me go without even trying to fight. But I also understand why you didn't and how *painful* it must have been for you."

She took a deep breath and even though she knew that it was insensitive, Lisbon needed to say it. "And when you finally did, I... I can't forget the pain in his eyes. Marcus, he...tried to conceal it, but it was obvious how much I've hurt him."

"He really is a bad liar," Jane agreed quietly. "However, he took it with far more dignity that I expected him to."

"Maybe... Still, I really wish I wouldn't have dragged him right into the middle of this mess. I have to tell him that I'm sorry."

"You already did, my dear." Reassuring her Jane gave her butt a gentle squeeze.

"Several times so. And as far as I can judge he understood. Besides," he added a little dryly. "He already released some steam."

That finally induced her to look up at him. Carefully she brought her fingers to his nose. "Does it still hurt?" she wondered not without sympathy and caressed the fading bruise.

"Nah," he waved it off lightly. "I'm pretty sure he could have hit me far worse. He probably contained himself for you – which my nose and I are grateful for, even though we probably deserved more."

Not quite successful in biting back a smirk, she teased, "I'm not disagreeing on that."

"Figured as much." They shared a small smile, welcoming the familiar banter, before Jane got serious again. "Look, I know you feel guilty about him, but as reluctant as I

am to admit it – Marcus *is* a good guy. I'm confident that he will find someone, who will make him happy. Truly happy."

"Maybe you're right." Lisbon knew for sure that the guilt wouldn't go for a while, but Jane had a point – and she honestly hoped for Marcus to find a woman for whom he wasn't just the *next best thing*.

Apart from that, she also hoped that the lingering ache that kept burning in her chest would fade eventually. Even though Jane had captured her in the end, it was still there, reminding her of how great idiots they had been. At least the choking uneasiness was gone now, and after weeks of tension it felt like she could finally breathe again.

Lisbon blinked to shake herself out of her nagging musing and glanced at Jane. He was still watching her and she felt a sudden urge to kiss him, so strong that heat washed around her like a wave and her heart picked up its pace. Yet, in the brightness of the morning, she hesitated, feeling ridiculously shy.

Being a little nervous and rather unconsciously she let her fingertips dance along his facial outlines. As she was tracing his cheekbones, the nose and his lips, her longing for a kiss became overwhelming, but she couldn't quite muster the courage to lean in.

Jane seemed to notice her struggling and she was glad when he started to move closer and closer until they finally met halfway. The touch was warm and innocent and sweet, and Lisbon almost light-headed with relief. For a moment or two neither of them moved, both relishing the gentle contact. Their hands, hers on his face, his against her hip, were frozen in their caress, as if both Lisbon and Jane were too smitten with each other to concentrate on anything else.

Then, while keeping the pressure soft, Jane initiated a slow and lazy massaging of her lips with his own. Motions, which made the proverbial butterflies dance funnily in her stomach until she felt warm and dizzy with bliss. It was more a *first kiss* than any other they had shared before. Last night their minds had been fogged with passion, ease and longing, they had been drunken with lust and affection. It had been wonderful and satisfying – without any doubt – but now it was different, more special and even more intimate.

When a small moan escaped her throat, Lisbon felt his fingers twitch against her skin and how their grip tightened involuntarily. However, after leaning into the kiss once more, they ended it reluctantly. Taken by surprise about how emotionally they were affected by such an innocent gesture, both of them needed to draw a calming breath. After sharing not a single word but an honest smile, however, it wasn't long before they united their lips again – more eager this time. Jane gently broke hers apart to slip his tongue into her mouth, and willingly she opened up for him while intensifying their body contact with rocking moves of her hips.

It was his turn to groan and she found him hardening against her thigh. She broke the kiss and her lips curled into a smug grin.

"Don't look at me like that," he murmured with pretended accusation. "This is *your* fault."

"It is, isn't it?" She sighed with pride and joined their mouths together again, catching

his lower lip to nibble at it. He allowed her to play with him for a blink of an eye, but then he suddenly pushed her on her back and himself on top of her, burying her beneath him. Lisbon made a delighted noise and brought her arms around his neck, just as Jane started kissing her thoroughly.

Now, that was better. Lisbon's last coherent notice was about the awkwardness being gone in the end, and then only one single thought was left, consuming her mind entirely.

Jane.

Passion, fervently enjoyed the night before, rekindled and filled the air with sweet, buzzing electricity – not that there was much air left between them to begin with. Jane was heavy on her, pressing Lisbon into the mattress, his legs sneaked between hers – and she enjoyed every second of it. Her fingers had found their way into his hair, reflexively clutching his golden curls while Jane was making his kisses deep, kindly tantalizing and intoxicating. They deliciously poisoned her mind into pleasant absentmindedness, lured her heart into an erratic rhythm and caused her body to start humming with desire.

Eventually he broke the contact of their lips to trail his own down to her neck instead and she groaned both in disappointment and pleasure.

He was taking his time, placing open-mouthed kisses here and there, nipping at her skin, teasingly but not hard enough to leave any marks. And he didn't stop when he reached the button border of his shirt. Moving slowly he opened one button after another, whispering tiny pecks only on the small uncovered path. It made her squirm with every single touch. It was only when he finished the last button that he pushed himself on his elbows and reached for the loose parts of the fabric. Gently he slid them aside, not only exposing her chest but also lightly brushing her breasts in the process.

Lisbon gasped and pressed the back of her head into the pillow. It should have been forbidden how even the softest of his touches could set her nerve endings on fire. She breathed in deeply as his fingers started painting invisible patterns on her flat belly, but when they stayed there absent-mindedly, she blinked quizzically and looked at him.

