

The Serum 3: The Lioness



By Crysttail

The lioness looked out across the hot Savannah around her. She could not see the trees where her pride lived, but she knew which direction it was. She had been off hunting by herself and wandered further than she meant to that morning. Now the heat of the day was raising and she looked for a sheltered spot to rest until nightfall, when she would journey back to join her pride.

She looked around and spotted a deep ditch nearly hidden in the tall grass not too far away from her. With the heat on her back, she made her way to the ditch and began to feel thirsty.

It was nice and shady at the bottom of the ditch and the lioness was lying down to take a nap when she caught an odd scent in the air. She got to her feet and moved along the ditch until she found the source of the odd smell, a truck that was lying in the ditch. She had seen trucks several times before, but only at a great distance. It looked as though this one had come driving rapidly across the plains and ran into the ditch. The front was crumpled and buried into the hillside and the truck would never drive again.

Moving cautiously, the lioness investigated the truck. She caught the faint scent of an unfamiliar animal inside of it, but the scent was at least a day old and there was no sign of anyone around. The scent was strongest on a piece of fabric near the truck. Had she been able to read, she would have noticed the name 'Fred' embroidered on the front of the shirt.

As she investigated the truck, she stepped up into the back and looked around. Most of what she saw she did not understand, but she did several clear jugs that held liquid, with the faint scent of water lingering over them. She felt her thirst returning and she pulled and batted the jugs out of the truck and onto the ground.

She couldn't figure out how to open them, but they were made of thin plastic and when she scratched at them, her sharp claws were able to pierce through, giving her access to the liquid inside, which she eagerly lapped up, though a lot was spilled onto the ground. The first two jugs contained water, but the third was different. That jug was shaped differently and covered with labels, the most prominent lettering being the letters 'PEFD'. She found that the liquid in this jug felt like water, but had a funny taste. It was not unpleasant at all, tasting slightly sweet, so she lapped it up as well. A fourth bottle contained water and was enough to quench her thirst.

Feeling content, she curled up in the shade beneath the truck and dozed lightly until the heat of day began to fade again, when she set off back towards her pride.

As she walked, she felt the familiar stirrings of warmth in her groin and realized that she was coming into her heat, sighing a little sadly at the thought. She had been in heat many times in the years she had been with the pride, and at first had mated often. But her belly had never swollen and she had never born any kit. She had watched the others' kits with sadness, always wishing for her own, but it seemed she simply could not become pregnant, and had gradually stopped trying; now only mating rarely, though her heat came upon her often. She sighed again, feeling envious and jealous as she remembered that even now, four in the pride were pregnant, one in her final weeks, two about halfway along, and one just beginning to show.

By the time she reached the rocky outcropping where her pride lived, however, her heat had become stronger than she had ever remembered it being before. She decided that she would try again, somehow feeling that perhaps this time would be special.

She found that most of the pack had gone hunting, but the dominant male was there and she went immediately to see him. He could tell almost instantly that she was in heat and as they courted, he led her a short ways away. When the courtship rituals were completed, they immediately got to work. As lions do, they mated almost constantly for an entire day, doing little else until they had finished.

A little dazed from the constant attention, but happy, the lioness found a nice bit of shade and drifted off to sleep, purring contently.

When she awoke the next day, she imagined she felt a bit of heaviness in her belly and told herself that it was all the seed that the male had given her the day before, smiling at the ridiculous thought.

She got up and greeted the rest of the pride, nuzzling and rubbing against them, rubbing their sides together, sighing softly again as she saw how full the pregnant lioness appeared. Even the newest one was already swollen while the one furthest along looked almost ready to drop her litter.

But there was work to do and the distraction of the hunt made her forget for a while about bearing cubs. The pride was skilled and well organized, and they were very successful that day, bringing down two zebras, so there was plenty of food for everyone, though the male ate first as always. Each member of the pride ate their fill and with have bellies they returned to nap in the shade, ignoring the heat of day.

As dusk fell they became more playful rolled around with each other for a while until they settled down to sleep, with only the male remaining awake to patrol their territory. The night passed uneventfully and the pride awoke early the next morning.

The pride socialized a bit and the lioness felt a little sad as she watched those who were carrying cubs rubbed against each other, their heavy sides rubbing together. As the sun rose higher, they traveled to the nearby watering hole and quenched their thirst. They watched the prey animals come down to drink, but they were still full from the success the day before and felt no need to hunt.

