

The Luna and her Quadruplet Pups by Jane Above Story

Chapter 213

Jane

When we arrive at the hospital, Ethan is already in the operating theater.

My heart sinks when the nurse at reception tells us we're too late, but it stops beating completely when we walk into the waiting room and see Nina and Matthew seated on the uncomfortable couches. They're both wearing guarded expressions, but neither can hide their surprise when Devon and I enter with the pups.

I'm sure in time we'll have it out, but other than some narrowed eyes and posturing, neither one of them objects to our presence. In truth, they seem fairly resigned, and when I ask if there's been any news, they simply frown and squeeze their linked hands. "Nothing yet," Matthew shares. "The whole thing should take a few hours.. they told us that we'd get a chance to say goodbye if it doesn't work." It seems as if every word out of his mouth is accompanied by a wince. "He won't wake up, but they'll take us back before he goes."

I can only nod, clutching Paisley tightly. All of the pups are upset, but she needs me more than the others right now. We pile onto one of the sofas together, all my babies gathered around me as we settle in for the wait. No one says a word, but in my head I pray and pray, begging the Goddess for a miracle. I've done nothing else over the last two days, and I can only hope she's been listening.

I'm not sure how much time has passed, because every time I look at the clock my vision begins to blur and I have to clamp my eyes shut. The air is thick with tension, and every few minutes I catch Nina watching me. I can still hear her arguing with Devon in my memories and as badly as I want to lash out at her, I keep my mouth shut. She, on the other hand, doesn't seem to share my restraint.

"I take it you didn't actually go into labor the other day?" Nina observes after a while, nodding towards my belly.

"Actually I did." I correct her, "but they stopped it – no thanks to you." I add spitefully.

"Come on, Jane. You have to realize that none of this was personal." Nina sighs in answer, rolling her doe-like eyes.

"Don't give me that – if this is anything, it's personal." I counter. "It's personal to you and me both. You might be fated, but I love Ethan. He's everything to me."

"I never said I didn't love him." Nina replies haughtily, but there's a hidden well of emotion in her gaze, and I wonder if she isn't making a confession. Unfortunately it disappears almost as quickly as it appeared, replaced with sharp accusation. "Not that it matters. I never even had a chance with him – he only ever wanted you."

"I thought it wasn't personal?" I mock, hating how childish I sound but not caring enough to change my tone.

"Why couldn't you just stay away?" Nina exclaims, exasperated. "If he lives he'll take you back in an instant and if he dies that no one will give a damn about me. Not when you were Luna for so long, and you have his pups."

My wolf growls in my head. I hate to say it, but I'm actually feeling a little sorry for the other she-wolf.

She's basically just admitted she has feelings for Ethan, and after years of living in someone else's shadow, she finally got her chance – only to watch it slip away. I can certainly relate to that.

I'd thought she was only here to increase her own power, but looking at her now it's only too easy to recognize the face of a woman driven out of her head by Ethan Blackwell. And I know because I see it in the mirror every day. She cared about Ethan enough to nurse him all these months, even knowing she might never gain anything in return.

"I'm sorry, Nina." I exhale heavily. "If the worst happens, I promise not everyone will forget you."

"You can't know that." She grumbles, crossing her arms over her chest.

"Yes I can." I insist. "Because I'm not going to forget what you did for Ethan – what you sacrificed." I promise, softening my tone.

"But if he lives, I'm not just going to stand back and let you take him. I'm done letting people walk all over me.

I've been weak long enough."

At first Nina's expression was vulnerable, but now it hardens and she bares her fangs, "You can't beat me in a fight, Omega."

Fours small growls sound around me, and I see all my pups raising their hackles towards the she-wolf. A rush of pride washes over me, even though I have no intention" updated by jobnib.com" of letting my babies help me combat this woman. "I wouldn't be so sure about that." I tell her smugly, I have a whole pack on my side."

Before Nina can answer, a white-faced nurse appears, and I immediately surge to my feet as fast as my pregnant body will allow me. Everyone around me does the same, and the scrub nurse looks back and forth between us in confusion."

What's happening?" Matthew asks anxiously.

The young practitioner takes a deep breath, and the ground suddenly feels as if it's crumbling beneath my feet. I know whatever is coming next isn't good. "Well, the initial operation was successful." She explains. "The doctor was able to completely repair the Alpha's spine."

Nina is holding her breath beside me, and I understand the impulse. This sounds like good news, but the nurse is acting much too grim. When she continues, I know my instinct was right. "

Unfortunately however, there's been a complication with the anesthesia. The surgeon has been trying to wake him for half an hour, but he's not coming out of it."

"What does that mean?" Devon presses, Wrapping a supportive arm around my shoulders.

"If he doesn't wake up soon, he might go into a coma." The nurse explains, frowning at the pups before looking back up at me.

"He might never wake up."

"They said we'd get to see him." Matthew reminds her hoarsely. "To say goodbye, if it came to it."

"Do you think we could go back now?" Nina asks excitedly.

"It would have to be one at a time." The nurse hedges, wlinging her hands.

"I'll go first." Nina immediately announces, shooting me a glance as if the pups and I are just a second thought. "You can go with your litter afterwards."

Ethan

My wolf races through the snowy mountains, bounding through thick white mounds of powder as evergreens whirl past me at lightning speed. My heart soars – my inner animal hasn't been free in so long that I almost forgot what this felt like. I can't even remember when I was able to run this way last. I don't even know where I am, but I don't care.

Voices are calling to me from afar, at first too jumbled and cacophonous to distinguish, but slowly they come into focus. There's one that's only too familiar, one which calls to my wolf like nothing else. It feels as though they're two halves of the same soul and yet, my wolf doesn't want to follow it.

The faster he runs, the farther away that voice seems to float. and the strange thing is, I don't miss it. It almost feels as though my wolf is searching for something – but what?

There's a white light in the distance, and I feel like a pup again, without a care or responsibility in the world. There is only the promise of peace, and I'm so exhausted that I'd do any thing to attain it. I can finally rest. I think dazedly, despite the fact that I can't remember why I'm so tired.

The light is getting closer and closer now, and I pick up my pace, desperate to reach it. I feel like I'm flying, as if my feet might leave the ground permanently at any moment. Yes. I chant in my head. At last.

A single second before I thought I might actually sprout wings, another voice breaks through the serene mountain air. It's melodic and silky, filling my senses like a ray of sunshine. "Ethan," it resonates, making my heart pound and my feet slow. "Don't go. Come back to me."

I know that voice. My wolf pauses, looking back over our shoulder and gazing into the endless forest. Unlike the first voice, this one makes me stop dead in my tracks. It doesn't feel like it belongs to some distant part of me, instead it's like a torch that sets my soul alight. It's not peaceful, or comforting. It's a burning, all-consuming flame which illuminates the world around me. For the first time I realize that nothing had been in color before this moment, but now that I hear her, the monochrome landscape bursts into a riot of brilliant pigment, each one more vibrant than the next.

Jane. I realize, finally recognizing the source. I start to turn back towards the beautiful sound of my mate, but for some reason my body continues to float towards the white light. No matter what I do, I can't seem to go back. No! It can't be too late.

But the more time that passes, I realize that it can.

I think I've gone too far.

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