Jane was gazing at her with so much wonder, love and pain, revealing so intense emotions, that she gripped the sheet and nearly whimpered. There was nothing that he hadn't explored the night before, but somehow it seemed to be different in the bright light of the morning. She wondered what he might be seeing and followed the movement of his eyes. From her disheveled hair that was sprawled on the pillow he took the path to her face, memorizing every detail from her dimples and freckles through to her laugh lines – only to linger even longer on the green of her eyes and the red of her slightly open lips.

From there he wandered along the shape of her neck, passed the collarbone until he paused on her breasts, watching the gentle but quickened up and down of her chest.

Lisbon blushed fiercely, not only because of the intimacy of this particular part of her body, but also because the small pink peaks right there seemed to be yearning for his attention. And if that twitching of the corner of his mouth was anything to go by, the bastard knew exactly how accurate that was.

After savoring the sight thoroughly, he continued his journey to where his hand was still busy with caressing her abdomen. It was quite a nice contrast – his big, slightly more tanned hand against the fair skin of her dainty waist.

He seemed lost in thoughts while he was watching the movements of his fingers and learning every little contraction of her muscles as a reaction to his touch. Yet, when he didn't go on but simply kept staring, Lisbon knit her brows.

"Jane?" she said a bit self-conscious even though his expression didn't leave any room for doubt about his admiration. He inhaled slowly and lifted his head to let their looks meet again, smiling reassuringly. Lisbon gasped, stunned by what she was discovering. His smile was an honest one, she could tell, but it crumbled as soon as she noticed his watery eyes, misted by sorrow.

Now truly worried she pushed herself up to get closer to him and whispered, "Something wrong?"

"No," he breathed, his smile in place again. "Everything's fine."

She didn't believe him for a second. Lifting her hand she placed her palm against his cheek. "Then why are you crying?" she asked softly with her thumb tenderly stroking along his cheekbone.

His smile vanished and he blinked rapidly to fight imminent tears. "I feel the same, you know," he managed to admit, his voice heavy and broken. "I can't believe that this is real either. I can't believe that...that I almost made the *same* mistake again." Lisbon understood immediately and his pain – his regret – all but choked her. Before she could say anything, he closed his eyes, still struggling against overwhelming emotions, and added, "I almost missed *this*."

"Jane," Lisbon whispered urgently, because she couldn't bear it any longer. She waited for him to look at her, making sure she had his full attention before she went on. "I'm here, Jane." Her words were hardly audible anymore but firm and promising. "I'm right here. And I'm not going anywhere." She needed him to understand. Maybe she needed to understand herself – and so she said once more, "*I'm here*."

Like a drowning man reaching the lifesaving surface of the water, Jane took a deep, quivering breath and *finally* won the battle of preventing his tears from falling. He merely sniffled a few times and visibly relaxed.

"I didn't fail this time," he realized with genuine surprise and Lisbon felt a sad tug at her heart, but gave him an affectionate smile nevertheless.

"No, you didn't," she affirmed and closed the gap between them to kiss him gently on the lips. He wrapped his arms around her without hesitation and she hugged him in response, both holding on tight as they sunk back into the pillow.

They didn't let go as their kissing became impassioned and loaded with lust. There was nothing between them, no space, no clothes, and no air. It was just skin on skin, a heated contact that left both of them breathless. Since he was still caught between

her thighs, they felt each other's excitement – and even though it grew overwhelmingly strong, they kept holding on, because it was such an intimate and thrilling feeling. A craving that was the sweetest ache on earth.

It was only when their arousal verged on the danger of fainting that Jane broke the kiss. He moved his lips and fingers downwards along her curves, recompensing her most sensitive spots for waiting so long. But even then he couldn't let go of her hand, their fingers entwined as if both Lisbon and Jane were afraid that one of them might vanish all of a sudden.

It wasn't something they could shake off easily, not even when they were joined together in the most intimate way possible – and not when they were moving with shared passion and in perfect sync. As they finally reached the climax of pleasure they were close enough to feel each other's trembling as their own.

As emotionally and physically exhausted as they were feeling afterwards, it took them quite some time to catch their breath – and it was such an incredibly good feeling that they couldn't stop exchanging glances and smiles. With another, rather chaste kiss on her lips Jane slid onto the mattress right next to her and tenderly pulled her into his arms again.

Lisbon sighed contently, cuddling into his embrace, and closed her eyes. She didn't even care that Jane's hopelessly creased shirt was still hanging loosely around her arms somewhere.

They kept dozing for a while, lying on their sides, facing each other with their limbs entwined.

It was quiet and peaceful again, until Jane brought his hand to her cheek, nuzzled her nose with his and murmured sleepily, "How would you feel about breakfast?"

She smiled and his fingertips slipped towards her lips. "Isn't it lunch time already?" she wondered teasingly and felt him shrugging.

"Meh, details," he hummed and let his fingers wander to her neck and then into her hair. "So?"

"Nah, I'm good. Besides, *breakfast* means that *one* of us would have to get up to prepare something – and I'm actually very happy where I am right now." To emphasize the statement she snuggled further into his chest. It made him laugh quietly and he ruffled fondly through her hair.

"Well, whatever makes you happy, my dear."

And suddenly Lisbon realized that it was true.

She was happy.

Guilt was still lingering beneath the surface and it would probably stay there for some time. However, the ache in her heart was already fading into a warning memory and the awkwardness was gone completely, replaced by exciting sparks of a new (old) love.

In the end, everything had fallen into place.

And maybe, she thought with a smirk as she dozed off once more, it is time to put on some rose-colored glasses after all.

The End