

Accidental Surrogate For Alpha By Caroline Above Chapter 131

#Chapter 131 – Ella Dreams of Sinclair

Ella

Sleep! I beg my manic wolf. You have to keep your strength up! We need sleep!

I can't rest when there's danger. She argues stubbornly, and though I'm frustrated, I

understand. I'm so exhausted with fear, anxiety, and pregnancy that I'm barely

hanging onto my sanity by a thread, but I know it's the right thing to do.

I need to keep

my wits about me.

I haven't heard anything since the Prince visited my rooms. The servants brought me

food and fresh linens, but I didn't trust them enough to actually eat, and as

comfortable as the bed looks, it's a far cry from my beloved nest. I don't feel safe here,

so how am I ever supposed to let my guard down enough to rest?

If only I could talk to Dominic, to know that he's alright and warn him about what I

learned. As soon as the thought enters my mind, I realize what a fool I've been. There

is a way! Of course there is!

I pull one of the blankets off the bed, scanning the room. I've circled the space about

two dozen times already, memorizing every nook and cranny. Three guards are

posted outside my door, and two more are posted on the ground below my third story

window. In the end I clamber into the large wardrobe, needing to be hidden from sight

– to feel walls around me even if they aren't truly strong enough to ward off an attack.

I toss and turn, trying to get comfortable and calm my wolf. My mind is still reeling, but the knowledge that I could soon be lost in a dream with my mate gives me the determination I need. When I open my eyes again, I'm in the same moonkissed forest I've visited in our other dream dates, and I pray that Sinclair has the sense to sleep too.

It happens slowly.

The more time that passes, the more I fear he's too frantic to rest, but after what feels

like hours, I feel the air around me change, sparking with sudden electricity. I know

he's here before I hear his voice, but it doesn't make the sound of his deep bass any

less beautiful. "Ella!" Footsteps are racing towards me, and then I'm out of the bed in

the trees, sprinting towards the sound of his voice.

When I see him I feel as though time itself slows down. My vision blurs with tears, and

I'm crying out for him too, "Dominic!"

He's charging towards me beneath the stars, his ravenous gaze locked on me with

such avid determination that part of me wants to turn and give chase – but I push

those instincts far away. We're both wearing the same curious clothing that always

appears on us here, but the closer Sinclair comes, I can see he's got a black eye and

fresh scratches covering his skin. I'm worried for the wounds hidden beneath his

clothing, but he's alive – and he's here.

When he's only a few feet away, I launch myself into his arms, feeling not a single

shred of pain as my battered body collides with his. Powerful arms lock around my body, clutching me so tightly I can't breathe, but I don't care. I want him to hold me even tighter, and so I cling to him with all my strength, wrapping my legs around his waist and burying my face in his neck. His scent fills my senses, and I'm crying with sheer relief. He's okay.

The huge Alpha is nuzzling and petting me, murmuring sweet nonsense as he trails his lips over my skin. "Ella, my Ella. I've been so worried." I can only whimper in reply, running my hands through his hair and hoping he can feel my love as powerfully as I can feel his. "Such a clever mate, to think of our dreams! So perfect, so sweet." He drops to his knees, and though I'm trying my best to fuse our bodies together, he begins tugging at my limbs, "I'm so sorry, my love. Are you alright?" I whine and squeeze him tighter, but his inner caretaker has claimed full control and he drags my body away from him with utmost ease. "Let me see, let me look at you."

With an agonized expression, his eyes sweep over the gash where my head hit the window in the car, the black bruise on my temple where the wolves knocked me out, and the blooming blue shadow on my cheekbone from Lydia's slap. His wolf whines as if my pain is his own, and Sinclair studies and fusses over each mark, dotting them with kisses and murmurs of sympathy. "Poor baby, what have they done to you?"

"The baby." I hiccup, shaking my head and dragging his palm to my

belly. He lets me
guide his movement, obviously equally concerned. “He’s kicking but I
can’t tell... is he
alright?”

Sinclair dips his head to my neck as he focuses on the pulses of energy
through his

bond with our son, nibbling the spot on my shoulder where he claimed
me the last

time we were here. “He’s okay, but he’s stressed.” He finally confirms,
“he can feel

your anxiety.”

It’s not the best news, but it’s still an incredible relief. I’d been terrified
that he might

have been injured in the crash. “There,” Sinclair croons, stroking my
tummy as he

breathes in my scent. “You see, that’s better already. Oh my sweet mate,
you must

have been so afraid.”

“What about you?” I sniffle, “are you hurt? What happened in the
battle?”

But Sinclair shakes his head, ignoring my question as he rises and
carries me to the

bed. He pulls off my night dress, apparently determined to examine
every inch of my

body for injuries because he can focus on anything else. He growls every
time I try to

object or push him away, running his hands over my bruises with
featherlight

tenderness, then following them with kisses.

I’m sorely reminded of a pet who can’t be dissuaded from investigating
every last

scent on their owner’s clothes after they come in from outdoors, albeit a
very growly

and affectionate one. Of course, I would ever voice such a comparison to
Sinclair. He

won't be satisfied until he's checked me from the top of my head to the bottom of my feet, switching back and forth between words of love and threats against the Prince.

When he's finally finished, he pulls me into his lap and wraps me up in a tight embrace, purring intently.

"I want to look at you, too. It's my turn!" I complain anxiously, trying to wriggle enough

to reach the buttons on his shirt. He huffs but eventually allows it, and I strip him the

same way he stripped me, a fresh stab of pain slicing into me with every new scar and

abrasion I find. His ribs are positively purple, and I feel guilty for squeezing him so

tightly before. Still, when I try to keep my distance he simply reels me back in, holding

me so tightly I have no hope of escape.

"How are you?" Sinclair inquires, still with such urgency despite the time which has

passed since we reunited. "Really?"

"I'm scared. For you, for me and the baby." I confess, "They killed Gabriel and the

others just for trying to protect me. I gave myself up and they still killed them!"

Sinclair growls, but this time I sense a flash of anger directed towards me." They were

always going to kill them, that's why you never ever surrender yourself. Never, you

know better than that, Ella. What were you thinking?"

