

## Chapter 100 Kidnapped

Ethan

Jane is staring at me so blankly, I'm afraid she didn't actually hear what I said. After a moment she blinks, and when she opens her mouth, her voice is so small I can scarcely hear it. "Gone where?"

My heart cracks open in my chest. "I don't know what happened." I can't tell her what I suspect, that they went out looking for her. "They were in their room, then I went to the bathroom and when I came out, they were gone."

Jane starts looking around, as if she expects to find them somewhere amidst all the police cars and investigators. "I... then why are you all standing here? Why aren't you looking for them?" Her voice is getting higher with every word, and I can see that she's quickly beginning to panic. Every moment that passes that she doesn't see her pups, is another spike of her heart rate.

"Baby, I came down here almost immediately... and when I did." I trail off, trying to figure out any way to soften this blow, but knowing it's no use. "I smelled Eve."

"But that's impossible." Jane argues, paling. "She's locked up."

The police commander is standing next to me, his face ashen. "Actually she isn't. I was already on my way here to tell the Alpha when his call came in. She broke out of the hospital earlier this evening."

"I checked the security cameras, Jane." I add, trying to quiet my own pounding heart. "She was here, and she took them."

Jane shakes her head, "No," she states mulishly, striding back and forth in the middle of the payment. "No, no, no. She can't have them. If she has them, she'll kill them!"

"I'm not going to let that happen." I growl, taking her by the shoulders and forcing her to stand still and listen. "We're going to find them."

"How?!" Jane bursts, tears springing to her eyes. "You couldn't even keep track of them when they were in the same house with you!"

"I know." I croak, guilt eating me up from the inside out. "I'm so sorry, Janey."

Her little fist slams into my chest, and though I'm sure she meant it to hurt, it felt about as powerful as a bee sting. "They were supposed to be safe with you!" Jane cries, her sweet voice full of bitter pain and accusation. "You were supposed to protect them!" She tries to wallop me again, but I catch her wrists – first one and then the other when she raises it too.

"Stop it, let me go!" She orders, thrashing against me as tears stream down her face. Instead I yank her into my arms, pinning her struggling limbs to her sides and encouraging her to lean her weight against me. She continues fighting, beating her ineffectual fists into my back and calling me every dirty name she can think of.

"Shhh," I try to soothe her, even though I know nothing can fix this. I can rub her back and kiss her hair all I want, but she won't be satisfied until the pups are returned. I won't either, but I can't stand to see her in this pain.

"Stop trying to comfort me!?" Jane sobs, her shoulders shaking violently as her hands clutch at the fabric of my shirt. "I don't want to be comforted! I want my babies."

"I know, baby." I croon, rocking her gently as she finally surrenders, pressing her face into my chest. "We'll get them back, I promise."

"No," She moans, the scent of her fear palpable. "She won't let them live long enough for us to get them back."

"Listen to me, Jane." I order, giving her a little shake. "I will die before I let her harm them, and I will die before I give up. The police are already tracking them. I discovered they were gone so quickly that Eve is probably still trying to find a safe place to hide."

"How did she even get all four of them?" Jane whispers.

Exhaling heavily, I explain, "She didn't, technically. She grabbed Paisley as a hostage, so that the others would follow. She held her claws to her throat, and Riley, Parker and Ryder followed her into a taxi." Jane can only whimper at this news. "They knew they'd be safer together than she'd be on her own. That's how we're going to get them back. The pups are smart, and they are way more than Eve can handle. She'll be so busy trying to wrangle them, she won't have time to hurt them."

Jane snuffles, "I hope they make her life fucking miserable."

"They will." I promise, "Those four together are a kidnappers worst nightmare."

"Okay." Jane nods, finally able to pull herself together with this thought in mind. "So what do we do?"

She still doesn't pull away from me, staying snuggled close even as police officers and reporters swarm around us. Before I can answer her, my private investigator runs up to us. "Alpha I just heard, what can I do?"

A spark of hope blazes to life in my chest. If anyone can find Eve, Jackson can. "We need to find Eve yesterday." I announce, looking over at the police commander. "I want a red alert put out, and the entire city on lockdown. Have the press cover this and only this until they're found. Get the entire pack searching for them. Put her photo and

their photos up on every TV station, telephone pole and news outlet we have.”

A volley of “yes sirs” answer me, and a dozen wolves run off to do my bidding. Looking back to Jane, I say, “I’m going to go after her. I don’t know where she went, but I know the direction the car was going and I have to try. I need you to stay here with the commander, in case she tries to get in contact.”

“Ethan, I’m not just going to sit here and do nothing.” Jane objects, “She’s not going to get in contact – she didn’t do this for a ransom, and besides, we have cell phones now! I don’t need to be at home for her to call.”

Sighing, I squeeze her a little more tightly. “Eve has to know that I’ll never forgive her if she hurts the pups–”

“You’re assuming she still cares about your opinion,” Jane counters, “how do we know she hasn’t completely lost her mind, that she’s not doing this for revenge? What was she even doing waiting outside the apartment? Why...” She pulls away from me for the first time, “why did the pups go outside in the first place?”

“I don’t know her motives, but we can’t eliminate the possibility that she might try to use them as leverage to get her freedom back.” I tell Jane, ignoring her question and hoping I can distract her. I don’t want her to reach the conclusion I have myself: that if she hadn’t walked

out, they wouldn't have either. "And we can't eliminate the possibility that she might target you next. I need you to be safe, I need to know you're protected or I won't be able to focus completely on the pups."

"You didn't answer me." Jane replies with a deep frown. "Ethan, what were they doing leaving the building without you?"

"I don't know," I answer, wincing when I see her lips begin quivering again.

"It was me." She says hoarsely, "they were coming after me."

Shaking my head, I lie right to her beautiful face. "We don't know that, baby."

"Yes we do!" Jane insists, "it's the only explanation. Oh Goddess, this is all my fault."

"You have to keep it together, Luna." Jackson interjects, "You can't help the pups if you fall to pieces. And asking why it happened won't do any good either. We have to focus on finding them, not assigning blame."

"Well said." I nod approvingly, "now, will you stay here with the commander, please?"

I can see that she wants to refuse. Her little chin is already tilting up in defiance, and I can't blame her. If the tables were turned and she was asking me to stay behind, I would never agree. Still, Eve doesn't want to

harm me, she wants Jane out of the picture any way possible – and that means she’s in danger as long as Eve is out there. “Please Jane. I’m begging you.”

She glares up at me from beneath her long, dark lashes, and slowly agrees. “Fine, but only if you keep me updated.”

“I promise.” I quickly consent, kissing her furrowed brow.

“Now,” I say to the commander, “Where are you holding the detective, if anyone knows where Eve might go, it’s him.”

The man’s face flushes with color, and my heart sinks into my stomach. “We aren’t holding him, Alpha.” He stammers, “He made bail. He left the precinct hours ago.”

“You mean the only man in the entire city, who might have told us how to find her, is out there on the loose, and you have no idea where?” I demand, feeling my blood begin to boil.

“Yes, sir.” He gulps, “that’s right.”

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