

Chapter 32

Rain-Washed Streets — The Board in Motion

The rain had softened to a thin, persistent mist that wrapped the city in a silver veil.

Streetlights shimmered across the wet pavement like scattered jewels, their reflections stretching long and liquid every time a car passed with a soft hiss of tires on asphalt. The air felt cool and clean, carrying the faint metallic scent of the river mixed with wet stone and distant bakery warmth. Umbrellas bobbed along the sidewalks in slow currents, their colors muted and glowing under the streetlamps, while pedestrians moved with that unhurried patience people adopt when the weather decides to linger.

Shammy stepped out of the bookstore and onto the sidewalk. The bell above the door chimed softly behind them, a gentle note that faded into the quiet rhythm of the rain. Her coat was damp at the shoulders, droplets sliding down the dark fabric in slow rivulets, but her tall frame moved with the same impossible grace — storm-carried presence wrapped in calm. Silver-white hair caught the streetlight in faint ionized gradients, electric blue eyes steady and warm as she adjusted her collar, the atmospheric pressure around her subtly shifting to make the small space between her and Jonas feel balanced and intimate.

Jonas glanced up at the sky, rain misting across his face, then fell into step beside her without hesitation.

“You escalated to weather variables.”

Shammy adjusted her coat with graceful fingers, silver-white hair shifting as she glanced sideways at him — electric blue eyes soft with quiet curiosity and subtle affection.

“Yes.”

Jonas smiled faintly, stepping closer so their arms brushed warmly as they walked.

“That’s bold.”

Shammy began walking down the street, her tall frame moving with effortless rhythm. Jonas fell into step beside her immediately, close enough that their shoulders touched with every other stride — warm, deliberate contact that neither pulled away from.

Neither of them rushed.

The city moved slowly around them — pedestrians under umbrellas nodding politely as they passed, cars rolling past with soft tire noise against wet asphalt, the distant glow of shop windows spilling golden light onto the glistening pavement.

Jonas eventually spoke, voice low and fond as he leaned slightly into her.

“So.”

Shammy waited, her hand brushing lightly against his as they walked, fingers grazing his sleeve in a quiet, teasing touch before settling.

“You changed the environment again.”

“Yes.”

Jonas nodded, his hand finding the small of her back — palm resting lightly, thumb stroking one slow, gentle circle through her damp coat.

“That usually means the next move is important.”

Shammy glanced sideways at him, silver-white hair catching the streetlight as she leaned fractionally into his touch, electric blue eyes warm and engaged.

“You understand experiments.”

Jonas shrugged slightly, but kept his hand at her lower back, pulling her gently closer so their bodies walked in comfortable alignment.

“I understand patterns.”

Shammy allowed a faint nod, her own hand sliding down to rest lightly on his forearm, fingers tracing a slow, affectionate path.

“Good.”

They walked another block in easy silence, shoulders brushing, hands occasionally finding each other in small, warm touches — her fingers brushing his wrist, his thumb stroking her lower back — the rain misting softly around them like a private curtain.

Jonas noticed something else, voice warm as he leaned closer, arm sliding fully around her waist.

“You also picked a direction.”

“Yes.”

Jonas gestured ahead, his hand staying securely at her waist, thumb stroking gentle circles.

“There’s a riverside promenade two streets over.”

Shammy said nothing, but she leaned into his hold, silver-white hair brushing his shoulder.

Jonas smiled, pulling her gently closer as they turned the corner.

“That was intentional.”

Shammy tilted her head slightly, electric blue eyes soft and teasing as she met his gaze.

“Yes.”

Jonas chuckled quietly, his arm tightening around her in a warm, comfortable embrace as the river came into view — dark water sliding quietly under the bridge, city lights reflecting in long, shimmering streaks across the surface.

The promenade was mostly empty in the rain, the wooden railing glistening wet, a few scattered benches shining under the lamps.

Jonas slowed slightly, but kept her held close.

“Well.”

Shammy stopped near the railing, turning to face him fully. Jonas joined her immediately, stepping close until their bodies aligned — his arms sliding around her waist again in a loose, warm hold, her tall frame relaxing comfortably against him.

The river moved steadily below them, rain misting softly across the water like silver threads.

Jonas leaned against the railing beside her, but kept one arm around her waist, thumb stroking gentle circles at her hip as he looked at her.

“You escalated the board again.”