"I just couldn't stand there and do nothing!" I exclaim pitifully, hating his

disappointment in me. I don't ever want Sinclair to be angry with me, but it hurts

especially badly right now, when I only want cuddles and support.

“Yes you could!” He corrects me firmly. “And when I get you back I’m going to make sure you never consider doing anything so reckless again. Not for me, not for anyone.” There’s a threat in his voice, but the strange thing is that I find the suggestion of his dominance more calming than anything else. I suppose it tells me that he still loves me enough to care – not to give up on me for a single mistake. “What else?” He inquires, still in protector mode, needing to know every last detail.

A fresh wave of sobs threaten as I consider the things which have occurred since I arrived here. “Lydia’s an abominable cow and the Prince is as dumb as a brick... and I

miss my nest.” I burst at the end, breaking down completely.

Sinclair clucks, purring louder for me. “I know, baby. I’m so sorry.”

“Why is this happening?” I squeak after a minute, hating my weakness.

“The Prince is getting desperate.” Sinclair answers, kissing my hair.

“But don’t worry,

I’m going to make it right. I’m going to come for you. Where is he keeping you?”

“I can’t tell you.” I state abruptly, thinking of the conversation I overheard earlier.

Sinclair stills, seeming to pick up on my sudden tension. “You can’t tell me, or you

don’t know?” He clarifies.

“I know... but I can’t tell you.” I clarify, feeling the sudden urge to cower. I peek up at

him from beneath my lashes and see the foreboding look on his handsome face. My

wolf tucks her tail between her legs, but I dig in my heels. “I won’t tell you.”

Sinclair growls, and I know I’m in big trouble.

Accidental Surrogate For Alpha By Caroline Above Chapter 132

#Chapter 132 – Ella Warns Sinclair

Ella “What do you mean, you won’t tell me?” Sinclair rumbles, full of foreboding. He’s glowering down at me, emitting raw Alpha authority and unflinching disapproval. The idea that anyone would keep me from him – even me myself – seems to be more than

he can handle. Still, I know I have to – if he comes after me the Prince will kill him. i

I set my jaw trying to look fierce and determined, even though my wolf is whimpering in the face of his ire. “I won’t! I don’t care what you do or what you say, I’m not going to tell you.”

“Ella, what are you talking about? Why not?” Sinclair demands, his hands tightening reflexively on my body and then easing when he realizes how tightly he’s holding me.

“I heard the Prince and Lydia talking, they know you won’t give them their ransom.

They think you’ll try to stage a rescue instead, and when you do, they’ll be waiting. It’s

all a set up. If you come here they’ll kill you.” I whisper frantically, knowing this won’t

dissuade him, but hoping my explanation will at least help him understand why I can’t answer his question.

Sinclair’s eyes glow neon green, and he bares his fangs, “So what would you have me

do, Ella? Just leave you as his prisoner?” Before I can conjure any kind of response,

he continues, “Not fucking likely, trouble.”

“I don’t have the answers.” I moan, leaning into him in hopes that he’ll calm down.

Unfortunately he knows what I’m about, and keeps me at arm’s length,

“I just know

that rescue is not an option. I’m not going to let anyone else die for me – especially not

you!” My throat is itching, my voice thick with emotion as I look up at my mate. “I can’t

lose you, Dominic.”

“Sweetheart, if I know there’s an ambush waiting I can prepare for it.”

Sinclair

reasons, sounding gentler now. I think my upset has calmed his own temper, because

he tucks my head under his chin and begins stroking my spine in long, soothing

strokes. “I know you’re scared and you probably feel horribly guilty about your guards,

but their deaths were the most honorable kind for a warrior. They joined my ranks

because they wanted to defend the pack at all costs.”

“You didn’t see them.” I hiccup, “it wasn’t – they thought they’d failed.

They died

believing they hadn’t done their jobs, that they hadn’t protected me.”

He tsks, pressing his lips to my hair. “They will be remembered as heroes, Ella. They

fought until the very end, even when the odds were so stacked against them that they

knew they couldn’t win.”

“But I don’t want you to die too!” I cry. “I need you, the united packs need you.”

“Shhh, I have no plans of dying anytime soon.” Sinclair promises, caressing the curve

of my belly. “But you need to tell me where you are so we can make a plan... so we

can avoid that at all costs. Did you overhear Damon and Lydia because

you're in the
Palace?"

I stubbornly shake my head. "I've made up my mind, Dominic." I insist. "I'm better off
in captivity than I would be if we lost you. Fear of you is the only thing
keeping them
from hurting me." 1

Sinclair growls low and deep, brushing his thumb over the bruise on my
cheek. "Is this
what you call unhurt?"

I lean my face into his hand, nuzzling and nibble his palm, "it's not so
bad." I insist, "A
few bruises are nothing in the grand scheme."

He grumbles, "They're something to me, and he's threatening to do
much worse if I
don't end my campaign in the next 24 hours. We don't have time to
waste."

"I'm sure he threatened to kill me, but even Damon isn't that foolish. As
long as you're
out there making life difficult for them, they'll need to keep me as
leverage." I reason,
hoping that I'm right.

"That's not a change I'm willing to take, Ella." Sinclair counters firmly.

"And even if you
are right, I can't help you through this pregnancy if we're separated.
You're already
high risk, being a prisoner could make your condition even worse and
endanger the
baby." 2

He's using the baby against me. I realize, admiring his sly strategy. He
knows I'll let
myself suffer, but the idea of our pup being harmed... I emit a pitiful
moan, hating how
right he is. "There has to be another way. Maybe I can escape on my
own." The

Prince's threats ring in my mind, but I'm smart enough not to repeat these things to my mate. I know in my heart that if anyone is going to put themselves at risk, it should be me. The possibility of my baby's death is too painful to contemplate, and my inner mama bear lashes out at the thought with primal rage. Still, Sinclair is the one who has to rule, he's the one responsible for protecting millions of shifters and humans alike.

"That's an idea." Sinclair is watching me with narrowed eyes, and too late I realize he's still got one hand on my tummy, no doubt channeling my feelings through the baby.

"But what aren't you saying, trouble? What aren't you telling me?"

