

The Luna and her Quadruplet Pups by Jane Above Story

Chapter 145

Jane

“This is going to work, Jane.” Ethan promises.

We’re going to get to them first.”

I’m having a hard time believing it. I want it to be true, but every near miss we experience sends me deeper and deeper into depression. I can’t live without my babies, I can’t survive this constant worry. I’m beginning to associate hope only with pain and disappointment. It doesn’t feel safe to hope anymore – I think it only invites heartbreak. After all, if I don’t hope, at least I won’t be surprised when my worst fears are proven to be real.

The depression and woe makes me want to give up. To curl into a little ball and never get out of bed. Of course, I don’t have a bed to languish in, and if we stop moving we risk missing the pups or worse, being caught by the King. We drove through the night to reach the capital, resuming our disguises and trying to locate Eric. There hasn’t been any word from him, and knowing that Anita has the pups in her grasps doesn’t make me optimistic about his chances. If the king trusted his son, he might have sent him to find the kids, rather than assigning the task to a stranger.

Linda is beside herself with worry, and if I had any space left in my heart to feel anything beyond my own sorrow and terror, I might be a better friend to her right now. Of course I patted her back and listened attentively as she shared her fears, but I couldn’t truly engage – not the way she deserves.

Guilt swirls with my despair. Linda has always been there for me whenever I needed her, the least I could do is return the favor in her own time of need – but I’m barely holding myself together as it is. “Baby, did you hear me?” Ethan presses, pulling my attention up to his handsome face.

You said this is going to work.” I parrot hollowly.

His face crinkles with pain. ‘No, sweetheart.” He corrects gently. I said that I need you to make me a promise.”

I guess I wasn’t listening after all. “Sorry,” I murmur,

“I guess I got lost in my thoughts.”

Do you want to tell me what you’re thinking about?” He asks, stroking my spine.

My lower lip trembles. If I speak, I’m surely going to cry and I can’t cry anymore. If I start now, I’ll never stop. Nothing important.” I lie, shaking my head.

Ethan Wraps me in a hug, but even physical comfort is too emotional for me in this moment.

It’s too easy to let my mate take care of me, to fall apart knowing he’ll catch all the pieces and glue them back together. I pull away from him, feeling another stab of shame for making this situation harder on him. For all I know he might have been hugging me for his own comfort, but I don’t have the strength to think about anything other than keeping my composure it’s taking absolutely everything I have. “What promise?” I prompt him, blinding myself to the worry and pain on his face.

There’s a chance I’ll have to fight Aimon, if we can’t intercept the pups, or if something goes wrong along the way, I might be forced to challenge him, or taken prisoner.” Ethan explains, his voice far too gentle to be speaking about such grim matters.

Ethan no.” My wolf rears up, and suddenly my mood swings wildly to anger. If we don’t intercept them, we have to wait for a ransom and adapt. You can’t just charge in their and demand to get them back.”

I hear you.” He assures me, and I agree, but I’m saying there’s a chance no matter how smart we are, how cleverly we play it – this is incredibly dangerous territory Janey.”

I know that!” I exclaim, “Don’t you think I know that?!”

“Of course.” He sighs. I’m not trying..... I just...

If things don’t go as planned, I need you to promise to save yourself and the pups. They need you more than they need me, and if it comes down to choosing between me and them, you have to choose them.”

“You’re telling me, that if he captures you or you’re fighting for your life.. you want me to leave you behind?” I summarize hoarsely, trying to wrap my mind around the impossible idea.

Yes.” Ethan confirms, and my inner wolf goes practically berserk. I have to fight the urge to shift then and there, to let out my inner predator and attack anything that might threaten the man I love.

“Never.”I shake my head. I can’t do that, Ethan.”

You have to.” He states evenly. You have to think about -»

What if it was me?” I demand. Don’t you think I feel the same way? That the pups come before everything else? I already suggested that I would rather myself be taken than them, and you bit my head off. “

Because it’s not the same!” Ethan thunders, his own eyes glowing now. “You’re their mother.

And you’re their father!” I remind him. You not only protect us, but the whole pack. And what about the boys, you think that if Aimon believes he finally has a chance to expand his empire onto the continent, he’ll just let your heirs go – to grow up and challenge him?”

Then you’ll hide, you’ll go somewhere he can’t ever find you!” Ethan growls, That’s exactly why you have to run if the worst happens to me, because if you and the pups are still here, he might not let you get away.”

“No Ethan!” I say again. “I only just got you back. You’re the one who’s been going on about united fronts and being a team. That doesn’t change just because things gets worse, if anything it makes it more necessary. When we go home, we go as a family and if I’m not allowed to sacrifice myself for you and the pups, you sure as hell aren’t either!

Ethan’s inner predator is in full control now, I can feel it deep inside – the raw power radiating off of him. I know he’s about to lash out towards me and I try to dodge out of the way. But he’s too big, too strong and fast. He catches me so easily I ought to be embarrassed, gripping my nape with pure dominance and scowling down at me.

I can feel an order coming on, and not the usual kind. Not the stern command of a man in charge, or even the sexy kind I can choose whether or not to defy. When an Alpha wants to, he can put all his power and authority into a command and make it impossible to refuse. Only an alpha of equal strength could fight such an order, and I’m far from Ethan’s equal in power.

I thought he’d done this to me when he ordered me to stay behind in the NightFang territory, and that somehow my maternal instincts overpowered it, but now I realize he’d done nothing of the sort. This feels a hundred times stronger, and I wonder if it’s because his wolf is fully on board this time. When he found me on the ship he said he hadn’t really wanted to let me out of his sight, so maybe that order hadn’t been at full force.... But this one will be.

Don’t. I beg, tears welling in my eyes. “Please don’t do this.”

Ethan pauses only long enough to k!ss me, crashing his mouth down over mine and letting me feel every last ounce of his dominance. His lips move over mine as his tongue delves into my mouth, sending shivers down my spine as he clutches me against him. He’s rough and ruthless, wringing all the defiance out of me with every n!p and care*ss. The force of the k!ss takes my breath away, and for a moment time stops.

I forget everything – where we are, why we were fighting, my own name – it feels as though he’s reaching inside me and touching my very soul, reminding me of who and what we are to each other. Of course, at the end of the day, he’s the alpha, and I’m the omega. What was it he’ d said when we were young? The authority was for me to give and him to take?

I’m crying again, even though I’d been fighting to stay calm with all my willpower a few minutes ago. In the face of Ethan’s strength, my defenses crumble, whether I consent to the surrender or not.

We’re both breathless when he pulls away, and he takes my face in his large hands, his glowing eyes piercing me like a knife. “If it comes to it, you will choose the pups and your own survival over me. If I tell you to run, you’ll run. If it looks like I’ve lost, you’ll run. If I’m captured, you’ll run. You will leave me behind, Jane – and that’s final.”

I’m shaking my head, even as his magic washes over me, taking hold deep in my bones. “Say it.”

He orders fiercely, tightening his hold on me.

I can’t refuse, I don’t have a choice – so I say the awful words, words I hate more than any I’ve ever spoken before, “I’ll leave you behind.”

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