The Luna and her Quadruplet Pups by Jane Above Story

Chapter 139

Jane

Ethan walks into our hotel room, frowning deeply.

If he notices that I'm brushing my teeth for the second time in as many hours, he gives no indication. I've been sick again, even though I initially felt better after we stopped. We booked two rooms after we arrived, and we've been taking turns using the hotel's landline to try and call the theater troupe. I'm beginning to worry that they've also stopped somewhere in this area, and therefore don't have any cell service themselves – because so far we haven't had any luck.

I can tell by Ethan's face that nothing has changed.

He must have come upstairs because Linda took over calling the theater. "No luck?" I guess. I'm beginning to think I must have done something truly horrible in a past life, for us to be punished this way. While I fret about karma and lament our dreadful near misses, I can tell Ethan is trying to keep up a strong front. Even now he looks up at me and wipes the somber expression from his face, trying to look hopeful.

"No" He reports. "I have a feeling they've stopped in an area with no service. But the good news is that they probably have stopped for the night. The later it gets without success, the less likely it is they continued to the capital."

I nod. "I hope you're right. And at least if the performance isn't for three days, we know that we can probably get in touch with them before the King gets wind of anything, or before the pups try to run." Even as I say it, I'm reminded of my fears that the trunks won't be opened until the troupe reaches their destination, but the pups can make it 24 hours without food and water – as long as they don't overheat. And they 're in a shaded caravan, I remind myself, they won 't overheat.

It will be okay. It has to be okay.

Ethan nods. "We'l reach them first. I'll make sure of it." He grimaces. "However we may have other worries. Linda is concerned that we haven't heard from Eric for so long. She thinks something must be wrong."

As conflicted as I feel about my one-time friend and confidante, I also don't feel comfortable with the radio silence he's been keeping lately. "And what do you think?"

Ethan sighs, "Well it was always going to be difficult. He promised to check in whenever he could, so it's not as if he's missed meetings."

"But I don't like it either. Anita was headed to the king and haven't heard from Eric since we learned that detail. I think there's a

"But?" I prompt him, sensing the oncoming contingency.

good chance Anita outed him."

"Do you think he'd have him killed?" I ask anxiously.

Ethan confessed. "Which means Aimon could have done any number of things."

"I think it's more likely he'd take him prisoner.

Apparently Eric's older brother died a few years ago, which means Aimon no longer has an heir, unless he wants to leave the

kingdom to his daughter, and I doubt he'd do that. He can't be too cavalier about ending his male blood line" Ethan reasons.

"So what do we do?" I ask, trying to imagine being so heartless that I'd take one of my own children captive, let alone kill them.

Then again, I'd never ask them to become spies or exile them either. Suddenly I have a great deal of sympathy for Eric. What must it have been like to be raised by such a person? How much strength did it take to turn his back on him, to disappoint someone he'd probably been striving to please his whole life.

There's nothing more we can do right now." Ethan frowns. "We have to get the pups back first. Once they're safe, we can try to

see if I can rescue him."

"What?" I gape. "Are you serious?"

find out what happened to Eric. If it turns out that he has been taken prisoner, I'll stay behind while you take the pups home and

"He's in this situation because of us" Etha reminds me. "And it's true he owed us, but I don't want him to die. For Linda's sake if nothing else."

"But Ethan, you can't stay here. The pups need you, the Nightfang pack needs you – and King Aimon will kill you the first chance

he gets.

"I know that." He says, "But I don't leave men behind."

thing to do, but the idea of him being in danger makes me want to throw up all over again. "There must be another way. You

have spies and soldiers, can't they break him out?"

"They would help, yes." He confirms.

Why does the idea of Ethan remaining in the Southern Isles to help someone in trouble bother me so much. I know it's the right

Why take that risk?" I fret.

Ethan grins wolfishly, striding forward and reaching for my waist. "You worried about me, beautiful?"

"Then why are you insisting on doing it yourself?

"Don't" I complain. "I'm serious. I don't like the idea of you endangering yourself just when we get the pups back. I need this

helpless to fight it.

ordeal to be over, not for it to be dragged out because you need to play the hero."

"It will be okay, Janey." He insists, pulling me closer. We don't even know if that's necessary yet, it's just a possibility I'm keeping in mind."

"I hate this!" I exclaim pulling out of his arms before he can cuddle me into complacency. "1 know being a parent is one crisis after another – but does it always have to be life and death! I'm so sick of the constant emergencies. Why is this happening?" I

ask, for whát feels like the thousandth time. "I know the Goddess does everything for a reason but I swear Ethan, I can't find any

logic in this! Why is she doing this to us? What did we do wrong?"

"We didn't do anything wrong sweetheart." Ethan insists, coming towards me again. "You can't think that way."

"1 don't know any other way to think." I counter. "1 mean, the world is clearly sending us a message here." I pace back and forth, trying to find a way to forget all the horrible possibilities ahead of us, trying to put all these cynical thoughts out of my head.

However no matter what I try, I can't get myself out of this grim thought spiral. There is only doom and gloom in my head, and I'm

"I need you to distract me." I finally say, turning to Ethan, who's been watching me with the same worried expression he's worn since this all began.

know what to do, Ethan." I confess, my voice growing higher and tighter with every word.

He comes forward again, and this time when he reaches for me. I don't null away. He take

"Distract you how?" He asks, eager to help but unsure what I mean.

He comes forward again, and this time when he reaches for me, I don't pull away. He takes my face in his powerful hands, catching a stray tear with the pad of his thumb. "I'm so sorry you're hurting, angel. I am too, and I'm so sorry that I haven't been able to find them yet."

"Any way you can." I plead. "I just need to turn my mind off somehow. If we're not going to find the pups tonight... I just – I don't

"It's my responsibility." He clarifies. "And I've failed.

You haven't failed!" I argue, hating the pain, guilt and shame on his handsome features. "You've been doing everything you can,

taking care of everyone else, with no one to take care of you even though you're suffering just as much as the rest of us."

"That's the life of an Alpha? He shrugs.

together when I felt better" I remind him.

"It's not your fault." I tell him, sniffling.

I shake my head, guilt flooding my veins. "I don't think I've been very considerate of you. I've been difficult, unloading all my pain

That isn't necessary, Janey." He murmurs, giving me another sad smile.

onto you, asking you to distract me, getting cross when you try to comfort me."

"But I want to do those things for you." Ethan objects. "I want to provide and care for you."

ten minutes ago.

"Don't you want to?" I question, pouting.

Again I shake my head. "I think it's high time I try to return the favor."

"Of course I want to." Ethan chuckles darkly.

Before all this happened all I could think about was being with you. The only reason I was able to resist you on the journey is

"Yes it is." I declare, sliding my arms around his neck and pressing my body flush against his. "You did tell me that we could be

"You were sick just this afternoon" Ethan says, and suddenly I'm very glad he didn't pick up on the fact that I was also sick about

because you were so out of it."

rugged surface, feeling my body begin to heat up. "And ifyou keep denying me, I'mgoing to think you don't want me."

To my surprise and pleasure, a hungry growl rolls through his ch3st like thunder, sending a delicious shiver down my spine.

"Well I'm not out of it now." I state, rising onto my toes and pressing my lips to the hard line of his jaw. I trail them across the

When I look up at him, he's looking at me as if I'm a particularly juicy steak he's about to devour."0h my sweet little wolf" He purrs ominously, all predator now. "That was the wrong thing to say?

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