I summon a growl, hating his perceptiveness. "Look, if I try to escape and I'm caught,

they might rough me up a bit, but they won't kill me." I assert, convinced the Prince

wouldn't give up such a powerful bargaining chip – or perhaps praying that I'm right,

since I'm not willing to endanger Sinclair. "I'll be able to try again. But if you try to

rescue me and they get the better of you, they'll kill you. The risk is less if I try to do

this on my own."

Sinclair fumes, and his fists clench and unclench on my body. "Listen to me, now. We

only have a few more hours to work this out, and one way or another, you need to tell

me where you are. I'm not saying I'm going to ride in there on a white horse to save

you, but I can't find solutions if I don't know the situation."

I peek up at him sulkily, feeling a ferocious desperation to keep him safe

no matter

what. “What time exactly do you have to give your answer? Are you meeting him in person?” I question, thinking that if I try to escape when the Prince is out of the house

with all his guards, I might actually be able to succeed.

“Why?” Sinclair demands, his voice like gravel.

“Because I’m trying to figure this out.” I reply vaguely, knowing he’s getting more and more frustrated with me by the minute.

“Tell me where you are and I’ll help you.” He repeats forcefully, practically shaking with the effort it’s taking to control his wolf. “This is not the time to test me, little one.”

“No.” I repeat stubbornly, not able to meet his eyes. “I’ve made up my mind, Dominic.

I’m not going to tell you.”

Sinclair’s hand clamps around my nape with unrelenting force, pulling my reluctant

gaze up to his own. “Let’s get one thing straight, beautiful. You are not going to keep

sacrificing yourself to protect the people around you – you’ve given up enough in your

life and it is my job to make sure you never have to do that ever again. I couldn’t

prevent you from doing it with the guards, but I’ll be damned if I’m going to let you do it

for me.” There’s something feral in his emerald eyes, a wildness I’ve never before

encountered. “I’m hate to do this, but you’re really not giving me another choice.”

At first I don’t have the first clue what he means, but the next thing I know, a wave of

ruthless dominance slams into me, nearly bending my body in two with the force of his

power. I gasp in shock, not understanding, “I – What are you doing to me?”

“This is the authority I hold over other wolves.” He growls unapologetically, “I don’t enjoy using it against my mate, but I will if I have to. Now tell me where you are.” He commands mercilessly.

To my shock and horror I feel the words rising up inside my throat, balancing on the tip of my tongue. I fight with all my strength, amazed and devastated that he might steal the words from my lips without my permission. I always knew Sinclair was powerful, but I’ve never felt the full force of his dominance before. I didn’t realize he could force someone to do something against their will, with only a few words.

“No!” I plead, tears streaming down my cheeks. “Please... don’t make me, they’ll kill you.”

“Tell me.” He says again, and to my misery, the force of his order only increases. I’m a begging, blubbering mess, but Sinclair doesn’t relent. I hate him for doing this to me, for making me say the words that might send him to his grave, but I can’t help myself. I’m powerless to stop him.

I feel my mouth opening, and then the words are spilling out.

Accidental Surrogate For Alpha By Caroline Above Chapter 133

#Chapter 133- Ella gets angry

Ella

“I’m in the Royal Palace.” I finally burst out. “The third floor, my windows look out over

the southern gate... it's a corner suite."

At once the crushing weight of his orders dissipate, and I'm left a puddle in his arms.

"Good girl." Sinclair praises me, and I feel positively sick to my stomach. "It's all going to be okay."

I can't stop crying. I'm beating my fists against Sinclair's chest, angrier than I can ever

remember being with him. "How could you, how could you?" I moan, my entire body

shaking with the force of my weeping.

"I'm sorry, Ella." He lets me attack him and never moves to defend himself, only

holding me steady as I vent my feelings onto him. "When this is all over, I promise I'll

make it up to you, but I stand by what I said. You're done hurting yourself for the sake

of others."

"But the world needs you! Not me!" I explode, finding it more and more difficult to take

in air. "And what do you think they'll do to me if you die? How is that going to help

anything?"

"I need you, Ella." Sinclair argues, "I need you as my mate, as the mother of my pups

– my Luna. I'm not going to die, Ella." Sinclair promises. "And neither are you. We're

not going to let him win, sweetheart."

"You don't know that!" I combat, heaving in another sob. "I will never forgive you for

this, Dominic. Not for as long as I live."

"The point is that you will live, trouble." He murmurs, his lips against my temple. "

That's what matters most. I'd rather you hate me and live, than love me and die – and

for that, I won't apologize."

"Well I do hate you!" I try to say, but it sounds about as fierce as a wounded butterfly.

"Do you really?" He inquires, a teasing note in his voice. "You don't sound convinced."

"Just don't die." I beg, and I realize that I stopped fighting him at some point. Now I'm

clinging to him the same way I had been when he first arrived in my dream, and part

of me wishes we could never leave this fantasy realm. We're both safe here. I can be

my wolf here without harming my baby, he can claim me and we can be together

forever – just the three of us.

"Shh," Sinclair croons, cuddling me to his chest. "We can work with the Palace, Ella.

There are passages in and out of the building intended for Royal emergencies.

There's a chance there might be some in your rooms, and even if there aren't, I might

be able to find some in order to get inside."

"But how are we supposed to tell each other if we're able to find one?" I sniffle, more

confused than anything else. "It was hard enough to fall asleep the first time – I'm in a

cupboard."

"A cupboard?" Sinclair repeats, a note of amusement in his voice.

"It felt safer than anything else." I defend hotly, knowing he probably can't understand

the logic of my swirling hormones and trauma. "The point is that I can't guarantee I'll

be able to fall asleep again, and neither of us has any time to waste. You can't plan if

you're asleep."

"Well, I can tell you this much," Sinclair muses aloud. "The safest

option for everyone
would be if you can find a passageway. Often the royal family are the
only ones who
know they exist, which means they won't be guarded.
Moreover, they're used for evacuations, which means they lead outside
the palace
walls."

"Really?" I whisper, my tears slowing now.

"You see, sometimes telling me the truth has its benefits." Sinclair
states, only slightly
smug. The worst part is that he's right. I always feel better after I've
come clean to him
about my secrets, and the cocky bastard knows it.