Shammy folded her arms loosely over his, but stayed warmly in his embrace, silver-white hair glowing under the streetlamp as she studied him with quiet affection.

“Yes.”

Jonas smiled faintly, pulling her gently closer until their foreheads nearly brushed.

“So what’s the next move.”

Shammy studied him carefully, her hands resting lightly on his chest, fingers tracing slow, warm patterns through his coat.

“You are still here.”

Jonas shrugged, his arms tightening around her in a secure, comfortable hold.

“I said I was curious.”

Shammy nodded, electric blue eyes soft and warm as she leaned her forehead gently against his.

“Yes.”

Jonas looked at her for a moment, thumb stroking along her waist.

“You’re still observing.”

Shammy answered calmly, but her voice was softer now as she stayed in his arms, one hand rising to rest lightly on the side of his neck.

“Yes.”

Jonas tilted his head slightly, forehead resting gently against hers.

“And what have you learned.”

Shammy considered the question, her tall frame relaxed and warm against him.

“You adapt quickly.”

Jonas laughed quietly, the sound warm against her skin as he held her closer.

“That sounds like a compliment.”

Shammy's expression remained neutral, but her fingers stroked gently along his neck, electric blue eyes warm with quiet affection.

"It is data."

Jonas leaned forward slightly, forehead still touching hers.

"Well."

He looked back at her, arms secure around her waist.

"My turn then."

Shammy waited, her body comfortably held against his.

"You're not just observing anymore."

Shammy raised an eyebrow, silver-white hair brushing his cheek.

"Explain."

Jonas smiled, his hand sliding up to cup the side of her neck gently, thumb stroking along her jaw.

"You're participating."

Shammy said nothing, but she stayed exactly where she was, her arms sliding fully around him in a warm, steady embrace.

Jonas gestured lightly between them, voice low and fond.

"You changed environments three times."

He looked at her calmly, forehead still resting gently against hers.

"That's escalation."

Shammy tilted her head slightly, silver-white hair glowing in the rain-misted light.

"Yes."

Jonas nodded, holding her close.

"So what happens if I escalate too?"

Shammy watched him carefully, her tall frame warm and relaxed in his arms.

"That depends."

Jonas raised an eyebrow, thumb stroking gently along her jaw.

"On what?"

Shammy's voice remained calm, but carried quiet, atmospheric warmth as she stayed in his embrace.

"Your curiosity."

Jonas laughed softly, pulling her gently closer until their bodies pressed warmly together.

“That word again.”

Shammy did not reply.

The rain drifted lightly across the river, misting softly around them like a private veil.

Jonas studied her for another moment, then said quietly, voice fond and close:

“Alright.”

Shammy waited, electric blue eyes soft on his.

“I’m curious.”

Shammy nodded once, silver-white hair brushing his cheek.

“Good.”

Jonas stepped slightly closer.

Not aggressively.

Just enough to shorten the distance between them even further, his arms secure around her waist.

Shammy did not move.

Jonas smiled faintly, forehead still resting gently against hers.

“Well.”

He said quietly, voice warm against her skin,

“I suppose the experiment just escalated again.”

Shammy met his gaze calmly, her arms wrapped securely around him.

“Yes.”

—

Above the City

Mephisto leaned forward with open delight, eyes gleaming.

“Oh now this is elegant.”

Konrad watched the pair standing beside the river quietly.

“Yes.”

Below them Shammy and Jonas stood close at the railing, the rain drifting softly around them, bodies aligned warmly, arms around each other in quiet intimacy.

Mephisto gestured toward the scene.

“She built the board slowly.”

Konrad nodded.

“Yes.”

Mephisto’s grin widened.

“And now the pieces are finally touching.”

Konrad said nothing.

Mephisto clasped his hands behind his back.

“Well then.”

His eyes gleamed with anticipation.

“Let’s see who plays the next move.”

—

© 2025-2026. “World of Ace, Mai and Shammy” and all original characters, settings, story elements, and concepts are the intellectual property of the author. All rights reserved.

Non-commercial fan works are allowed with attribution.

Commercial use, redistribution, or adaptation requires explicit permission from the author.

Contact: editor at publication-x.com

From:

<https://datavault.ws/> - **DataVault**

Permanent link:

<https://datavault.ws/doku.php/canon:ace27:chapter32>

Last update: **15/03/2026 12:08**

