

## The Luna and her Quadruplet Pups by Jane Above Story

Chapter 189

Ethan

The morning after we run into Devon, I've only been in my office at the pack headquarters for about an hour before he comes barging in, his silver eyes blazing with barely contained fury.

"Who the hell are you and what have you done with my best friend?" He snarls, slamming his hands down on my desk and glaring at me.

I wondered how long it would take you." I drawl, leaning back in my chair. "I see you're still head over heels for Jane, then? If you're this upset about her being upset. " My wolf is grumbling mutinously in my head, but this is exactly what I hoped for. I thought long and hard about whether I should let Devon in on my secret, but I think it's best he knows. I can trust him every bit as much as I can trust Matthew, and it can't hurt to have another wolf on the lookout for dangerous behavior.

"It has nothing to do with my feelings for Jane."

Devon thunders, "I would be disturbed to see any she -wolf treated the way you've treated her, and especially by someone I once considered a brother.

Do you have any idea the state she's in?"

"Of course I do." I reply simply. "It's why I let her stay with me this last week. I couldn't just throw her out onto the street when she was so unstable."

"Unstable?" He repeats, as if he can't believe his ears. "She's pregnant and only just survived a kidnapping with her pups, only for her mate to reject her – it's a miracle she's still standing. You know she fainted when we were together yesterday?"

What?" I utter in surprise, sitting up a little straighter. "She never said."

Oh so you do still care. Devon glowers, wrinkling his nose in disgust. "What kind of an Alpha are you, abandoning your family this way?"

"If you can calm down long enough to listen, I can explain." I sigh, letting some of my own anguish show.

Devon seems taken aback by my abrupt shift in tone, and the emotion which is certainly shining through my eyes. Still, he doesn't give in too easily. What possible explanation can there be for your behavior?"

Taking a deep breath, I rise to my feet, untucking my shirt and lifting it to show him the top of my braces.

My skin is bloody where the metal is digging into me, and though it might not be obvious that they extend all the way down to my feet, it should be clear enough that something is wrong. "They're not safe with me anymore."

Devon's eyes are wide as he takes in the gorey sight, and I know he doesn't quite understand. "What are those?"

"Sit down, and I'll tell you. I'll tell you everything." I offer.

He does, and over the next half hour, I tell him the story from beginning to finish. My diagnosis, the implications for Jane and the pups, the journey I went through to reach my current mindset, and my plans for looking after my family from afar. Devon has tears in his eyes by the end, and I realize our bond as brothers never severed no matter the distance between us.

Ethan," He says once I'm finished, his voice thick with emotion. "You're a fucking idiot."

For which part?" I inquire, not offended in the least.

For all of it!" He bursts. "Jane and the pups love you! Don't you think they would rather spend your remaining time with you than be forced away! Don't you think they should get to decide if they deserve you! I admit you screwed up royally the way you handled the Eve situation, but you weren't yourself either after the Southern Isles. It took you time to work through your depression and reach a healthier mindset, Jane still being upset – especially when she's pregnant and hormonal – doesn't mean you're no good for her."

"Devon, she offered to become my slave again, if I would take the pups back." I share, revealing one of the few details I left out of the story.

Devon visibly recoils, his dark skin losing some of its color. "You're serious?" He chokes.

Yes." I confirm. "And it's not just about what they would want. They simply aren't safe with me. I can't protect them. I realized, when we saw you yesterday, how selfish I'd been about Jane from the beginning.

I'm trying to do the right thing and let her go the way you did. If I had been truly worthy of her I would have given her the choice between us, I would have trusted her more than Eve, I would have paid attention enough to see she was miserable in our marriage. This isn't just about my injury."

Devon's head is in his hands. I still think ...

Listen, I don't know how much time I have left. But I'm determined to fix things, whether I live or die, and that starts with giving Jane and the pups the life they deserve. And I want you to help." I declare firmly.

He frowns. "You want me to lie for you? To help you push them away knowing they would rather suffer the sadness and the risks?"

Yes." I confirm. "I've already set things in motion for the future. I have a plan in place in case I go mad before the doctors can find a cure, and contingencies to continue helping my family after I'm gone. I hope I survive and I'll continue looking out for them as long as I can, but I can't do it alone."

He shakes his head. "I think you're giving me too much credit. I've changed over the years too. I have my own secrets, things you wouldn't like, wouldn't want me near your family if you knew. I'm not the role model you want for your sons."

Would you ever hurt them?" I counter, wondering what's happened to him in the years we've been parted. Would you trick them or be cruel, even if you thought it was in their best interest?"

He frowns, still shaking his head, That's not the point."

Just answer the question." I press, knowing the answer already.

"No, but – Devon tries to protest.

"And are you still my friend?" I inquire, knowing

I'm playing dirty now.

'Ethan I'll always be your friend." He states, clearly exasperated. But-

"Devon, this is my dying wish." I announce, wouldn't deny your oldest friend his dying wish, would you?"

He narrows his eyes at me. You manipulative bastard."

I flash my fangs. "Is that a yes?"

You

When I get home, still replaying my conversation with Devon in my head, I find Jane reading in the living room. I cock my ears for the pups, hearing four sleeping heart rates and even breathing. Good, I think, They're napping. The perfect opportunity for me to give my mate a talking to.

Jane looks up when I enter, schooling her features not to show any emotion. She only acknowledges me long enough to ensure I'm not a stranger entering the home, then looks back to her book. I cross the room to stand before her, towering over her and thinking how stunning she is even as I cross my arms over my chest. "Were you planning on telling me you fainted yesterday?"

Surprise registers on her features, though she tries to cover it. "Who told you?"

Wrong answer." I growl.

What do you care?" She snaps, Pregnant women faint. It doesn't mean anything."

"What if you hadn't been with Devon, what if you'd been alone with the pups. Do you have any idea how frightened they would have been?" I ask, both out of genuine worry and to cover my concern for Jane. If Devon hadn't been there to catch her she might have landed on the concrete and gotten a head injury, she could have fallen into the street and been run over.

For a moment I can see my words making an impact on Jane, her face drawing in concern as she considers this possibility. "I think I ought to hire you a nanny."

Immediately the emotion on my mate's lovely face is replaced with anger. "Oh that's rich. You don't want to be a father yourself, you just want to pay someone to do it for you. Or do you think I'm so incompetent that I can't care for the pups on my own anymore."

Call it both." I shrug.

Jane growls, actually growls at me, and I feel a burst of pride in my chest. That's my fierce girl. I think, loving that she's finding her strength again.

However a moment later I hear four tiny gasps, and I realize that in my concern for Jane, I stopped listening to ensure the pups are still sleeping. Too late, I realize that their heart rates now match waking rhythms, and their breath is no longer soft and steady.

My heart sinks. They're awake. And they're listening at the door.

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