"How do you know all this?" I inquire curiously.

"You forget that my father was almost King once, and we keep very
close ties with the
pack elders. Besides, the royal family and the Moon Valley Alpha are
supposed to
function as each other's backup in times of emergency – we know the
protocols for
evacuation and everything else in case the worst happens, even if we
don't know the
specifics."

"But what if there aren't any passages in my room?" I ask nervously,
knowing it will
mean I have to wait for his rescue.

"Then I come to you." Sinclair shrugs. "Hopefully you'll be able to get
out before that's
necessary. If you can escape then you can get in contact and let us know
to call it off."

"Call what off?" I fret, blinking up at him with wide eyes.

"The Prince is waiting until the end of the day to hear from me. I'll set
the meet and tell
him the location fifteen minutes before the planned rendezvous – just
like we did the

ransom meeting.” I’m surprised to hear that Sinclair already met with the man, and that the Prince is still standing afterwards, then again, he has a very strong trump card as long as I’m in his grasp. “But instead of going to the meeting, my men and I will infiltrate the palace. I’ll reach out of Adolpho and see if he knows any of the passage entrances.”

“And if he doesn’t?” I press, seeing far too many ways for this situation to go wrong.

Sinclair drops a quick succession of kisses to my cheek. ” You’re just determined to poke holes aren’t you? If he doesn’t then we’ll do this the old fashioned way and go over the walls. If you find a passage then leave some sort of hint for us in your room – draw the curtains closed and unmake the bed.”

“Why, if you get there and it’s empty then won’t you know that I managed to get out?” I object, trying to follow his logic.

“No, they could move you to another location, or we could end up in the wrong room thinking it’s yours and accidentally leave you behind. If we arrive and see the room in that state, we’ll know we’re in the right place but we need to retreat. Is there anything else distinctive about your room? A color scheme, or something?”

“The walls are green.” I share, “and there are yellow flowers on the armoire.”

“Okay, that’s even better.” Sinclair nods. “Actually, it would be good if you can try to leave some sort of clue about where the passage was – so we can follow you out that way and catch up.”

I shake my head in awe, not understanding how he can be so calm about all this. Our very lives are on the line, but Sinclair is the cool and collected strategist, working out the problem as if it's a jigsaw puzzle. "What kind of clue?" He pauses to think. "Is there anything in your room you can use to write a coded message?"

"I think there's a notepad and pen by the desk." I recall.

"Then write a message to the prince, but spell out the location of the passage using the first letter of every sentence." He instructs, and I can see the gears whirring in his mind.

"Okay, where should I look for passages?" I inquire, trying to picture the opulent bedroom.

"Start with any furniture or decorations against the walls – the back of your cupboard, paintings, fireplaces. Pull down vases, coat hooks, anything that might trigger a wall opening. Do the same in the bathroom. Pay attention to scuffs on the floor from sliding furniture, or drafts of air. If that doesn't work then just start pushing on the walls – you remember the entrance to the safehouse?" I nod, and he continues. "It could be a pressure sensor like that."

"How can you possibly be so calm about this?" I breathe, feeling my pulse fluttering in my veins.

"I'm not calm, Ella." Sinclair corrects me, looking down to meet my gaze. Sure enough, I see fire blazing in his brilliant irises, and a muted rage I know he's saving for the

Prince. ” Trust me, I’m the farthest thing in the world from calm, but the best thing I

can do to help you right now is figure out a plan, so that’s what I’m doing.

I nod, clenching my eyes shut. “How much time do we have?” I inquire, having a bad

feeling that our reprieve is coming to an end.

“If you don’t have any more questions then I should go.” Sinclair says regretfully. “I

wish it was otherwise, but I need to start getting plans in motion, and you need to start

searching for your escape.”

“Okay,” I murmur, trying not to fall apart again.

“I love you, trouble.” Sinclair replies, tilting my face up to his and claiming a deep kiss.

“I love you too.” I answer, just in case this all goes terribly wrong. I don’t want to let my

earlier proclamation of hate to stand. “I’m sorry I said -”

“I know,” He assures me, kissing me again. “It’s going to be okay. Now wake up – the

sooner you do, the sooner we can be together again.”

I wake with tears in my eyes, but with fresh determination. I climb out of the wardrobe,

and begin the hunt.

Accidental Surrogate For Alpha By Caroline Above Chapter 134

Chapter 134 – Ella Finds a Passage

Ella

I wipe the tears from my face and scan the room, Sinclair’s voice ringing in my mind.

I’m still upset with him for making me share my location, but I’m determined to escape

before he can endanger himself coming after me. If there’s a way out of

this room, I'm
going to find it. i
Let me help! My wolf requests eagerly, as exhilarated with adrenaline as
I am.
You are helping. I roll my eyes. Whose instincts do you think I'm using
here? Certainly
not my useless human ones.
And it's true, The stronger my wolf has become, the stronger all of my
senses have
become. My ears are cocked for the sounds of anyone approaching the
room, my
eyes are hawkishly raking over every nook and cranny in the bedroom,
searching for
the tiniest details on the walls and floors. My nose is scenting the air,
trying to
determine if there are strange draughts of air beyond the interiors of the
small space.
More than anything, I'm tapping into the strange and mysterious gut
feelings which
have recently been becoming more and more pronounced, hoping this
sixth sense will
help point me in the right direction. These are all things I wouldn't have
been able to
do before – at least not in the same level of sharpness.
I pat my belly. "Mommy has a silly wolf, Rafe."
The canine in question snorts in my head, Not as silly as his fathers.
You may have a point there. I remark fondly, thinking about Sinclair's
possessive,
overprotective inner animal who has a conniption if his scent fades from
my skin or
tries to bribe me with stolen children so I'll let him avenge my honor. A
deep pang
rises in my chest the more I linger on my mate, love and long
overwhelming me all at
once.

It's okay, we're going to see him again. My wolf assures me, every bit as heartsore as I am – if not more so. The sight of Sinclair's battle scarred body is fresh in my memories, and the pain I feel for the pain I love suffering thus is almost too much to bear. I'll never forgive myself if he's hurt worse than he already is because of me.

