

Maybe in another dimension

Von ellenchain

Kapitel 12: Were we in love back then?

Thankfully, a fellow mutant had almost the same stature as Charles, so he could lend him two jeans. Erik had to do a lot of explaining to do while they had the meeting, but his people were more or less open minded towards the new habitant.

"Is it really safe to have him here?"

"If he's here by his own, then we're lucky to have him, right?"

"Will he help us with our problems with the humans?"

"Is he your new pet?"

"Did you finally give in?"

"What if it's a trap?"

He received all kinds of opinions during their meeting but generally the mood was accepting. Charles Xavier was now officially a part of Genosha. At least for now.

When he came home, he saw Charles sitting on the couch reading a book. Again, he was covered with the blanket and more cushions he had probably found around the house.

As soon as Erik entered the living room, his friend looked up and smiled at him faintly. "How was the meeting?"

"Great", the metal bender murmured. It already felt way too comfortable to get asked that kind of question by someone who just started living with Erik. Despite the fact that the question never arose if Charles should get his own flat or house. "I have two jeans for you. The guy said you can keep them."

Blue eyes widened. "Oh really? That's so nice, thank you!"

The jeans fit more or less. This version of Charles was a little bit smaller around the waist than Erik had in memory. The jeans were a bit loose.

"It's just for today", Charles said and moved around the couch to see if the trousers were okay.

"Seeing your tiny luggage... You might want to add some more clothes."

"Is there something nearby? Where I could buy new outfits?"

Erik sighted and went to the kitchen. He was hungry. "About an hour drive from here are a few shops. But nothing special. So don't expect expensive brands like... whatever you wear usually."

"I don't know what I usually wear. I just grabbed a few things from the cupboards back at the school." The brown-haired telepath followed Erik to the kitchen and lingered at the island. "Then I will keep wearing your clothes if you're okay with that."

Erik wasn't okay with that. Or was he? In the end he didn't answer and gathered some noodles.

Charles watched him intensely and nibbled at his nails. "I wanted to make something to eat, but then I remembered that I'm no good as a cook. So I waited for you."

"It's probably better this way. I don't want to see my kitchen in flames."

Charles giggled and stepped closer. "Maybe you can show me some tricks?"

"Tricks? It's just cooking..."

"Then let me watch you."

Erik furrowed his brow.

"Please", Charles said again so tenderly that Erik's heart melt in an instant.

So they cooked together in the afternoon and again in the evening. Charles was good in cutting things without hurting himself, so he had a new job to do, while Erik did the rest.

Right after they finished eating, Charles asked for a round of chess. And Erik's mood lightened up instantly.

"Do you also want a drink?", Erik asked, already knowing the answer.

"Yes, please", Charles said with a loving smile on his face.

Erik won all rounds, but Charles was getting better. This time they only drank one drink that they didn't even finish after they were done playing.

When they were sitting in comfortable silence, Charles interrupted it by asking a strange question. "How many people did you kill?"

He caught Erik off guard. He almost spilled his drink. "Excuse me?"

"Hank was clearly convinced that you're a cruel murderer. But being here with you... is completely different. It's like he's talking about a different person. I know that you have a short temper, but... now I'm curious. How many people did you kill?"

Ah, Charles was starting to get to know him. But unfortunately from the wrong perspective. "Too much, I'd say. On the other hand... maybe too less", Erik answered truthfully and stared into his almost empty drink. "I used to kill every Nazi, I met. Then I killed every human being that was threatening me. And now... I kill if only necessary. But unfortunately that's very often."

Charles watched him with curious eyes. "Did my older me killed anyone?"

"I don't know. Probably?"

"Hank didn't want to tell me. And Raven said that killing people should be avoided if necessary. As if I was a child."

"You are", Erik said and looked into Charles eyes. "You don't remember your past and you're only a few days old. We weren't able to predict you."

"My other me was predictable?"

Erik smiled. "Oh, yes. Almost completely."

"That's not a nice thing to say", Charles pouted and drank all of the remaining Whiskey in his glass. Although it was just one drink, he was already a little bit drunk.

After another comfortable silence arose, Erik also finished his drink and thought about going to bed. Right after he was wondering if Charles might need another blanket, Charles started speaking again.

"Can I ask you a personal question?"

Erik raised his eyebrows and nodded after a few moments of guessing what it might be that Charles wanted to know and needed to ask beforehand.

