

# The Luna and her Quadruplet Pups by Jane Above Story

Chapter 136

3rd Person

"It can't be locked!" Riley insisted. "We just got ins!"

"Maybe it locked aut-auto... you knows, on its own."

Paisley guessed, unable to navigate her tongue around the big word.

"Maybe," Riley agreed. "But either way, we're definitely moving" The trunk was rocking back and forth, and they could hear footsteps outside.

"1 thinks we're being carried?" Paisley whispered nervously.

"Do you think the boys are moving too?" Riley wondered.

"I dunno." Paisley frowned, distracted when the trunk stilled with a sudden jolt, and a strange rumbling filled the air. "Wha's that noise?"

Riley leaned up to the keyhole in the wooden siding, trying to peer through. "I sees the other trunk!" She shared excitedly. "But we're not in the street anymore."

Even as she spoke, they jerked forward again, banging their slight shoulders into the walls of their wooden enclosures. "Where are we then?" Paisley whimpered.

"You're not going to like it." Riley told her, gazing around the dimly lit space outside.

"Why not?" Paisley questioned with trepidation.

"Cuz I think we're in the back of a truck... or van." She guessed. "It looks kinda like the van Anita had us in, only there's much nicer things" Indeed, the back of the strange vehicle was full of clothing racks and painted set pieces, not that the child recognized these items. All she saw was sparkly fabric and what looked like painted tapestries.

"But Mommy and Daddy are back in the cloud city!"

Paisley all but wailed, "we can't be going someplace else!"

Riley wrapped her arms around her sister, leaning her small head against Paisley's. "I don't think we have a choice."

She confessed. "I think we're going someplace new, whether we likes it or not."

In the other trunk, Ryder and Parker were having much the same conversation. They'd noticed they were moving just as quickly, and also tried to escape their confines. For a moment they'd been afraid they were back on a boat, the way they were rocking about, but thankfully that ceased before either could be sick. Instead they found themselves lurching to a stop before the engine began and the van set off.

Parker was doing the exact same thing Riley was, peering out the trunk's keyhole and trying to get a bearing on his surroundings. When he was certain there were no people around, he raised his voice to a low hiss. "Riley? Paisley? Can you hear us?"

"We hear you!" A whispered shout came back. "We can't get outs, what do we do?"

"We could shout for help?" Ryder suggested.

"If we shout for help it will only get us caught by whoever's driving." Parker reasoned. "Who knows who it is.

"But if they stop, maybe they'll take us back to Mommy and Daddy!" Paisley added hopefully.

The last time we trusted someone they tried to hold us pris'ner, and even the nice peoples just wanna go to the police. We can't risk it!" Parker insisted. "I say we wait until we get wherevers we're going, then make a break for it when no one's looking."

"Okay." Riley and Paisley said in unison. "Let's just hope they aren' going very far."

"They're probably not." Ryder claimed, but it was simply his hope rather than a fact. "At least, I hopes their not."

The girls exchanged worried glances through the gloom.

"We hope so too."

After stashing the quadruplets Sophie dashed around the corner, intent on finding Jane and Ethan again, only to slam headfirst into Fabian. "What – oh!"

"Sophiel!" Fabian caught her by the shoulders, "Have you seen the new pups? They escaped."

The little girl had never been more thankful she had the foresight to hide the pups rather than taking them through the city with her and Bailey. "No! How did they escape?" She asked, adopting a shocked expression.

"They must have worked together somehow – I don't know" Fabian growled. "But we can't let them get away.

They're cute enough that they can make us a fortune begging tourists alone"

I'll help you look." Sophie offered, "They can't have gotten far."

"Alright, you take the East quarter, I'll take the West."

Fabian suggested.

"No!" Sophie chirped nervously, she'd left Ethan and Jane in the Western part of town, far to near the secret entrance to the tunnels. "I doubt they'd go to those parts of the city, they know that's where the tunnels start and let out.