You're right. I answer with renewed determination. "Mommy's going to get us out of this." I add to Rafe, rubbing my navel.

I begin to walk along the interior walls, checking behind every painting, lifting every vase, shoving at the bookcases and tilting and tugging each and every book. I scour the space with a fine-toothed comb, feeling along the plaster and trying not to get dissuaded when I come up empty handed. Still, it's difficult not to feel a little pessimistic when everything I attempt fails.

At last I come to the fireplace, poking and prodding at the mantle, applying pressure to the heavy grey stones and lifting the grate. Nothing happens. I run my fingers along the underside of the square opening, praying that I find some sort of button or handle, but again I find nothing. Still, something is telling me to keep trying. I've been hopeful with the other objects and furniture, but now I have the surreal sense that this is right.

As a last ditch attempt, I begin fiddling with the tools situated next to the fireplace, lifting the brush, spade and tongs. Finally I attempt to lift the poker, but it won't budge.

I yank at the handle, but it remains firmly in place, as if it is glued to the

floor. My heart
begins to race, and instead of lifting, I try to pull it from side to side.
With a forceful
tug, it finally deploys, shifting towards the floor with a pronounced
click. There's a
rumble and the scaping of rock against stone, and suddenly the back wall
of the
fireplace disappears.
It takes all my restraint not to jump up and down and cheer. My spirit
soars, and I
hurriedly flit around the room, pulling the curtains closed and unmaking
the bed. I'm
listening intently for the sound of anyone approaching, terrified that a
guard might
walk in while the passage is open, but also afraid of making more noise
than I already
have by closing it. I dash to the desk and frantically try to figure out
what to write. The
cipher Sinclair suggested isn't the problem – the question is what on
earth I should say
to the man who abducted me.
Eventually I settle on the following:
To His Royal Highness and Her Unholy Pain in the Ass, Lydia,
For what it's worth, your plan wasn't the worst idea. It was, however, an
absolute
miscalculation to think I would just sit here and accept my fate. Really,
if you're going
to kidnap someone, you honestly ought to learn a few things about them
first. Even
though I may look like a helpless damsel, it's not in my nature to
surrender. Please
consider doing more research in advance of your next scheme, or I'm
afraid you might
be doomed to fail again. Losing may be what you're accustomed to, but
if you just

apply yourself and put in the work, you'd be amazed at what you can achieve. And while I offer this humble advice for your diabolical schemes out of the goodness of my heart (I do worry that if you continue to be such an utter and complete failure, it might further degrade your mental health and you're already plenty psychotic), I must warn you against targeting me again. Continuing to move against Sinclair is not only dangerous, it is phenomenally stupid. Eventually he will lose his patience with humoring your pathetic schemes and fight back – and you will die an excruciating but well-deserved death.

Sincerely,
Ella Sinclair

P.S. Go fuck yourself.

Dropping the pen, I pause to glance at the go-bag I took to the safehouse. I don't want it to weigh me down, but I can't afford to lose the herbs Adolpho gave me. I grab the tin, leaving the rest behind, and tuck it into my pocket. I quickly return to the fireplace and slip inside, every nerve in my body singing with excitement. We did it! This is actually going to work! My wolf howls with delight, and I search for a way to close the passage from the inside, soon finding a similar lever as the one disguised as a poker. The stone closes behind me, and suddenly I'm in utter, complete darkness. If my wolf was fully awake, I'd probably be able to see through the pitch black tunnel, but instead I can only make

out dim shadows. Still, it's certainly better than nothing. Thanking the goddess for the first step of my escape, I pray that this passage leads me straight out of the palace and that I don't have to navigate a complicated maze of tunnels that might let me out in another room or worse... get me lost. If I want to get notice to Sinclair before he can stage a rescue, I have to be quick. I set off at a trot before remembering I'm supposed to be on bed rest. You'll be more stressed by remaining in danger than you will by a little exercise. My wolf reasons, but I'm not sure. I slow to a quick walk, telling myself that this is better anyway in case the ground is uneven or I come across an unexpected step. I'm relieved when the tunnel continues straight on ahead with only a few twists and turns, but no intersections with other passageways. However my relief soon turns to fear, because I walk further and further into the darkness with no end in sight. I'm not sure how much time passes, but seconds turn to minutes, and minutes turn to what feels like hours. I have no way of knowing if my mind is merely playing tricks on me, or if I really am walking as far as it feels. The longer I work, the more I begin to feel paranoid about my plan. What if there is no end? What if I just keep walking forever and never get out? I You're being irrational. My wolf answers in a soothing tone. This tunnel is here for a reason, it can't go on forever and the fact that it's so long is a good sign, there's no way we're still in the palace.

But where is it going to let out? I fret. At this rate I'll never be out in time to get in touch with Sinclair.

We'll figure it out. She replies. Don't stress more than you have to. Think of the pup.

I nod in agreement, and apologize to the tiny being inside me. "I'm sorry, Rafe. It's okay, I'm okay."

I wish I could say the tunnel ended soon, but instead it goes on for miles. I walk until my legs are weak with exhaustion, and when I finally reach the end, I'm so relieved

that tears fill my eyes. Of course, my tears transform from happy to horrified when I finally emerge from the passage.

If that tunnel was meant for evacuation, then it certainly did its job. It empties out into the frozen wilderness of the mountains outside the city, so far from civilization that I

can't even see Moon Valley in the distance. It's the coldest month of the year, and the landscape is buried beneath a thick blanket of snow. I'm wearing the simple clothes

the Prince provided so I could change out of the dirtied and bloodied outfit from the kidnapping: no coat, no gloves, hat or scarf.

Suddenly I'm praying that Sinclair staged his rescue earlier than planned, because if he doesn't find me soon... I'm going to die out here.

