

The Luna and her Quadruplet Pups by Jane Above Story

Chapter 211

Jane

The next few hours are a terrifying blur.

My labor came on fast after Devon revealed that Ethan is going to marry Nina if he survives his surgery. I suppose it was the shock, or perhaps all the stress of the last 24 hours building up and pouring over. Either way, my body quickly doubled over with contractions; and a fresh wave of fear assailed me. I'm only five months along, if I have my baby now it's chances of surviving are next to nothing. Still, I know what labor feels like – even if I'd forgotten just how acute the pain is.

I read once that women have a special hormone which makes them forget just how traumatic childbirth is, so that they'll be more willing to reproduce again. Right now I believe it – I remembered that the pain was extreme, but living it is another thing entirely. My body feels like it's trying to tear me apart from the inside out, and suddenly I'm furious with Ethan for putting this child inside me – for causing me this pain.

At the mere thought of Ethan, my wolf begins to whine. I need him. I need him right now! Two days ago I wouldn't have considered asking for him I still believed he hated me. But now I know the truth, and it's impossible for me to hold back. "I want Ethan," I moan, belatedly realizing that Devon and I are no longer alone. The scent of a familiar and loathsome she-wolf is heavy in the air, and a moment later I hear her voice.

"Damn it. Get her to the hospital." Nina orders sharply.

When the hell did she get here? I don't want her here! She's trying to steal my mate! I try to growl at the other she-wolf, but neither she or Devon seem to hear me. They continue talking as if I haven't made a sound. I blink my eyes open, even though I don't remember closing them. I look up at the ceiling, and confusion washes over me. I turn my head to the side, seeing Devon and Nina's profiles towering over me.

When did I lie down? I wonder dazedly, groping for the ground beneath me. It's soft and cushy, and I understand I'm on the couch. I want to speak, to tell these two to stop ignoring me and bring me my mate, but I can't seem to summon the words.

"In the meantime I'll call Matthew so he can tell Ethan some sort of emergency arose back home."

Nina continues uninterrupted. "We can be gone within the hour."

"What, why?" Devon inquires, clearly not understanding.

Because she's a snake! I want to scream. She knows he won't leave me like this.

"He can't find out about this." Nina explains, sounding exasperated. "If he thinks she's in trouble he'll drop everything. He'll cancel the surgery."

"Nina, that's his decision." Devon argues. "Im sure he can reschedule."

"Of course he can reschedule, but if they make up then you and I will be screwed." Nina insists, obviously annoyed that Devon isn't happily going along with her plans.

"I think you underestimate Ethan, if you think he would change his mind that easily. You have no idea what they've already been through." Devon defends. "And if he does change his mind, then we should let them be happy."

"And what about our happiness?" Nina inquires fiercely. "They had their shot twice and look at how it's turned out! Shouldn't we get a turn, a shot?"

Stop standing there and talking! I want to cry, I need a doctor!

I know I didn't actually say anything, but thank the Goddess Devon and I are on the same page. "I don't have time for this." He hisses. "I'm taking Jane to the hospital, but don't expect me to lie for you Nina. If she asks me what happened, I'm going to tell her."

"Im not concerned with Jane. She already did everything in her power to change his mind and it didn't do any good. Ethan is the problem. Tell her what you like, and leave Ethan to me." She sighs, sounding almost regretful then. "You'll thank me for this one day. When you and Jane are happily married."

"You underestimate Jane." Devon informs her, sliding his arms beneath my body. I want to sit up and put my arms around his shoulders, but instead I feel my limbs hanging limply. "Mark my words, she'll come after him when she's better."

"Well I won't give him up easily." Nina replies, "So if she does come, she'd better be ready for a fight."

I don't remember much after that. I only recall flashes – the inside of Devon's car, being put on a gurney at the emergency room, nurses puncturing my skin with needles, and my doctor promising that everything will be all right.

From then on I only dream, my mind conjuring the different lives I might have.

I'm on a country road, traveling down a strange but lovely path. I'm surrounded by flowers on either side, in the middle of a sprawling valley. There are mountains in the distance, and moonlight casts shadows over the ground in front of me. I graze my fingers over the blooms burgeoning at my sides, moving forward even though part of me wants to stop and take in my surroundings. I cannot seem to slow down or make my feet still, and after a while I realize that I'm not traveling on a road at all, but in time. Time, which presses on whether we want it to or not, and regardless of whether we're ready for the future awaiting us.

The time road suddenly splits in a prominent fork, and for the first time I have to decide which route to take. On the right I can see myself walking hand in hand with Devon, a baby strapped to my chest, with all four of my pups around us. The children are laughing and skipping along, and when I look up at Devon, there is a serene smile on my face.

Nina's words ring in my head, warning me to be ready for a fight if I come after Ethan. At once I understand that this is the choice I must make. If I stay in the Dark Moon pack, I could have this idyllic future with Devon. Our love might not be the burning, passionate kind, but it would be strong and true. He would protect our family, and I wouldn't ever have to worry that he would stray.

It's sweet and secure, guaranteeing a loving father for my children, and safe harbor for my heart.

Almost compulsively, I look down the left fork, eager to see the alternative. At first I'm simply praying that Ethan will be there. After all, the Goddess has sent me visions before, and if this is no mere dream, then I might very well be seeing Ethan's fate on the operating table.

I needn't have worried – Ethan is alive and well on this road, though it takes my eyes a moment to adjust. Once they do, they fill with tears. I was expecting a picture similar to the one with Devon, an insight to what our lives will be like a few months or years down the road. Instead I see two young teenagers outside a bakery, bickering and flirting until the boy drops his head and claims a kiss which changes the girl's life as she knows it. Ethan and I, the first day we ever acknowledged our feelings.

At first I wonder if that's the moment I've been holding onto all these years – a childhood infatuation I've been clinging to even though those teenagers are long gone. Then I watch as the scene changes, showing me the day Ethan convinced me to elope with him. I watch our entire history unfold, for the first time seeing the events with Eve and Petra from his perspective. I keep watching, until we're right up to Aimon's defeat.

Over and over again, I see the same pattern unfolding: me being skittish and distrustful, and Ethan patiently and bossily guiding me back to my center- to him.

It's almost too painful to watch the most recent chapter, but when it finishes Ethan and I shift into our wolves and take off into the night, together in our truest form. That's the way it's meant to be, I think wistfully. Not some unrealistic ideal of safe, pain-free love – but the riotous, all-consuming passion of our wolves. They're the ones who chose each other, and they're bond is too deep to ever break.It's so clear now. For years Ethan has been putting in the work in our relationship. Chasing me down, proving himself to me, protecting our family over and over again. And now he's made the greatest sacrifice of all. It's my turn. I decide fiercely. He's always been there to bring me home – even when I didn't want to listen. He needs me to bring him home now, and I'm not going to let anything stand in our way -including his own stubborn will

An soon an I wake I'm going o tell Devon I'm sorry, and then I'm going to go back to the NighFang pack and make sue Ethan knows that I'll be waiting for him when he comes out of surgery.

And if Nina tries to stop me? Well, let's just say shall live to regret it

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