

The Luna and her Quadruplet Pups by Jane Above Story

Chapter 153

Ethan

No, no, no. It isn't real, this isn't happening.

I was afraid our escape had been too easy, but I'm not sure what other choice we had. We were only two people, and doing this job right would have required an army. Maybe we should have taken more time to plan, rather than rushing in, but in the end it was always going to be the same odds. Besides, we had a very small window after I knocked the guards out and stole their uniforms, we wouldn't have been able to use them as disguises tomorrow or the next day – after Aimon realized we had them.

It was a blessing we'd been able to find Jane and the pups so quickly, and Linda's quick thinking truly had been inspired. I don't regret the way we went about the rescue, I only regret that we didn't succeed. This isn't the way I wanted it to end. In a one-on-one fight I'm confident I could easily defeat Aimon – he's twenty years my senior after all. However I don't trust the King to give me a fair fight.

Right now he's standing at the Palace door, flanked by half a dozen guards on either side. He's wearing a smug leer, and my wolf howls in fury to think we came so close. "How did you know?"

"Didn't you wonder why there weren't guards at their door?" He arches a brow. "I have every inch of that suite under video surveillance. I knew the moment you stepped inside."

Disappointment wells up inside me, the cameras must have been hidden incredibly well, but it does make sense now. He was probably planning this from the very beginning. The blankets in the trolley shift from beneath, and Jane pushes them to the ground, revealing herself and the pups. I glance at her terrified expression, and she shakes her head, silently begging me not to do what I must.

I turn my back on her, fearing that I won't be able to go through with this if I keep looking at her heartbroken expression. "Just let them go, Aimon. It's me you want." I demand.

"Ethan, no!" Jane is no longer begging in silence, she's trying to scramble out of the laundry cart, wincing and whimpering in the process.

"Janey." I speak her name as a stern rebuke, plucking her from the cart and setting her feet on the ground before she can hurt herself worse than she already is. "You knew this might happen. You promised me." I tower over her, letting her feel the full force of my power as I push the service vans' keys into her hands. "

Take Linda and the pups and go."

"Ethan, I can't!" She protests again, tears pooling on her dark lashes.

"You can!" I insist, taking her shoulders, "You have to!"

"I'm afraid I can't allow that." Aimon interjects, gesturing to his guards. They swiftly circle us, and the King continues. "You see I have need of an omega, and your daughters are integral to ensuring sweet Jane behaves herself long enough to give me an heir. You and your boys on the other hand..." He trails off ominously. He's so cavalier about threatening my family, and rage sets my blood to boil. Have I ever hated anyone this much? Even Eve? My wolf claws at the surface of my skin, and for once I don't try to hold him back.

"If that's the way you want to play it," I counter, stepping forward with a ferocious growl, "Then I might as well challenge you formally."

"You're outnumbered, Ethan" Aimon drawls, though I sense a note of fear in his low voice. "Fighting me would be suicide.

"So what?" I bark, stripping off my shirt. "You're going to kill me anyway. You didn't really think I'd go down without a fight, did you?"

Aimon scoffs, signaling his men a second time, and I realize his plan. He's been counting on his guards being strong enough to overpower me, and only now that I'm in front of him is he beginning to doubt they can succeed. He also wasn't counting on Jane and Linda. Neither woman is particularly powerful naturally, but Jane is a mother whose pups are in grave danger, and Linda is a she-wolf whose mate is behind bars. Righteous anger and adrenaline can go a long way in such circumstances.

I exchange a meaningful look with both of them, and while I wish there was time for me to tell Jane and the pups that I love them again, the element of surprise is the only advantage we have – and it's not even much of a surprise. I lunge for Aimon, shifting mid-pounce, and Jane and Linda dive for the guards nearest me, giving me enough of a head start to tackle the king.

Aimon shifts just before I collide with him, and I sense more attackers closing in around us. His guards are coming to his defense, but they aren't fast enough.

We tumble to the ground together, rolling in a blur of fur, teeth and claws. I snarl and snap, slicing at the sensitive flesh of his underbelly with my sharp claws.

Two wolves land on my back just as I get Aimon pinned, and I have to buck them off to focus on the vile man in front of me. If I finish him off quickly enough then their allegiance will have to transfer to me, but as long as Aimon lives, his men will do whatever it takes to help him.

I can see Linda and Jane fighting out of the corner of my eye, and I have to internally berate myself not to get distracted worrying about my mate. Aimon wants her alive, so his men will try not to hurt her. I also feel responsible for landing Linda in this mess, but I tell myself that the best thing I can do for them both is take Aimon down.

He's more sly than I initially credited him, but the old King is still no match for me. The hardest part is constantly throwing off his men so I can actually focus on him. Every time I get him in the right position to go in for the kill, another massive body crashes into me, and I'm forced to start all over again. I whip my head around when I hear Jane yelp, and Aimon takes the opportunity to sink his fangs into my arm.

I snarl, slashing my claws over his face as I try to make sure Jane is alright. She's crumpled on the ground a little ways away, a hulking wolf standing over her. The pups are crying out for her, but they can't escape the laundry trolley. Cursing myself, I push off of Aimon and tackle the wolf threatening Jane, ripping into his throat before he even knows what's happened.

As soon as he's down, I pause to check on Jane, nudging her with my cold nose and sighing with relief when she whines and blinks up at me.

I try to send her a mental message promising to help her as soon as I'm able, swiping a kiss over her muzzle and diving back into the fray. Aimon is trying to slink out amidst the distraction, leaning on his guards for support as he tries to get to his feet. I roar and knock him back onto the hard cement, crashing my body into the guards around him to clear the way, and set upon him once more.

Finally I got the window I needed. I close my fangs around his throat, feeling his pulse racing between my jaws. Just as I bite down, pain slices through my spine as one of the guards sinks their teeth into the precious column of nerves. Howling with agony, I don't let the other wolf's attack distract me. I slice my fangs into Aimon's neck, hot blood pouring out around my mouth as I rip his windpipe clean out. It's over very fast in the end -it usually is. One moment the tyrant king was whining and wriggling beneath me – the next he's completely still as the light drains from his eyes.

I don't feel any regret.

At once the movement around us ceases, and I find myself falling to the ground with Aimon, even as the wolf on top of me finally relents now that his master is dead. Why do I feel so dazed? It's almost as if I'm being slowly submerged in warm water, the entire world has gone fuzzy around me, and though I keep telling myself to get up, my body doesn't obey.

The next thing I know Jane is leaning over me, bruised, alive, and naked as the day she was born. "It's okay, Ethan." She's repeating, tears dripping down her cheeks. "Just stay down. It's over, we're safe." She presses tender kisses to my furry head, repeating the same words over and over. "We're safe. An ambulance is on the way, just hang in there."

They're safe. I repeat to myself, if this is the end, at least I know my family is safe. As I waver in and out of consciousness, one final thought follows me into the darkness.. can't feel my legs.

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