Accidental Surrogate For Alpha By Caroline Above Chapter 135

Chapter 135 – Sinclair Stages a Rescue
Sinclair

After waking from my dream with Ella, I immediately get to work trying to find a way into the Royal Palace. I'm hopeful that Ella might be able to find a way out on her own, but I'm leaving nothing to chance. I call Adolpho and my father for insights on secret passages while Hugo and Roger assemble a small army of our best fighters. None of us have slept much since the battle, and I know this is another of Lydia's tactics. The Prince and his men will be well rested and fully energized, while mine will be running on fumes. Still, Ella and the baby are all the motivation I need to push through my exhaustion. Adolpho tells me about a tunnel near the river which can help us breach the Palace without a loud, violent assault bound to draw attention from the public and the media alike. This is good – it was going to be hard to explain why the Moon Valley Alpha was sending forces to attack the Royal Residence, but I'd been willing to do it if there were no other options. When I share this logic with my father, he frowns thoughtfully, and I pause. "What is it?" "Are you sure you want to keep this quiet?" He questions, rubbing his jaw." Maybe this is the opportunity we've been waiting for, to show the world Damon's true colors. No one would blame you for attacking if they knew the Prince kidnapped your mate, and after you defended the territory against the rogues so valiantly – no one would accuse you of being weak for calling him out."

I consider his words carefully. We've always kept our shadow war with the royal family secret because accusations without proof or action are more likely to backfire than make progress. However this time there's been plenty of action, and the early "all clear" along with Ella's testimony and injuries could be the proof we need. I don't know what happened to her guards' bodies and we checked the CCTV cameras in the area of the accident only to find all the footage erased, but we might not need a smoking gun if we can get Ella back safely. 1

We will get her back safely. My wolf corrects me fiercely. And then we should kill Damon and Lydia both. Just think of the possibilities, he suggests slyly, gearing up for a bloodthirsty rant. We can tear off all his fingers and shove them up... I tune out the violent images suddenly filling my mind. Not for the first time, I'm surprised at my wolf's willingness to harm our fated mate, but I can't help sharing his desire to exterminate the Prince. Granted, this is another idea which has historically been very tempting, but I've held back for much of the same reasons. Shaking my head, I groan, "I fucking hate politics." 1

Dad's lip quirks, "Care to share your train of thought?"

"If I accuse him without doing anything about it. I'm weak. But if I kill him without authorization from the Alpha Council, then I'm an anti-government rogue – a usurper." I explain gruffly. "Sometimes I think the old ways were better. No diplomacy, no voting – just taking the power which is rightly yours."

My father clears his throat and arches his brows, patiently waiting for me to work through my frustration and reach the right conclusion on my own.” I know, I know!” I gripe. “That’s what they did. That’s the kind of ruler from which we’re trying to protect the united packs. But it still makes me want to rip my hair out. I hate that we have to play by the rules just to prove ourselves worthy of the position they stole through flouting them at every turn.”

“But we do, because at the end of the day our responsibility is to do right by the people, and we can’t do that if we get exiled or deposed.” Dad reasons calmly.

This reminder, more than any of the possible implications for my campaign, makes the decision for me. “And I have to do right by Ella, which I can’t do if I get distracted with the politics. The most important thing is bringing her safely home, and that means I have to go with the plan which gives us the best chance of doing that. It’s riskier to stage a full on incursion. The surest bet we have is to sneak in through the evacuation tunnels and keep a low profile.”

“Alright then,” Dad agrees with a proud twinkle in his eye, “And afterwards we can consider how to handle the Prince moving forward.”

I nod, feeling a little calmer now that we’ve rationalized our plan. I spend the rest of the day strategizing and waiting with baited breath for Ella’s call. Every time the phone rings or I get a notification my heart leaps in my chest, and every time it falls when I

see that it's just one of my men or a news blurb. We've been getting non-stop requests from the media ever since the rogue attack, and even though I'm worried about the optics, so far I've refused to hold a press conference or make a statement. I sent Hugo to issue a press release while I focus on the rescue mission, hoping that will be enough to calm the clamoring public. I wait until an hour before the Prince's deadline to finally call him to set our meeting. At this point it's been eight hours since I woke up, and I figure that if Ella hasn't found a way out by now, she's not going to. I use the same protocol from our first rendezvous, promising to send the location just prior. Meanwhile I mobilize my team to the site of the tunnel entrance, and send backup squadrons to surround the palace. Nearly every enforcer I possess is ready and waiting to infiltrate the palace if the plan backfires, and I can only hope that the Prince empties the palace of guards in order to take them to the meeting. We see the second they move out, truckloads of shifters rolling out of the main gates and heading off in the direction of our meeting point. I don't waste any time guiding my forces into the passage, traversing the narrow space at a steady trot. It's only about a thousand meters to the tunnel entry, which lets us out into the opulent palace library through a bookcase. I've been in this library before, and I know it's in the east wing of the estate. Luckily it's unguarded, so I move to the windows as quietly

as I can, trying
to gauge our exact location. I'm not going to be able to pick up Ella's
scent until we're
closer, the sprawling palace is simply too large.
"Okay, we've got some ground to cover, boys." I state determinedly.
"Keep your eyes
and ears open."
I open the door and peer outside, clearing my corners before emerging
into the
corridor. We stealthily sneak through the halls, peeking around corners
and sneaking
up on unsuspecting guards posted along the way. For every wolf we
dispatch, we try
to drag their unconscious bodies out of sight to avoid detection, but the
fact is that our
scents are going to give us away just as quickly. When we cross the
second floor
atrium I finally catch Ella's scent, and then it's merely a matter of
following my nose. I
keep one eye on the world outside the windows as we go to ensure our
path matches
up with the location of the room Ella described to me.
When we finally reach the third floor corridor in question, I know we're
in the right
place by the guards posted at Ella's door. I deal with them quickly
letting my enforcers
drag their bodies into hiding while I storm inside. The room is exactly as
Ella
described, and her scent is everywhere. I scan the area for her, noticing
the drawn
curtains and unmade bed. Worry pulses to life in the pit of my
stomach... if she found
a way out then why haven't I heard from her? 1
I catch sight of a piece of paper on the desk, covered in Ella's scrawling
script. I can't

help but chuckle when I read her sassy note, even though it gives me no comfort to know that she found a passage when she hasn't yet made contact. Either she ended up getting lost somehow, or she's been caught. I pick up the note and fold it, placing it in my pocket. Ideally when the prince returns, he'll catch the scent of my team in the room and see the disabled guards in the corridors, then assume we took Ella out the same way we got in. In reality we'll be somewhere else entirely. "All right, let's move." I order. It takes a minute for us to figure out how to open the passage, but once we do my team storms into the fireplace, forced to duck our heads below the low ceiling. The last man inside shuts the passage behind us, and darkness closes in. Ella's sweet scent fills the air, in fact, she's all I can smell for miles ahead. Miles... I realize with a fresh stab of fear. My little troublemaker is only supposed to be on her feet for twenty minutes at a time... what if she isn't lost or recaptured, but somewhere further down this tunnel experiencing a medical crisis... or worse? "We're taking this at a run." I announce, my voice echoing in the dim space. "Try to keep up." I
With that I take off into the darkness, hoping against all hope that we aren't too late.
Shuffle! Shuffle!