After awhile, the lions returned to their home. As the lioness walked, she felt oddly heavy, as she sometimes did after right after eating a large meal. But she had never felt like that the day after the meal, she usually felt light again by that time. She was beginning to wonder about it when she tackled by one of her sisters, who had was in a playful mood. Distracted from her thoughts, the lioness forgot about the odd heaviness and rolled and tumbled with her sisters.

That night as they slept, they were awakened by the sound of two lions roaring in the distance, an unknown male and their own. But the pride's male sent the intruder on his way and they soon fell asleep again.

They awoke the next morning feeling their hunger renewed, and so they set off on the hunt. The lioness again felt an odd heaviness in her middle. Looking back, she thought that she saw a slight curve to her sides that hadn't been there before. She was going to look at it closer, but by then the hunt had begun.

After the hunt, they ate greedily until all of their sides bulged, though none so much as the lionesses who carried the cubs within them. They slowly made their way back to the rock. Another lioness had come into her heat and she and the male went off together.

All of the lions were feeling sated by the meal so they spent the day napping lightly and lying around. By nightfall, a few were more active, but most of them just gradually drifted off to sleep.

The morning sun arose to find most of the lions still asleep. The lioness awoke and rolled over onto her back. Looking at her belly, she was surprised to see a quite noticeable bulge in it. She moved one paw down to feel over it and found to her surprise that instead of being soft like it felt after a large meal, it felt more firm. She wondered what it could be caused by when her gaze fell on the lioness he was lying asleep next to her. She was the one early in her pregnancy, and the lioness could see that her belly had almost the same shape. Her mouth opened in surprise at the possibilities, but decided not to get her hopes up. She would just wait and see what happened.

Most of the lions were full, but a couple went off in search of smaller prey while the rest lounged around. As darkness began to fall, the male and the female returned, both looking tired but happy. Soon, after, the other lionesses returned from their hunt and the pride lay down to sleep.

They were awoken early in the morning by the distant roar of a lion, which the male went to investigate. While they waited, the other lions milled around a bit, rubbing against each other. The lioness was quite surprised when she rubbed her side against another lioness and felt an odd sensation. She hadn't noticed it at first in the dark, but now that she looked back, she could see the large bulge in her side. She purred happily, for now there was no doubt that she was pregnant. It was odd though, she had only mated a few days before and already she was as large as the lioness that had been pregnant for weeks. Feeling happy and playful, she rolled over onto her back to look at her heavy belly, smiling at how rounded her middle was now.

As soon as it was light, the pride went hunting. They were not as successful as the previous days, but the lioness didn't mind, happy that at last she would bear cubs. When they returned from the hunt, the other lionesses realized that she was pregnant and gathered around, congratulating and rubbing against. A few were a little surprised at how quickly she had grown, but most were simply happy for her, for they knew that she had never been able to carry cubs before.

Later that day, when the sky had begun to darken, they set out again and were more successful. Tired, full and happy, they lay down beneath the rocks. Just before they fell asleep, the male returned, limping slightly but apparently victorious. He greeted each of them and stood proudly over them as they drifted off to sleep.

As dawn arrived, the pride woke up yawning. The lioness groaned as she sat up, feeling the weight in her middle. She looked down and gasped at how round she was now, as though weeks had passed while she slept. She now looked to be over halfway through her term, her belly swollen and round. The others crowded around as they saw her, wondering what was happening. However, she appeared to be otherwise completely normal as though her pregnancy had taken just as long as any other, so they decided they would just have to sit back and wait to see what happened. The lioness was a bit troubled, but didn't worry too much. It looked like she would be having her cubs sooner than she had thought, that's all.

Since they couldn't do anything about, the pride went on with everyday activities, the lioness joining several others in a successful hunt. After they had all eaten as much as they could, they returned to the shade of the rocks. Full and warm from the sun, the lioness drifted off to sleep, not waking until the sun had nearly set. When she awoke, she felt heavier than ever, and looked it. By now she had passed the two lionesses in the middle of their pregnancies, though she still had a ways to go.

The lioness, along with a few others, went down to the river to get a drink, smiling at the weight in her middle, though walking was a little impeded by it. Looking back, she smiled at the way her sides bulged. On the way back, she adjusted to the weight enough that she could walk, and even run, nearly as fast as before, though as she played around she found she couldn't jump as high.

