

The Luna and her Quadruplet Pups by Jane Above Story

Chapter 127

Jane

I can't be pregnant... I can't.

It's too soon – too complicated. I don't have the brain space to focus on such a momentous possibility, let alone figure out what it would mean for Ethan and I.

We're already stuck in a holding pattern, trying not to get ahead of ourselves with feelings while our lives are in shambles... at least I am. Ethan seems as determined as ever that we be mated for the rest of time.

I've been terribly anxious ever since the possibility entered my mind, and as much as I want to find out whether my fears are real or just paranoia, I'm afraid to find out the truth. Under different circumstances I'd go to the doctor at the first opportunity, but I'm not sure I can cope with one more worry on my plate. Maybe it's a completely escapist mindset – like an ostrich sticking its head in the sand- but as long as there's a chance I'm not pregnant, I can go on pretending like everything is normal. The moment I find out otherwise, however, they'll be no ignoring it.

It's not as if it's outside the realm of possibilities.

After all, I've always struggled with motion sickness. It's more the fact that I haven't gone back into heat yet, but that can easily happen with stress. Another time I might be ashamed of the impulse to hide and ignore my problems, but I'm protecting myself now. If I put any more weight on my overburdened shoulders, I know I'll crumple under the pressure.

When I left Paisley with Ethan, I got very good at compartmentalizing my emotions, and those skills have come in very handy over the last few days. I put the possibility of pregnancy into a lock box in the back of my mind and focused solely on getting my pups back, but every now and then the idea escapes, slipping out of its secluded corner to torment me at the most inconvenient of times – like now.

"You okay?" Ethan asks, searching my features as I try on potential disguises. "Are the clothes too hot?"

"No, it's fine" I lie, giving myself a little shake as I study my reflection in the mirror, "what do you think?"

He turns me to face him, even though he could see me perfectly well before -I think he just wanted an excuse to touch me, After a moment's consideration, he shakes his head, still not releasing me. "You're too pretty."

I snort, turning back to the mirror. Those are the last words I'd use to describe myself right now. I'm wearing boys' clothing, with my breasts bound and my hair piled up under a wig and cap. My slender figure has lost any semblance of femininity in the baggy garments, and while some women might look stunning in pixie haircuts, I am not one of them. "You don't have to flatter me Ethan." I tell my mate, "it's okay that I don't look my best."

"I'm not trying to flatter you, Jane." Ethan replies seriously. "You're too pretty to pass for a boy. This isn't enough."

"I think you're biased." I tell him-wryly, turning my head from left to right and studying the lines of my face.

"I'm not." He insists. "Linda, can you come in here?"

My friend promptly emerges from the bathroom, dressed up in a very similar getup. "This is ridiculous."

She grumbles when she appears. "I feel like an idiot"

Despite her words, she doesn't make a half-bad page boy. She's considerably taller than I am, and while striking, her features are more masculine than my own.

If I didn't know any better, I might think she particularly pretty boy. "Linda, you look great." Ethan tells her, if we give you a beard it will be perfect, now what do you think about Jane?" He asks, turning my body towards her. This time he doesn't remove his hands after positioning me, keeping them firmly on my waist and scalding me straight through my top.

"Well I'd believe it more if you weren't subtly groping her." Linda chortles. "But it's not quite believable anyway – her features are too delicate."

"See?" Ethan says, his lips grazing my ear. "I think we need to put you both in some facial hair."

"And what is your disguise going to be?" I ask saucily, "a ball gown?"

"No" He replies with a small smile, ""m going to age myself up a bit. Gray hair, a cane, full-on whiskers."

Instead of an Alpha and two she-wolves, we'll be an old man and two boys. No one will recognize us"

"Maybe not by sight" Linda remarks, "but what about our scents? We're both marked now" she reminds him with a charming blush.

"I have some cologne to disguise that." I share, slipping out of Ethan's hold long enough to do some digging in my bag. It hadn't been easy to create a new scent on this journey – surprisingly the ship's supplies provided half the ingredients I needed, and Ethan found the rest in town, but supplies weren't the hard part.

Doing chemistry when I felt like death warmed over was absolutely miserable. Still, I managed for my pups.

I toss the perfume bottle to Linda, who sprays a bit on her wrist and inhales, coughing when it hits her senses. "My Goddess, that's like bottled testosterone."

"Yup" I confirm, moving back to Ethan's side and letting him slip his arm around me again. That's the idea."

"Okay, so we have our disguises." Linda grimaces, assuming you two can keep your hands off one another that is."

Ethan arches his brow. "Why? We could pretend to be gay."

Rolling my eyes, I shake my head. "She's right, we'll draw more attention as a couple."

"Are you saying we're a couple?" Ethan asks, waggling his eyebrows at me.

"No, I'm saying that's not an option." I correct, giggling despite myself.

"Spoil sport." Ethan teases, dropping a kiss on my neck. I thought it was only going to be one, but I suspect after so many days in close quarters, with me begging him to give me a bit of attention and he steadfastly resisting my wiles, Ethan is beginning to cave to temptation. Because instead of a single kiss, he ends up nuzzling my skin and nibbling my throat, dropping kisses after kisses and seeming to forget we aren't alone.

"Ahem! Linda clears her throat pointedly.

Ethan pulls away from me at last, looking completely unrepentant. "Sorry Linda."

"Yeah, sure." She mutters, though I think I see a hint of a smile on her face. "Jane, can you help me with the beard?"

"Of course." I agree, pulling free of Ethan and following her into the bathroom.

"Alright spill." She says once we're alone.

"What do you mean?" I ask, blushing.

"What's the deal with you and lover boy out there?"

" She asks, "I thought you hadn't made a decision about your relationship yet."

"I haven't" I hedge, studying the packaging of the fake facial hair Ethan purchased. "It's just been difficult with all the medications I'm on. They're making me really loopy and he's been so strict about not taking advantage... I think we're both just a little."

"Sublimating all your anxiety about the pups with s*x?" Linda suggests shrewdly.

"Well, not actively." I mutter, feeling her words slice into me. Is that really all this is, Ethan and I trying to distract ourselves from our fear and grief by focusing on each other? "Do you think it's terrible if we are?" I ask her, feeling my stomach begin to churn anew. "I mean, is it completely twisted to be preoccupied with each other when our lives are falling apart around us?"

"Maybe." Linda replies honestly, "but then again, what's the alternative? Falling to pieces, ignoring the problem?" She shakes her head, "you can't do anything until we make port. I don't think it's wrong for you to try to distract yourself. I think the question is – what happens when this is all over? You don't want to lead him on now if you're going to leave him in the end."

"I don't think I am." I share softly, painfully aware that Ethan is still on the other side of the door. "I mean, I haven't decided anything yet, but I don't think this is just stress or misdirected emotions."

"I don't understand" Linda frowns, changed?"

"what's

"I have." I realize, "Strange as it seems, I'm not the same woman I was when I came back to town, Linda." I continue, staring at my own unfamiliar reflection, yet feeling as if I'm seeing myself for the first time in ages. For the first time in a long time, I feel like my old self."

"Like when you were Ethan's prisoner?" Linda questions skeptically.

"No, like before." I correct her. "Before Eve ruined everything, before I became afraid of my own shadow....and there's a reason Ethan and I were together then." I reflect, wondering if he can hear me, and not giving a damn whether or not he can. "Whatever else happens, we have an undeniable connection. We may not be divined, but we chose each other over everyone else... and sometimes that means even more than fate."

"Well in that case" Linda replies, offering me a wide smile."Welcome back."

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