

The Luna and her Quadruplet Pups by Jane Above Story

Chapter 195

Ethan

As I hang up the phone, I wonder if I've just made a terrible mistake. According to Devon, Jane was so out of it that she won't remember any of our conversation, and I'm praying he's right. It would complicate things far too much if Jane actually recalled my confession professing my undying love for her even after everything I've done. Still, I couldn't help myself. My wolf wouldn't allow me to listen to her suffering in this way and stay silent.

I also fear it was a mistake to promise I could be there with Paisley once she wakes. In the moment my thoughts were simply that getting Jane to sleep was more important than anything.

Hopefully when she wakes she'll be lucid and the entire PTSD episode will be a blur, but I don't want to frighten her more if she does remember and I break my promise. I suppose Devon can keep her asleep until I can arrive, but we can't keep that up forever.

I'm currently at the border of the NightFang territory, having every single car crossing into my pack's lands searched. I'm praying that Paisley is indeed headed in my direction, and if we're lucky then I might even be able to find her before the people with whom she's stowed away even know she's there.

My guards have already been at it for an hour however, and the more time that passes, the less optimistic I feel.

Depending on the drivers, Paisley could be anywhere on the continent, and after what happened in the Southern Isles, I'm not confident that would tell a stranger her identity if she's found. This both comforts and frightens me at once. I want her to be cautious, but not to the point that she can't find her way back home.

This is why we never should have sent her away.

We should have known she'd do something like this. My wolf growls in my head.

I was trying to do what's best for her. I bite back, wondering if he's right. She's been pining for a mother her whole life, and we've seen the damage I do to she-wolves. She needs a father like Devon, not me.

Just like Jane needs a mate like Devon? My wolf grumbles, Who couldn't calm her or comfort her despite his best efforts?

He'll learn. No one figures these things out overnight. I reason stubbornly.

You did- you never had any problem reading

Jane's needs. He argues.

I think you're forgetting a rather significant incident where I failed to notice she felt like an unwanted slave for more than a year. I hiss in my head, scanning the horizon for approaching cars.

That was a conspiracy. She was spellbound and Eve and your mother were whispering poison in your ear. He insists.

The point is that I wasn't able to see what was happening right in front of my very eyes despite being her mate. I cut sharply, Now enough of this I'm not going to keep litigating this to death. I've made up my mind.

I'm about ready to shut my wolf out completely, sick of these constant arguments and wishing I could somehow cut myself off from the pain he feels being trapped. It's not that I don't love that part of myself, it would just be so much easier if I didn't have to feel all this. I wish I could turn off that part of my brain, even if it meant I would have to live as a shadow of myself for the rest of my life – better a shadow than a madman.

I'm still caught up in my morbid thoughts when a shout sounds on my left, "Alpha! Come quick!

I turn in the direction of the call, scenting the air and immediately detecting my daughter's pure, sweet scent. Oh thank the Goddess!

I race to the car in question as fast as my braces will allow. When I arrive at the vehicle, finding a very confused looking couple and one of my guards leaning into the backseat, I see Paisley sound asleep on the floor of the car, half- covered by a thick blanket. I have tears in my eyes as I lift her up into my arms, and the couple immediately starts exclaiming apologies, insisting they had no idea.

I quickly check my pup for injuries or signs of distress, but she looks completely unharmed.

Her steady breathing is low and even, and she's napping so deeply that she doesn't even notice being moved. I hug her close, looking over the top of her head to the panicked couple. "It's alright. I promise. "She snuck into the backseat all on her own, I know it wasn't your fault."

I turn to my guards then, Call off the search and get me a car. I need to get her to Jane as soon as possible."

I'm still waiting for a vehicle to appear when Paisley stirs, yawning widely and blinking up at me in confusion, then relief. "Daddy – you found me." She smiles and stretches, snuggling into my chest. "I knew you would."

I shake my head. "Paisley, what were you thinking!" I scold. "After everything you've been through, do you have any idea how dangerous that was? You know better than to go near strangers, and even if they were good people, they didn't even know you were in the car. You could have gotten locked inside and been trapped – it's the dead of winter, you could have frozen to death"

But Daddy, you needed me – I couldn't leave you, and I knew you'd find me. Paisley argues, still hugging me.

I set her on the ground so that she'll be forced to look me in the eye. "Paisley, I'm very upset with you. You terrified your Mommy and took some very serious risks. You're a big girl now and I know you want to help me, but that also means that you ought to know enough to realize what you did was very wrong.

Paisley sticks out her lower lip, giving me huge puppy dog eyes. "I'm sorry, Daddy. I didn' wanna scare you and Mommy. Please don' be mad at me.

I offer the clever pup a low rumble. I am mad at you. I love you very much, but you can't get yourself out of trouble by batting your eyelashes at me and being adorable. "

Her brow furrows. "Why not?"

I almost want to laugh. "Because part of growing up is taking responsibility for your actions when you've done wrong, and you know you were wrong, Paisley. You know you were defying me and Mommy and that running away wasn't safe."

Paisley thinks about this for a moment. I can see her working through all her different emotions: guilt, sadness, anger, indignance, confusion. Her little face is set in a deep frown, and then she looks up at me with blazing eyes looking more fierce and determined than I can ever remember seeing her. I don' care."

Paisley, I warn, not entirely sure what I'm seeing here. Is this the beginning of a tantrum, or something else? Something new?

"No Daddy!" She cries. "I made up my mind. I don' care how wrong it was. I belongs with you. I loves Mommy and I loves Parker, Riley and Ryder – but you needs me. I'm staying with you. And if you try to make me go away again I'll just run away over and over. I don' care how many times I have to do it, I will always come back to you."

My wolf is both impressed by my daughter's defiance, and frustrated by her stubborn insistence. I love how strong she's getting, but it is incredibly inconvenient in moments like this.

Sweetheart, I know it's difficult, but I promise you'll adjust in time."

Daddy I said no!" Paisley shouts, crossing her arms over her chest. "I know you thinks I'm being rock headed -"

Hard headed," I correct gently.

"Whatever!" She exclaims, thoroughly exasperated. "But I knows my own mind! I know what I want and I'm not going to change my feelings. I want to be with you and you haves to accept that."

I study her closely, wondering how determined such a young pup can really be. Part of me thinks she's just being dramatic, that as soon as the initial pain of our separation passes, she'll forget all about me. However deep down, I think I realize that she's completely serious.

Paisley isn't going to stop trying to get back to me, no matter how much time passes. She's wise beyond her years, and her heart is as strong and passionate as her mother's, if she says she'll keep running away, she means it.

So what do I do? Do I work with Jane to lock up our baby for her own protection, or do I let her come home to me, even though I might be a danger to her. I already know I can't bear to do the former – I wouldn't crush her spirit for anything in the world. "But Paisley, I'm not safe for you to be around."

You won't hurt me, Daddy." She decides firmly, tilting her chin up. You loves me too much.

"You're really determined aren't you?" I sigh, looking into her brilliant green eyes.

Yes." She insists. I am."

I think we need to talk to your Mommy."

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