

The Luna and her Quadruplet Pups by Jane Above Story

Chapter 180

3rd Person

Jane could recall very few times when she'd been genuinely angry with her pups. Overwhelmed, frustrated, and annoyed? At her wit's end, even?

What parent hasn't felt those things? But true anger? She could count on one hand the times her children had driven her to that point. After all, they were too young to have crossed many lines beyond temper tantrums and whining.

However when Jane realized her clever angels had lured her and Ethan into a trap, and they were now standing beneath a sprig of mistletoe, she felt her temper fraying rapidly. They couldn't have any idea about the larger implications of their scheme, and probably thought the entire situation was delightful.

still, Jane knew only too well how quickly things might turn ugly with Ethan, and she was furious with the pups for putting them in this position.

She tried to take a deep breath, not wanting to lash out at her babies, but nearly beside herself with fear and frustration. Don't they realize how dangerous this is? She fretted, already knowing the answer was no. What if Ethan turned on them? What if he was cruel to her in front of them, or took it into his head to punish them? It all depended on Ethan, on whether he had enough of a heart left to quietly refuse or if he decided to make a scene. So Jane stood there paralyzed, looking at her former mate with abject dread and praying he would show her mercy.

Just walk away. She thought desperately, willing her feet to move. Just laugh it off and walk away.

Jane started to turn around, but the next thing she knew Ethan had lashed out and grabbed her waist with both hands. He tugged Jane towards him, and her lips parted in a surprised gasp. They were still open when his mouth descended on hers, stealing the breath she'd just inhaled. For all her intentions to flee, now Jane's limbs froze completely, going impossibly still as if her body was waiting to react until it could decipher whether or not it was being attacked or embraced.

Her mind went completely blank, all her panicked thoughts replaced by a thick and numbing fog.

Somewhere deep down she was aware of the demanding press of Ethan's soft lips, of his delicious scent filling her senses, his hands moving in slow circles on her back, and the kids cheering in the background. Still, it might as well be happening to someone else. It was as if Jane had left her body and was looking down on them from above.

Is this really happening? She wondered frantically, studying the couple below her. I've been dreaming about kissing Ethan again for more than a month now. Have my fantasies come true, or is this just my imagination run wild?

Ethan growled into Jane's mouth, and suddenly she was jolted back into my body. At once she reacted, her arms twining around his neck as she returned the kiss, letting her instincts take control. She tilted my head to the side, allowing him to slant his mouth over hers and deepen the kiss. Ethan's tongue dipped into Jane's mouth, tasting and teasing her the way he has a thousand times before. Her wolf wanted to rejoice, but she was becoming increasingly aware that something was missing.

The sensation of being in Ethan's arms was so familiar, and yet Jane still felt empty. She didn't understand why. Maybe because she knew it wasn't real, or that she'd become too broken down and hollowed out by his mistreatment to feel anything anymore. When Ethan first kissed her after they were reunited the previous summer, being with him felt like coming home at a long journey's end; his touch was electrifying and all consuming. Now something felt wrong, but the more time that passed, the less Jane felt it was because of her fragile mental state Ethan felt wrong. He wasn't holding her the way he used to, he wasn't kissing her as if he meant it. It was almost as though he was trying to hold her at arm's length, even as he claimed her mouth.

He's over me. Jane realized at last. When he kissed me before he still loved me, even if he was angry at me. But now the love has faded and only anger remains.

Jane didn't know why she was surprised. She supposed her wolf might have believed that if they could only get close enough to kiss him, the physical spark they had always shared would convince him not to end things, but that had obviously been a false hope. And here I thought I'd given up on him.

Only when the pain of realizing Ethan was over her struck, did Jane admit how much hope she'd still been holding onto, and how badly she wished things could go back to the way they used to be. Ethan hadn't been the only one letting his anger control him, but Jane's had been hiding a much deeper, and much more painful truth. She was still in love with Ethan, and she was beginning to fear she would never stop.

Ethan reluctantly released Jane, wishing he didn't have to so badly it hurt.

When he looked down at her, he saw tears hovering on her lashes, and she shakily glanced at the children – who had lost interest in the extended embrace a few moments before and were now celebrating their victory by hunting for marshmallows to roast in the fireplace. I knows they're here!" Riley was saying, her little nose twitching with excitement. I can smell them!"

"Shh, they'll hear you." Parker cautioned, glancing at his parents.

You know Mommy doesn't let us have sweets afore dinner." Ryder agreed, caution heavy in his voice.

"But it's Christmas." Paisley objected, thunderstruck that exceptions wouldn't be made on such a special day.

"You can have marshmallows for dessert." Jane called, swiping at a few stray dears which escaped onto her cheeks. After you've had a nice, healthy meal."

The four children groaned, chiding one another for being too loud and giving up the game. "See! I told you to whisper!" Parker griped.

Thank you for not making a scene." Jane whispered to Ethan. "I'll talk to them about not doing this sort of thing again."

Ethan's wolf wanted nothing of the sort. If anything he wanted to encourage the children to give him as many excuses to kiss Jane as possible, but he knew it was a bad idea. He'd been dreaming about sharing a last kiss with Jane for so long it was hard to believe he finally got the opportunity to have one. How many times had he thought, if I could just kiss her one more time, hold her one more time.