The night began to grow colder than usual, so all the lionesses slept against each other, pressing into her swollen sides and making her purr happily. During the night the other lionesses were pushed apart as her belly grew, but none of them noticed until they woke in the morning to find that her belly now appeared to be close to full term, about the same size of the other lioness who was furthest along. The lioness had trouble standing, unused to the sudden increase, but after walking around for a bit she became coordinated enough that she could join the others on the hunt, although she was now a great deal slower. Her weight did come to her advantage though by helping her to pull down a running antelope.

All of the pride ate their fill and the lioness almost couldn't walk with the weight of her meal and her unborn cubs, but she was able to make it back to the rocks along with the others, where she sat down heavily and dozed through the heat of the day. As dusk fell, many of the others went down to the watering hole, but the lioness didn't feel like moving and eventually drifted off to sleep for the night.

The pride was awakened in the early morning light by a commotion. Struggling to her feet, the heavily gravid lioness saw that the cause of the commotion was that the other lioness had gone into labor was preparing to give birth. This caused some concern for the lioness, for she could see that she had now outgrown the other lioness, which meant that she should already have given birth. But somehow she knew that she wasn't ready yet. For the first time since her strange pregnancy began, she became nervous. Perhaps, she thought, the other lioness had only carried a small litter and that was why she was smaller. She watched and found that she was wrong about that as the other lioness whelped six young cubs, a very good sized litter for lions.

Most of the attention was on the newborn cubs now and the lioness withdrew a bit, looking back at herself, feeling the heaviness in her middle. She thought she could even feel some movement from within. She sighed softly, feeling a little bit frightened of what was happening inside of her.

After the other lioness had finished and been looked after, the pride set out for the morning hunt. The lioness went to join them but found that it took all her strength just to jog and the effort left her panting. Sighing sadly she turned instead and trotted down to the watering hole, all too aware of the weight in her swollen middle.

When she had finished drinking, the sun was high in the sky, so she sat in the shade of the tall grass and waited for dusk to arrive, watching the various other animals that came to drink. Gradually the sky darkened and she got slowly and heavily to her feet, moaning softly at the weight of her swollen middle. She tried to jog back to the pride but was annoyed to find that she couldn't manage anything other than a fast walk, the effort of which left her panting as she reached the outcropping of rock where the pride slept.

She was sat down and was forced to lie on her side because of her belly. Feeling a little uncomfortable and troubled by her fears, it took her a while to drift off to sleep. At last though, her weariness won out and she fell asleep beside her sisters.

She awoke with a groan late the next morning, feeling the heavy weight of her swollen pulling down on her. She moved to stand up and gasped with shock as she found that she couldn't. Alarmed, her breathing quickened and she could only lay there for a moment, until she managed to calm herself down a bit. Carefully, she tried again, moaning softly. She found that by twisting around, she could just manage to stand. She stood there, panting a bit at the effort. She took a tentative step forward, but found it to be too difficult and nearly collapsed. Panting heavily, she gently lowered herself and leaned over to lie on her side.

Now she was feeling nervous and a little frightened. She knew that she was far larger than she should be. Most lionesses were able to hunt all through their pregnancy until they gave birth, but even of those that weren't able to, she had never heard of any lioness being unable to move around. She looked around for some help, but the male was patrolling the borders and all the other lionesses had gone hunting, except for the one who had given birth, who was down at the watering hole.

Alone and afraid the lioness waited, only her belly for company. She could feel the movement of her cubs inside and as the day wore on the movement seemed to increase. As the shadows lengthened and the sky began to darken, the lioness felt an odd change come over her. At first she didn't understand what was happening as her belly seemed to pulse lightly, but then she realized with a gasp that at last her time had come. She panicked, not knowing what to do, but her instincts took over and before long she felt the first cub sliding out between her legs. She lost track of everything, going into a sort of trance as her instincts took complete control.

She didn't know how long it took, but when she came back to her senses darkness had fallen and the pride had returned and was gathering around her, helping her with cubs as she lay there panting for air. Her belly felt odd and she felt like she would never walk again, and would certainly never allow a male to mate with her again. But all that was forgotten and she smiled as she looked over the sixteen newborn cubs nestled against her middle as they each tried to drink from her teats. She purred softly and leaned over to lick each of them, happy and content with her cubs.