

The Luna and her Quadruplet Pups by Jane Above Story

Chapter 129

Ethan

I'm by the marina when I catch a familiar scent, and my mind instantly transports me back to the alley where we lost track of the pups' scent in Cité de la Nuit.

My wolf howls in my head, and I immediately begin following the trail. It's a struggle to continue hobbling along in the guise of an old man, rather than breaking into a run and chasing down my prey. Somehow I find the patience to go slowly, following the scent to a dive bar just off the pier.

Peering inside, I see a few rough looking men gathered at the bar, smoking and drinking huge pints of ale. I c0ck my ears towards the sounds of their voices, trying to match the scent to its owner.

"It's your turn to get the tab, Griff" One of the shifters grumbles.

"I can't. You know our job went bust" The man in question answers bitterly. "I'll be lucky if I get paid before we get back to the continent."

"Yeah, yeah" the first man scoffs, "it's always the same story with you, you roll into town every few months and mooch off of us, always leaving someone else to pay off your debts. I don't know why we put up with you."

"Because without me you'd run out of merchandise " Griff replies, putting enough emphasis on the word to make me think whatever he provides them isn't legal."This s**t hole wouldn't be nearly as much fun without our girls."

"That's true enough." Another bar fly agrees, "but you didn't bring any this time."

"It was a special job – I already told you." Griff explains, "Anita said we'd make our usual shipment on schedule, this is just a one-off."

"A failed one- off" The first man frowns, "where is Anita anyway."

"She went ahead to the capital – and thank the Goddess, I hate being around her when she's in a foul mood. Talk about no fun" Griff chuckled.

I've heard enough. There's not a doubt in my mind that this Griff person was responsible for taking my pups, and my wolf is going berserk in my head, begging to be let out so he can destroy the slimeball. Truthfully I wouldn't mind destroying all these ruffians – it's clear they all take part in abusing trafficked women, talking about them as if they're nothing more than items for sale. Still, I can't afford to blow my cover, and leaving a trail of dead bodies in my wake would certainly do that.

I don't know if the Goddess was looking out for me, or if it was pure dumb luck that I happened upon them in the middle of such an incriminating conversation, but I'm not going to waste the opportunity. Pondering how I can extract the trafficker from the scene without drawing attention to myself, I study the small bar, noting the exits and dark corners. After a moment my eyes land on the grimey restrooms, and I realize all I have to do is wait. Eventually Griff will have to relieve himself, and then the only challenge will be keeping him quiet while I beat him bloody.

It takes the better part of twenty minutes for the man to step away, and the more time that passes, the more I struggle to keep hold of my wolf. I'm feeling more bloodthirsty by the minute, especially as I continue to listen to the despicable men carouse. As the minutes tick by I also try to untangle the meaning behind his statement about the job going bust."

We already knew King Aimon hadn't bought the pups, did the job end because something went wrong, or were our suspicions about the pups escaping correct? When Griff finally stands and begins weaving his way through the chairs and tables towards the restroom, I follow closely, trying to keep my cane quiet as I tail him.

When I step into the bathroom I'm pleased to see that he's the only man present, and that there's a lock on the door. I quickly slide the bolt home, and approach behind him at the urinal. Extending my claws, I swiftly bring them to his throat, taking cruel pleasure in his shock. He freezes in place, even ceasing to urinate mid-stream.

"Hello Griff" I greet him, my voice little more than a guttural growl.

"|- who are you?" He demands hoarsely. "What do you want?"

Ducking my head to his shoulder, I inhale deeply, catching the unmistakable scent of the kids, even if it is a few days old. "Tell me scum," I begin ominously. "Why do you smell like my pups?"

If I thought he'd frozen before, it's nothing Alpha." It compared to the way he shrivels up now. takes me a moment to realize that he's wet himself, the stench of urine was already so strong in the air.

"That's right" I confirm darkly. "And if you want to live, you'll tell me where they are."

"I don't have them!" He assures me nervously.

"Who does?" I demand, thinking this is even easier than I expected. It's amazing how spineless even the worst criminals can be. Then again, I could r!p his throat out at a moment's notice, I'd even enjoy it.

"No one-they escaped!" He tells me, his voice shaking. "We were taking them to the capital, and they convinced us to stop so one of the boys could be sick, then they ran away into the jungle."

All of a sudden I remember Jane's nightmares about the pups being alone in the rainforest, and my stomach sinks. Were those only bad dreams after all?

Or was she having some sort of premonition? "Where exactly?"

"On the King's highway." He chokes, "just past the turn off for Alta Montaña."

"You didn't go after them?" I snap, trying to imagine the scene.

"We would have, but they threw nails all over the road. I still have wounds in my feet." He whines, as if he thinks I might be a sympathetic audience.

"Good." I scoff, picturing him howling in pain while my clever pups escape. I'm both proud and terrified for them. It's a relief that they aren't with the King, but Jane was right, they're too little to survive on their own – especially in a hostile environment that challenges even the most capable adults.

"Why has Anita gone to the capital?" I inquire, remembering this detail from his conversation.

"She doesn't tell us her plans." Griff mutters, sounding a bit sullen. "But if I had to guess, she's gone to tell the King the pups are here, so that we can still get paid for our efforts"

My insides – which have been in knots for days- wind themselves even tighter."Do you have a way to get in contact with her?"

"AllI have is a phone number" He shares, quickly rattling off the number.

"Good." I state grimly, "now this is how it's going to work, Griff." I announce, scraping my razer sharp claws over his carotid artery and listening to his pulse race."

I'd like nothing more than to rip your head off your worthless body, in fact, I've been imagining doing just that ever since I caught your scent."

"Please don't" He begs, "Please, I'll do anything, I can be of use to you."

"And that's the only reason I'm going to let you live.

I inform him coldly. "When I walk out of this room, you're going to put your tiny d**k back in your p*nts, and go back out to your buddies like- nothing happened.

You will not tell them, or anyone else that we met. If you do, I will find out, and you will lose the right to continue breathing." I threaten. "So you're not going to say a f*****g word – but you will not forget. Because one day I'm going to come back to you and call in this favor.

"|- what favor?" He stammers.

"Letting you live" | hiss, digging in my claws just enough to break the skin of his throat.

"Oh, of course! Of course!" He panders weakly.

"Good." I snarl, "and if anyone asks, if we ever cross paths again before I'm ready to cash out, you'll pretend we've never met. Is that clear?"

"Yes, Alpha." He promises. "You have my word.

"Good." I answer, seriously debating taking a pound of his flesh now – out of pure spite. In the end I regain my control enough to release him, striding out of the bathroom while he continues to tremble in the front of the urinal. Despite our interaction, he never got a good look at me, so while he may recognize my scent, I hang around the bar long enough to watch him emerge. He's flushed crimson, the front of his trousers are soaked through, and his eyes are darting around in fright.

As soon as I hear him lie to his companions about being so drunk he couldn't reach the urinal in time, I slip away, confident he won't spill the truth. Just as before, it's a challenge to move slowly when every fiber of my being is overflowing with urgency, but I manage.

I can't wait to tell Jane what I learned, however when I arrive at the bed and breakfast I find both bedrooms empty. She's gone.

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