Chapter 136- Ella's dilemma

Ella

I gaze around at the icy mountains, squinting up at the sky. The sun is high overhead,

only halfway through its daily journey from East to West. That means it's about noon...

three hours from when I found the passage, according to the bedroom clock. The

Prince's deadline isn't until dusk, which means there's still time to get word to Sincalir,

assuming I can figure out how to get back to the city.

Suddenly I'm kicking myself for leaving my go-bag behind. My coat wasn't there

because it had been stained and damaged, but I had other clothes inside, things I

could layer onto my body to try and provide myself some warmth. I might move faster

without the weight, but lightness won't help me if I drop dead from hypothermia.

Just keep your blood moving. My wolf advises, as long as your heart is pumping it will

keep you warm.

Not if I'm sweating. I counter, the liquid will just freeze and kill me faster.

Then stay active, but not so active that you're sweating. You don't want to stress the

baby anyway. She advises,

Alright. I agree. How far do you think the valley is?

Well, it's nowhere in sight, so we must be on the wrong slope of the mountain. My wolf

reasons, making my heart sink.

So what? I have to go over it? I ask in horror, looking up at the snow covered peak.

There's no way I can make that sort of climb without gear, and it would certainly take

more time than I have to spare. Besides, I'd probably fall into a crevasse or get buried in an avalanche. There is no way in hell I can survive that journey. I think we have to give up on the idea of reaching Sinclair before he can come after us... we need him to come after us. All we can do is try to stay warm and hope he attempts a rescue sooner rather than later. She suggests. I hate to admit it, but I know she's right. I'd wanted to prevent Sinclair from encountering any more danger than he already has, but beggars can't be choosers, and right now I'm certainly a beggar. So do I stay put and walk in circles, or try to descend? I wonder. I don't want to stay out in the open like this, in case the Prince figures out that I've escaped before Sinclair comes for me, but the closer I am to the tunnel, the faster I can be rescued. I could just go back into the tunnel and hope that the Prince doesn't figure it out. I realize, a light bulb bursting on in my head. It's a risk, but the tunnel had been warmer at least, surely I'd have a better chance if... My thoughts trail off as I turn and see that the rock wall where I'd emerged is tightly shut. Like the fireplace, an interior lever had opened the exit to the passage, but unlike the fireplace, this one seems to have closed behind me. Panicked, I rush back to the granite slab, pushing at it the way I'd seen my guards to at the safe house. I try and try to open it again, looking around for anything that might trigger the internal mechanism and finding nothing. In the end I'm

throwing my body
into the rock, tears of frustration
streaming down my cheeks. “No!” I cry out angrily. “No, no, no! It isn’t
fair. Open,
damn you!”

Nothing happens, and I end up collapsing into the snow with a wordless
scream of
outrage and misery. Get up! My wolf orders sharply, lying in the snow is
going to soak
your clothes and then we’ll really be screwed.

Knowing she’s right, I jump back onto my feet. The tears from frost on
my cheeks, and

I rub away the crystalline particles, trying to keep my wits about me
even though I
want nothing more than to rage at the Goddess and the universe for
putting me in this
situation.

At a loss, I stare down the mountain. The treeline starts about a mile
below me, and
though I know the sun will keep me warmer than the shaded forest, it’s
also lower
elevation and I might find shelter for the night. Even as I think it, I know
I won’t make it
through the night... not in my current state.

There are always the herbs. My wolf reminds me softly, her voice heavy
with regret for
making the suggestion. If you wake me fully we’ll be able to handle the
elements.

Wolves are made for the wilderness... you’ll be ten times harder to kill.
No! I argue immediately clutching my belly. Not unless we have no
other choice.

Those herbs are a last resort.

I don’t like it any more than you do. She remarks sorrowfully, but this is
life and death.

If you don’t make it, Rafe doesn’t either.

I know that! I insist ferociously. But I can't... there's still a chance that we can find another way. Maybe Sinclair can catch up before it's too late. Maybe there's a cabin somewhere in that forest... in fact, I bet there is! If the Royal Family uses this tunnels in emergencies I bet there's some sort of emergency shelter nearby! It would be crazy not to when things get like this in winter. Okay, then. My wolf approves. We keep moving and we look for shelter. Calmer now that I have a plan, I rub my belly and give a word of comfort to my growing pup. "It's okay, angel. Daddy's going to come for us, and until then I'm going to keep you safe and sound." It takes me ages to reach the forest. I force my tired legs through the deep snow drifts, sinking down into feet of fresh powder with every step I take. I try to use my sharpened senses to detect a path or signs of opening in the dense trees, but I can't seem to decipher anything but ice and snow. I'm already exhausted, and my skin stings with the bite of the glacial wind. I experience some relief when I move into the dense woodland, scenting the air for any signs of wildlife or civilization – no matter how distant

Accidental Surrogate For Alpha By Caroline Above Chapter 137

Ella

My grief keeps me awake far longer than I'm sure I could have managed otherwise.

I'm alone, so I don't bother trying to quiet my keening, wailing my despair into the night air. I'm not sure how long it will take for the shift to take hold, but I pray that the violent transformation will generate enough heat and energy to allow me to survive.

The possibility that it might fail seeps into my mind and suddenly I wonder if I should have just let myself fall asleep, rather than meeting my end in agony. Oh Goddess, I should have taken the herb hours ago. I think woefully. Now it's probably too late.

