

The Luna and her Quadruplet Pups by Jane Above Story

Chapter 177

Ethan

Yes.” Jane confirms, looking me in the eye for the first time. I’m pregnant, Ethan.”

The room is spinning. Everything has turned upside down and inside out, and I can’t make sense of any of it. This isn’t real. It can’t be real. Jane can’t be pregnant.

History is repeating itself right before my eyes, only this time my mate hasn’t hidden her condition from me out of fear, she’s done it because I didn’t give her any other choice. The first time was a misunderstanding, but that’s not the case now. It isn’t possible. I think again. I would have known – there would be signs, symptoms. Even as I ponder this possibility, I realize there have been signs and symptoms. She never went back into heat again after the first time, she was so sick in the Southern Isles even after we disembarked from the ship, and her emotions have been so raw since she returned.

What?” I say inanely, not able to wrap my mind around this. “What are you talking about?”

“I’m pregnant.” Jane repeats, tears shining in her eyes. “I wasn’t going to tell you after you rejected us, but I can’t hide it any longer.”

“How long have you known?” I ask, my voice like gravel. I have no right, but I can’t help feeling disgruntled that she kept this secret. Another baby.

Another child I’ll be endangering if I let her stay. But another baby. I missed her first pregnancy – I never got to watch her body grow and change with the pups, I didn’t get to help her bring them into the world, to see the miracle with my own eyes. This could be my second chance, the opportunity to do it right this time around.

I suspected when we were still on the ship,” She confesses, “and I was fairly convinced by the time we tracked the pups down. I just couldn’t think about anything but getting them back.

“You kept it from me all that time?” I hiss, outraged that she was coping with this on top of everything else that happened on our trip.

“You had enough to worry about.” She shrugs, tears spilling over her lashes. And I didn’t think you’d let me help if you knew. You already didn’t want me there. Then the doctors in the hospital confirmed it...

I was coming to tell you when.. when you sent me away.”

All at once, my cruelty towards my mate takes on new meaning. I devastated Jane at the moment she should have been happiest, I placed the burden of raising another fatherless child on her shoulders.

You’re d*mn right I wouldn’t have let you help.”I say, before I can stop myself. You had no business putting yourself at that kind of risk when you’re breeding. What were you thinking?”

“I was thinking my children were in danger and I had to do anything possible to rescue them.” She snarls back, finally showing some of her old fire.

“And what about the child in your belly?” I demand, “you didn’t think anything of putting it in danger?”

“I didn’t even know if it was real!” Jane counters.

Why else do you think I waited so long to find out?I couldn’t do what was necessary to save the pups if I was walking on eggshells for an unborn child. “

You should have told me!” I growl, pacing ferociously. “You should have come to me the first moment you suspected you were breeding!

Why?” Jane exclaims, her face twisted in a pained expression. “Do you even care that I’m going to have a baby, or just thatI kept the secret and undermined you again?”

I care about you, I care about the baby. I want to shout. Instead, I scoff. “And you wonder why I don’t trust you... Do the pups know?”

“Of course not, Jane is saying, wrapping her arms protectively around herself. “I was going to wait until I was clear of the first trimester. I thought it would be hard enough explaining where babies come from.. I didn’t want to risk having to explain miscarriages too if something went wrong.”

This is torture. I can’t stand hearing her speak this way, seeing her so timid and fragile. This morning I didn’t think I could possibly feel worse than when Jane offered to sacrifice her freedom to me, but it seems I hadn’t yet learned the true depth of my despair. What kind of Alpha does this to his mate? I shouldn’t be allowed to be anywhere near her or the pups. If Jane is pregnant then she’s even more vulnerable than I knew. She won’t be in any condition to protect herself or the pups from me, and there’s no denying a day will come when this is necessary.

But we still have a chance to get better. You decided not to give up – and this is exactly why we can’t. My wolf insists. She shouldn’t have to do it all alone – not again! It isn’t right.

I’m not giving up. I answer furiously. But we can’t keep hurting Jane like this. we’re no good for her, and one day we might be able to be near her again without being a threat, but we’re never going to deserve her.

of course we do, when we’re well there’s no stronger Alpha. My wolf counters.

Strength isn’t enough. I realize, far too late. All this time I’ve thought being the toughest wolf automatically made me worthy of my mate, but now I see that safety isn’t worth anything if she’s perpetually heartbroken, Just look at what my protection has done to her. Though you’re right – she shouldn’t have to do it alone. She shouldn’t have had to the first time, and I’ll be damned if I’m going to let it happen again.

If anything this news has made me realize just how right my Beta was – though for very different reasons. I have to do whatever I can to get better, but not so that I can bring my family home. My initial instincts were right, as much as I abhor the idea, I have to find Jane a new mate, someone she’ll be safe and happy with and who can be the father my pups deserve. if I can find a cure then I can watch over my family from afar; I can give them a better life than they would have had if they stayed with me, and I can keep them safe in the meantime.

It’s always been my job to love and protect Jane, and though she may not understand it, I’m doing the same now. The difference is that I’m protecting her from me now, and this love feels deeper and more true than before. In the past I never would have considered parting from her, but I can’t be selfish anymore. I have to let her go.

The plan is already forming in my mind, but for now I have to make sure Jane gives up on me once and for all – only then can she start over. Only then can she begin a new life.

“Five pups isn’t so much more daunting than four.”

I announce, returning to our earlier conversation with forced pragmatism. Eric was in love with you and willing to take on the pups, I’m sure we can find another man to do the same now.”

That’s it?” Jane gapes. “That’s all you have to say to me? Nevermind that I’m pregnant with your child, you still want to pawn me off onto another man?”

“Don’t sound so surprised. I mutter. “You can’t really have expected this to change anything.”

Jane shakes her head, swiping at her cheeks. “You know I can’t tell if I’ve lost my mind, or if you’ve lost yours.” She announces, her voice like gravel. “I keep thinking it’s you, but then people always say the definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over but expecting different results. I suppose it’s my own fault for not learning my lesson the first time. You keep hurting me and I keep expecting you to go back to acting sweet, despite the evidence in front of me.”

I hope that means you’re going to stop trying to change my mind.” I reply. “I might not want you for a mate, but you’re better than this, Jane.

She shakes her head. “You know, you’re right.” She agrees. “I don’t know why I’ve always given you so much power over me, why I’ve let my wolf convince me to give you second, third and fourth chances. My weakness is my own fault, but I’m not going to subject my pups to your mistreatment, I’m not going to make them pay for my mistakes any longer.”

“Good.”I commend her, pleased to see she’s finally reached her limit. Maybe offering to be my slave again was rock bottom, but apparently my disregard for our new baby was the straw that broke the camel’s back. You’re almost sounding like yourself again.”

She notches her chin up, Let’s just get through the holidays, and then we can go our separate ways.”

“Agreed.”

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