"When we met... back then. You know, 20 years ago", he started stammering as if he had difficulties to formulate a coherent sentence. "Were we in love?"

Erik felt his heart stopping. The shock must have been written on his face, because Charles looked suddenly equally shocked.

"I-I mean – I feel so attached to you that I thought... You know, I only remembered your name and mine and when we met for the first time it felt... so calming. I was so scared in that facility, but then there was you. And even now I feel so comfortable around you. But you keep saying that it's far more complicated between us than just

friendship, so I thought..." He placed the empty glass back on the tiny table next to the chessboard and searched for Erik's eyes. "Those feelings I have for you are deep. Very deep. I guess, it's because I felt them for such a long time. And considering that you hurt me back then and we separated on such bad conditions... I don't know. It sounds like we were lovers. And then broke up."

Oh god, Erik thought. Innocent Charles was cute. But also too directly when talking about feelings. Not that he hadn't been in his old state, but saying 'My feelings for you are deep' was next level. And Erik was so bad in talking about feelings. That's why it has always been easy with Charles in his head. There was no need to tell him – he already knew. But that mental link was out of question.

"That's not exactly how it went", Erik began and wet his dry lips. "We weren't... a couple or something like that."

"Oh, I see", the telepath muttered and looked down – clearly disappointed. "Was that the reason why I wasn't allowed to say something like that in front of Hank and Raven?"

Erik sighted. And against his own reason, he poured himself another drink. "No. That was something different."

Blue eyes looked at him in confusion.

"Affection between two men is... difficult. Hank and Raven may be a little bit more open towards that topic, but others aren't. Just be careful when talking about finding someone special and referring to another man", Erik explained and was reminded at the camps in Auschwitz, where homosexuality was treated like a disease. Just like being Jewish.

Charles stared to Erik's drink and decided to take a second one, too. "I don't understand that, but I think I have to accept it." He drank his Whiskey in two sips. "But thank you for your answer. I guess our feelings are not mutual then."

Erik's heart hammered in his chest. His hands were shaking. He never imagined talking about something like that with Charles. Not like this. Not on this level of honesty.

Before Erik could say anything, Charles took the bottle and poured more Whiskey in his glass. Again. "I see now that this explains a lot. Your behaviour towards me and my older self. And why I was so desperate. And why I never got married. Or had a partner at all. I guess, I was waiting for you to come back to me. Or something like that."

Erik also drank his remaining Whiskey down in one. But it wasn't helping at all. His heart ached nonetheless hearing such assumptions.

"And here I am again", Charles said and suddenly smiled sadly in his drink. "Can you believe it? I didn't know anything about you – just your name – but I was so convinced that you were special to me that I didn't see that you weren't thinking the same. I was convinced that going to you instead of waiting another 20 years would solve

everything. But I guess... that's not the case."

Erik wanted to answer. Wanted to say something. But nothing came out of his mouth. Silence stretched through the room that made him uncomfortable. Then he saw Charles wiping over his face with his arm.

He was crying.

"Oh, Charles, no", Erik tried to sound soothing but tensed up immediately.

Then Charles laughed between the silent sobs. "I don't even know why I'm crying! I'm so sad and I don't know why. But I don't want to remember my horrible past, because I have the feeling that... knowing why I'm crying won't make me feel any better. Most likely even worse!"

The more Charles swiped over his wet face with his arm, the less Erik knew what to do. Why was he so bad at that topic?

But he remembered that Charles liked being touched. He used to hug Raven a lot and when he and Erik became friends, he hugged him too, whenever the opportunity had arrived. It was very awkward at the beginning, because Erik hadn't been touched like that for most of his life. But he got used to it.

Until he had to give up on it again.

The metal bender got up, walked around the tiny coffee table and sat down next to Charles. He opened his shaky arms and put them around the warm body. Charles sobbed in surprise, but leaned against Erik instantly. A few seconds passed by until Charles finally came closer and also put his arms around Erik. He laid his head on Erik's shoulder and probably closed his eyes, because hot tears streamed down Erik's throat. His warm breath was on Erik's skin. His hair smelled like Erik's shampoo. The navy cardigan still looked nice on him. His tiny hands on his back were comforting.

The hug felt so nice, Erik also closed his eyes and lay his cheek on Charles' hair. The crying stopped after a few moments of hugging and caressing backs.

And eventually they fell asleep on the couch.