

## Chapter 90 Memories

Jane

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I was eighteen, newly married and supporting Ethan at one of the most difficult times in his life. The day after his father's funeral I truly believed I was coming down with my period, and though Ethan offered to stay home with me, I told him to go to work anyway. It was too important, he was the new Alpha and he had to seem like he was up for the job from day one.

"Are you sure?" He asked me, leaning over my prone body on the bed, his brow furrowed in concern.

"Go on, I'll be fine." I promised, leaning up on my elbow to kiss him goodbye, "I just need to take some painkillers and try to rest."

"Only if you're sure." He frowned, kissing me again, then bending his head to kiss my fresh claiming mark. "I'll see you tonight. Just call if you need anything."

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"Good luck, Alpha." I teased, though some of our old joke had died away now that the title actually belonged to him. I couldn't taunt him about not being in power yet, and

every mention of the word was a reminder that his father was gone.

After he left I curled up and tried to nap, but before long my mind started to drift to my new husband. He'd worn me out over the last few days, and my body was deliciously sore. I never dreamed how much pleasure was possible with one's mate. Everything he'd shown me before we eloped felt wonderful, but it was so different to actually have him inside me, claiming my very soul.

The more I thought about it, the hotter I became, my most intimate parts surging to life and swelling with blood, demanding attention from my mate. At first I reached down to the apex of my thighs, alarmed by the gravity of the need quickly consuming me and desperate to take the edge off, but no matter how I tried, nothing helped. I might as well have been touching someone else, so little did it impact me.

I realized the problem quickly, much more quickly than I figured out what was happening to me. I needed Ethan, my wolf only wanted his touch, and even my own hands wouldn't be able to relieve the horrible ache between my legs. I pulled out my phone, feeling incredibly guilty for disturbing him when he probably wasn't even to the office yet, but beyond all thought or reason. Deciding to text instead of call, I quickly typed: how long are you

going to be gone?

His answer came back so quickly I suspected he'd been staring at his phone. The typical work day ends at 6pm, but I'll try to get away a little early if I can.

Oh Goddess, it was only ten AM. I didn't understand what was wrong with me, I truly believed I would die if I didn't get rutted soon. Had marriage corrupted me so completely? So quickly? What was wrong with me that I was going half crazy with desire? Normal people couldn't possibly exist this way – they'd never get anything done! When I didn't respond promptly, Ethan send another message. Are you okay?

This prompted an entirely different kind of crisis. Ethan was working on lowering my inhibitions when it came to talking about sex – encouraging me to tell him what I wanted, liked, and speak the naughty terms aloud, but I wasn't there yet. I didn't have the first clue how to convey what I needed from him without mortifying myself, or to relate just how urgent the situation was becoming.

Half mad, I realized I couldn't ask him to come home when he'd barely started his first day as Alpha, but I honestly couldn't abide the thought of waiting until he came home either. I'd never make it eight more hours. Can I come see you? I typed dizzily.

Of course – is everything okay? He asked again.

I just need to see you. I explained, lurching out of bed and pulling on some proper clothes.

I stumbled my way downstairs and hopped into the first cab I could flag down. The driver was a beta, and seemed slightly star struck to suddenly have the new Luna as a passenger. He offered me his condolences on my father in law's death, and asked after the family, telling me he'd take me anywhere I liked.

"Please, take me to the pack headquarters," I whimpered. "Fast."

"Yes, Ma'am." He actually saluted me, before careening off down the street. It was during our wild ride through the city streets that the pain landed, slamming into me full force. Where moments before I had been overwhelmed with raw, animal lust, now it was blending with the most terrible pain. I've never felt so empty, and I cried out in anguish, completely alarming my driver.

"My lady, what's wrong?" He asked, eyeing me in the rearview mirror.

"I don't know." I cried, trying to curl up on the back seat.

"I... I think I'm dying. I need Ethan."

The driver scented the air and then, to my shock and mild offense, the cabby began to laugh. "Oh dear, poor child. Did no one ever explain it to you?"

"What-?" I gasped, tears streaming from my eyes.

"You've gone into heat, little Luna." He told me softly, "you won't be dying any time soon."

My face flushed with color. No one had ever explained it to me, then again, they might not have known. My mother, Linda, all the women in my life were betas. This wasn't a problem they had to face. Heat, rutting, all these strange games of dominance and submission – it was all the rare domain of alphas and omegas.

When we arrived at the pack headquarters the driver made me stay in the car. "You don't want anyone but your mate to smell you." He advised cryptically.

"Why not?" I asked nervously.

"I'll let him explain that to you." He murmured, "just stay here."

For once I actually did what I was told, but it wasn't because I had any interest in obeying, it was simply because I was in too much pain to move. I'd later learn that the first heat is always the worst, I suspect in part because it is so new and unexpectedly awful. In later years I was able to prepare myself for the pain, plan out everything in advance to ease my torment. The one movement I could manage this first time was to roll down the windows. It was so hot in the back of the car, and I felt like I was choking without fresh air.

I'm not sure how long the driver took retrieving Ethan, and I imagine it wasn't easy to do so without announcing what was happening to the entire building, but it felt like hours to me. The first few wolves who passed by the parked taxi paid no notice to me, but after about a dozen men strolled past, one stopped dead in his tracks, turning towards the car and looking as if he'd been slapped right across the face.

He was a mountain of a man, almost as tall as Ethan and sporting quite a bit more fat. When his eyes landed on me they immediately began to glow. His fangs and claws extended, and he began growling low in his chest. Waves of feral aggression poured off him in waves, and the next thing I knew he was lunging towards the car, trying to climb through the window to reach me even though he was much too large to fit.

It was a blessing the doors were locked, because his meaty hand was viciously yanking at the handle, trying to wrench the door open. I wondered why he didn't just open the door from the inside, but he couldn't seem to take his eyes off of me. I've never seen such madness – before or since. I'm sure if he'd been able to reach me he would have forced himself on me right there in the middle of the street. Instead I could only cower on the floor between the front and back seats, praying he didn't

find the sense to push the interior lock. I might be able to outrun him, if I got out of the car, but suddenly the cabby's words made a lot more sense. If this is what my scent did to an Alpha, how many more wolves would I draw into the chase out in the open?

Thankfully I never had to find out, because a few moments later the horrible man was yanked out of the window as a thunderous roar overpowered his frantic snarls. His big body went flying, and the next thing I knew, Ethan was there, gathering me up off the ground and into his arms. "What were you thinking, leaving the house in this state?" He demanded fiercely, kissing every inch of skin he could reach as he rocked me back and forth. I could feel his hardness digging into my bottom, but he seemed completely in control – not anything like that other man. "I would have come home without a second thought, Janey."

"I didn't know," I whimpered, clinging to him. "I just knew I needed you."

The vision breaks when I get back to the apartment, but not entirely. Still floating along the hazy planes of memory, I sneak down the hall towards Ethan's room, only pausing to make sure the pups are sound asleep in their room before continuing. I start to step into the room, but as soon as my eyes focus on the bed, I freeze: Ethan

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 +90 Points at most

isn't alone.



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