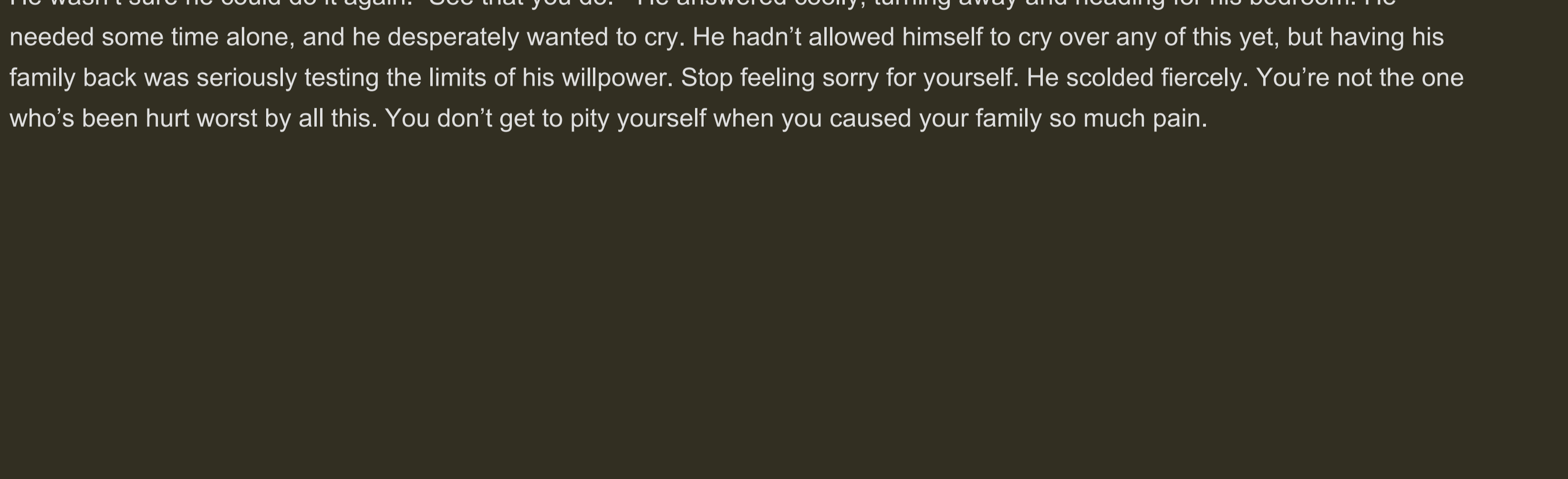
It was one of his many regrets about the way he'd handled things in the hospital. He'd tried to recall their last kiss before the rescue, and though he'd been glad the dangerous situation had made every kiss more meaningful, he wished he'd known it would be the last one. Unfortunately the reality of finally having a last kiss now that everything had changed was more painful than he'd imagined.

Now that Ethan knew it was the last one, he'd wanted to dive into it with complete enthusiasm. He hadn't considered the way he would have to keep space between them so Jane wouldn't feel his braces.

He couldn't hold her the way he wanted to, couldn't feel all her soft curves pressed up against him.

Moreover, he hadn't predicted how reserved he would have to be to make sure she wouldn't feel his undying passion for her. Kissing someone while pretending you weren't madly in love with them was a tricky business, and he knew it wouldn't get any easier with time – because he wasn't going to start loving her any less.

He wasn't sure he could do it again. "See that you do." He answered coolly, turning away and heading for his bedroom. He needed some time alone, and he desperately wanted to cry. He hadn't allowed himself to cry over any of this yet, but having his family back was seriously testing the limits of his willpower. Stop feeling sorry for yourself. He scolded fiercely. You're not the one who's been hurt worst by all this. You don't get to pity yourself when you caused your family so much pain.



Ethan shut himself into his room, wondering how on earth he was going to get through the next few days.

It was true that his wolf had been much calmer and easier going since his family returned, but his emotions were another matter entirely.

A small knock sounded on the door, and at first he thought it might be Jane. Instead Paisley poked her beloved head inside, then toddled in without waiting for permission. "Hello princess." He greeted her, come give Daddy a cuddle, won't you?"

Paisley didn't need any encouragement, she swiftly crossed the room and let Ethan scoop her up, wrapping her arms around him as tightly as she could and burying her face in his neck. "I don't like seeing you sad, Daddy." She murmured, nuzzling his skin.

I'm sorry, sweetheart." Ethan replied honestly. He hated to think his grim mood was causing the sweet pup stress.

"I think you need us." She continued, "you need someone to help you and give you cuddles when you're sad."

Oh Goddess how he would love that. "No angel, I love you more than anything, but that's not a burden for you to bear. You've had to be so grown up all these years, it's high time you get to enjoy just being a pup.

Paisley pulled back, pulling her young face into the sternest expression she could manage. I wasn't asking, Daddy. I'm telling you. When Mommy and the other pups go home, I'm staying."

[Previous Chapter](#)

[Next Chapter](#)