"I don't think they're that bright" Fabian frowned.

They were smart enough to get out of their bindings."

Sophie reminded him pointedly.

"You're right, okay I'll take North, you take South."

Fabian amended, charging off without another word.

Breathing a sigh of relief, Sophie quickly retraced her steps back to Ethan, Jane, Mary, Thomas and Linda. They all whipped around in surprise when she appeared behind them, Bailey hiding behind her back. "Sophie, where are the pups? Jane asked.

"Come this way, but be careful," Sophie cautioned, "Fabian knows they've escaped."

The adults dutifully followed the young pair, their pulses racing with excitement. Jane was trying very hard not to get ahead of herself. She wouldn't relax until her babies were safe in her arms, but she could feel how close they were. It was nearly impossible not to let her hope run rampant.

"Where did you leave them?" Ethan pressed, no less patient than his mate.

"Fabian was chasing us, so I helped them hide in some big trunks" She shared, more than a little proud of herself. "

It's a good thing too cuz I ran into Fabian a minute later"

"Very smart thinking" Thomas praised.

However just as they rounded the corner where Sophie and Bailey had left the pups, they found the entire space empty. "They're right over....What? No!" Sophie ran forward, spinning around on the spot. She'd just been there, she'd just seen them a few minutes ago.

"They were just here, you have to believe me!" Sophie exclaimed, her eyes filling with tears. "Bailey tell them!"

Bailey nodded in agreement, "They were rights here."

Jane and Ethan surged forward, studying the surrounding space. There were large dry rectangles littering the soaked cobblestones. Clearly trunks and crates had been sitting there very recently, but they were gone now. "It's okay.

Sophie." Ethan assured her. "We believe you."

Though he spoke to the young girl, he wasn't looking at her. In that moment he only had eyes for Jane. It wasn't an uncommon occurrence, but at the moment it had nothing to do with her charm of beauty. She was standing in the middle of the street, looking so lost and helpless his heart ached.

Her lower lip was quivering violently, and Ethan quickly closed the distance between them and pulled her into his arms before she could start sobbing.

In the meantime Linda darted into the nearest shop, and Sophie looked piteously up at Mary and Thomas. "Does this mean you won't take us home with you now?"

"I told you that you would have a place with us whether you helped or not, and I meant it." Mary told her simply.

Sophie's cheeks split into a tearful smile, "really?"

"Really." Thomas nodded, wrapping an arm around his wife as he watched the suffering parents in front of them.

Ethan was petting Jane and whispering promises against her hair. "It's okay, we'll find them. We know they're alright now, we know they're out of the jungle and we know how they're thinking. This is just a roadblock.

"But we were so close!" Jane cried despondently. I don't want to wait, I want them back now!"

"I know, little wolf." Ethan crooned, rocking her from side to side and clamping his own eyes shut in unmistakable pain. "I do too."

Jane looked about ready to collapse, and though the shepherd and his wife hadn't trusted these strange characters initially, there was no denying now that they clearly loved their pups more than anything in the world.

Jane's mournful cries carried through the air as Ethan tried to comfort her, to no avail.

A few moments later Linda returned from the shop, offering her friend a sympathetic look. "Apparently the trunks belonged to a traveling theater troupe. They just finished a stint here and packed up to travel to their next gig.

If I had to guess I'd say they didn't realize the pups had climbed inside and just loaded everything into their caravan."

"Really?" Jane pulled away from Ethan, sniffing but heartened by this news. "Maybe we can catch up with them!"

"We will catch up with them." Ethan decided firmly. "Do we know where they're headed?"

Linda took a deep breath, clearly not eager to deliver the rest of the information she'd learned. The bud of hope which had bloomed in Ethan and Jane's chests dampened before she could say a word, it was obvious from the look on her face that she didn't have good news to share. "They're going to the capital." She shared gravely, "to perform for the king."

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