

The Luna and her Quadruplet Pups by Jane Above Story

Chapter 225

Jane

When Ethan and I arrive back at the penthouse we find Devon and Nina sitting on the sofa while the pups zoom around the living room in front of them. Devon has an arm slung over Nina's shoulder, which surprises me, but I can't focus on them because the moment we walk through the four little bodies come hurtling at our legs.

Mommy! Daddy!" The pups cry excitedly.

Parker is the tallest and fastest, so he reaches us first, leaping up into Ethan's waiting arms while I intercept Riley, whose small size lets her bound weightlessly across the room. "Hello my love puddles." I greet them happily, kneeling so I can also hug Ryder, while Ethan effortlessly scoops up Paisley, even though his arms are already full with her brother.

"What have you been up to? Were you good for Devon and Nina?" I ask, marvelling at Ethan's strength despite his recent recovery.

"We were sooo good." Riley confirms. "Nina was sad so we cuddled her."

"And then Devon told us we could get ice cream if we promised not to eavesdrop." Parker adds, and I notice some chocolate stains around his mouth.

"So we played games in our rooms and then we went and gots the biggest sundae in the whole world, Mommy." Paisley continues, squirming free of her father's hold so she can come kiss me hello.

She yawns wide as she snuggles up against me, and I brush my lips over her soft cheek. Suddenly it's very clear why they were so energetic when we walked in I know a sugar high when I see one, and I also realize my babies are about to crash. In truth, I'm fairly exhausted myself -between growing my baby, running with Ethan and surviving the onslaught of his lust, I could easily collapse where I stand.

"Well it sounds as if you've had quite the afternoon." Ethan observes with a tight smile, and I know his thoughts are lingering on Riley's comment about Nina. I follow his gaze to the pair on the couch, seeing that Nina's cheeks are flushed with slight color. I realize they need time alone to talk, so I suggest something we all need.

"Yes, and it's almost naptime." I announce, finally able to get my hands on Parker as the pups rotate through our arms. "So why don't you thank Devon for filling you with sugar and then we can go lie down in your fort."

"Are you going to nap with us Mommy?" Ryder inquires eagerly, his eyes wide.

"I thought I might." I reply, ruffling his hair. "Your Daddy chased me around the woods for so long I can't even feel my feet anymore."

"Really?" Riley questions slyly, poking my foot with her little paw. "Can you feels that? Or that?"

How bout this?"

"Nope, none of it!" I lie, which of course only encourages the other pups to try as well. Soon I'm lying in their makeshift fort in the bedroom, with four precious babies gathered around my feet, coming up with more and more new items and textures to test against my toes and heels. It's pure silliness, and quickly falls apart when they find a feather to tickle me with – still, it got them to me lie down. I'm convinced the promise of my company is the only thing that persuaded my hyper pups to actually take a nap, and soon they're fast asleep around me. I nod off quickly as well, and when I wake an hour or so later I can hear quiet voices in the kitchen.

I emerge from the pups' room, carefully closing the door behind me. I'm still groggy, and want nothing "more than to go crawl in Ethan's lap, but when I find him he's standing at the counter with an odd expression on his handsome face. I stop when I see tears in Nina's eyes, unsure of whether I should retreat. However when Ethan sees me, he ushers me closer with a wave. "Jane, Nina has something she'd like to tell you."

I hesitantly approach, not knowing what to expect, let alone what to do or say. "Alright."

Nina turns to face me, a strange sort of resignation on her features. "I owe you an apology." She says, shocking me completely.

"Oh." I stammer, glancing at Ethan, who offers an encouraging nod.

"I'm sorry for the way I behaved in the Dark Moon pack. I was jealous and insecure... I was trying to protect the future that I thought I wanted." Nina's lashes fall shut, regret heavy on her tongue. "I'm coming to realize that I was wrong about a lot of things, but nothing was worse than the way I treated you when you needed help. I'm ashamed of how I acted."

I can hardly believe my ears, but there's no denying the pain on her lovely features. I also don't miss the way she says "the future I thought I wanted." I know better than anyone what it's like to move through life in one direction, only to have my path suddenly be taken away or disappear. Did Ethan tell her about what we decided?

The impulse to hug the suffering woman is too strong to resist, and I cross the floor without another word to pull Nina into my embrace. She gasps in surprise, and it takes a moment for her to return my embrace but once she does, she squeezes her arms around me as tightly as I'm holding her. "Your pups are a lot like you, you know?"

Éthan and I both chuckle, and I simply squeeze her tighter. "I'm sorry." I murmur gently."If anything good comes out of all this then maybe it should be second chances for us all."

"I agree." Nine sighs, "Which is why I'm going with Devon to the Dark Moon pack when he leaves here." Nina announces, her voice slightly muffled by my hair. I look up at Ethan in surprise, but he must have already known this detail because he only nods. "I don't belong here..." Nina continues in a whisper. "And I'm starting to realize I never did."

"I really hope you find what you're looking for." I tell her honestly, still watching Ethan. I'm struggling to stay focused on the woman in front of me, too preoccupied with wondering what this means for my mate and I.

"Thank you, Jane." Nina replies, finally pulling back. "I hope we can be friends one day... even though we started out on the wrong foot."

"I'd like that," I agree, smiling at her as she swipes tears from her eyes. Footsteps sound behind me, and I tum to see Devon leaning in the doorway. He looks past me to Nina, tenderness filling his eyes as she looks up at him. "Ready He inquires, extending his hand towards her.

"Ready." She confirms, seeming suddenly shy and possibly a bit nervous. She closes the distance between them and rests her small palm in his, and together they retreat from the penthouse, promising to be in touch before they leave the territory.

I watch them walk away with more than a little confusion, but then Ethan is there, pulling me close. "I feel like I've missed something." I confess, leaning into his warmth.

"The Goddess moves in mysterious ways." He answers with a shrug, dropping his lips to my fresh claiming mark.

"What does this mean for us?" I ask, almost afraid of the answer. It seems like this could only be a "good thing – but I've been wrong before.

"It means that we have one less obstacle in our path." Ethan replies, nibbling my shoulder as his hands travel over my body. Whatever he may have said about the struggles ahead of us, there's no doubt his wolf enjoys having near – staking his claim.

"Hmm," I muse, nuzzling my nose against his chest, "What should we tell the pups?"

"I think we should keep this to ourselves until things are sorted out." Ethan sighs reluctantly.

"Well I have the sneaking suspicion that they're going to figure it out." I remark dryly, "especially if they see you pawing me this way. But if you're really determined I suppose we can keep things platonic until the pack is appeased.. not touch unless we have to. sleep in different rooms."

Ethan growls deep in his chest, and I have to smother my giggle. I'd known that saying this would provoke him, and he isn't letting me down.

There's no need to go to extremes." He grumbles, still nibbling my sensitive mark. His hand slips down to my round belly, "besides, We should share a room just in case you go into early labor again."

"Oh really?" I tease. "Is that why?"

Ethan arches a brow, a sultry smirk taking over his chiseled features, "Do you doubt me, mate?"

"That depends." I answer silkily, "If I say yes, what are you going to do about it?"

Ethan chuckles and scoops my feet out from under me, promptly carting me off to his bedroom to ravish before the pups wake up.

I can only smile. For the first time in a long time, I feel like everything is exactly as it should be.