This thought only makes me cry harder, but there's also a growing kernel of warmth in my belly, pulsing inside me and radiating the strangest sensations through my body.

Suddenly the entire forest explodes into a cacophony of sound – chirping crickets,

croaking frogs, the low hoot of an owl, and other things I can scarcely recognize. I can

hear small animals scurrying below the snowpack, and the sound of the wind rustling

through the trees for miles away. It's too -overwhelming, and I'm amazed by the

images that appear in my mind, explaining each sound with a clarity I couldn't have

possibly imagined. It's almost as though I can see sound.. and I realize this must be

how it is for wolves all the time. The herb is working.

Then I hear something else, pounding footprints crunching through the snow. "No! No,

no, no." I moan desperately, my mind slowly piecing together the puzzle of

information. If I hear footsteps it means... it means either Sinclair or the Prince has

finally caught up with me. Either way...

I'm going to be found imminently, which means didn't have to take the herb after all. I

find the strength to push my body up on my hands and knees, sticking my fingers

down my throat and trying to make myself vomit.. to undo the horrible. That's how Sinclair found me a few minutes later, sobbing and gagging, begging the

Goddess to take back my rash actions. "Ella!" He shouts, racing towards me. "Oh

thank the stars." His voice pierces my skull at a terrifying volume, and I clamp my

hands over my ears, crying out.

"Ella, it's okay, I'm here." Sinclair assures me, misunderstanding my pain. His voice is

still too loud, but the pain in my heart is even more excruciating than the pain in my head.

"No," I cry again, my chest heaving. "No, you.. You're t-too la -late."

Sinclair crashes onto his knees in the snow beside me, wearing head to toe tactical

gear that no doubt kept him perfectly warm through his own alpine trek. His arms

reach for me, but I jerk away from him, my adrenaline spiking again now that my

baby's life is in unnecessary danger. I'm crying so hard I can't catch my breath, but I

still can't make myself vomit. The surreal power swirling in my stomach only grows

stronger, and I know there's no reversing this. I jerk my head to Sinclair, and he reels

back when he sees my wide, glowing eyes.

"I thought... I thought I was dying" I try to explain, my words coming out babbled and

slurred. “I didn’t th-think... I had.. a ch-choice.”
Understanding makes Sinclair’s brilliant green eyes go wide with alarm and pain. He swears under his breath, looking over his shoulder at his second in command. “We need an extraction right now. Call for a chopper.” I hear the man pulling out his phone and the dial tone is as loud as a blaring fog horn. I’m shaking my head as Sinclair reaches for me again, my words unintelligible in the height of my “anguish. “It’s okay, baby. It’s gonna be okay.” Sinclair croons, dragging me into his embrace even though I fight tooth and nail. “Come on, let’s get you warm.” He unzips his coat and pulls me against his overheated body before zipping it up again. The man on the phone is speaking now, giving our location, and I’m amazed to discover I can detect the pilot’s voice just as easily. Sinclair’s heart beat is pounding against my ear, and the sounds of his men’s hearts and breath fill my head as well. “Too loud.” I whimper, “It’s too loud.” “I know, baby.” Sinclair whispers, but it sounds like a yell. He chafes my body with his hands, generating heat through his thick jacket. “We don’t have much time.” He says then, clearly talking to his men. “She’s about to enter her first shift.” “Her first -” One of the men starts to question, clearly not in on the secret of my suppressed wolf. Sinclair cuts him off, “I’ll explain later, we need to get out of the woods.” He stands, cradling me in his arms, and I sob into his neck. “Th-the p-pup.” I moan. “II’ve k-killed him.”

“Shh, little one.” Sinclair, purrs, but I can hear the “grief in his own voice. “Let’s just get you someplace safe. Fuck, you’re frozen solid.” He takes off at a run, and suddenly I understand how he reached me so fast. Even carrying me on two legs, he and his men are five times as fast as a human, and probably ten times faster than I’d be stumbling and falling through the deep snow in my exhaustion. The world starts to go fuzzy then, and I feel as though I’ve swallowed a glowing ball of light. Other senses are starting to sharpen – my eyes are tightly shut and blurred with tears, but my nose is suddenly every bit as overwhelmed as my ears. Sinclair’s familiar aroma has been magnified by a thousand, deepened and more complex than I’ve ever experienced before. It’s so strong I almost feel intoxicated with it, but I can smell other things too, things I never imagined having scents – like the sweat of the men surrounding us, and my mate’s fear for my well being. Bad things too, like the decay of dead animals trapped in the ice, or the scat of a lynx somewhere off in the distance. It seems as though I’ve been moving through the world in a bubble my entire life, and now that protective, insulating barrier has finally popped and everything is coming into severe focus reminds me of birth, of a child existing in its dark, -fluid filled sac until it’s abruptly introduced into the harsh world with no warning. I suppose this is a rebirth for me, but the comparison sends my spiraling emotions even further out of control. The

cost of my own reincarnation is depriving my pup of his own life... he will never have the chance to experience life outside of my womb. My shivers only worsen with my grief, and though Sinclair's scorching skin is buffering my icy limbs, I can't get warm. We're out of the forest in an instant, and then a horrible, violent whump whump whump, fills my ears. I scream in response to the noise of the helicopter, more painful than anything I've yet experienced. Sinclair attempts to help by pressing one of his hands over my own. "Just hold on, Ella." He encourages. "I've got you." He leaps into the back of the aircraft, taking me into a far corner and strapping himself in. I'm trying to plug my ears again, but it won't work. His men clamber into the chopper with us, and then we're leaving the ground, gaining altitude and rising up into the heavens. The motion makes me feel sick to my stomach, but my body seems incapable of rejecting the contents of my stomach, as if the herb congealed my insides and formed an immovable rock to ensure the metamorphosis takes hold. "Let me see your hands, baby." Sinclair requests, dragging one of my palms from my ears to examine my fingers. He curses again, and I realize it's because my extremities have turned blue with frostbite. He does the same with my feet, and I can't even bring myself to care that I might lose my fingers and toes. I would gladly trade them for my baby. Sinclair tucks my frosty fingers under his arms and grips my toes

in his hands,
trying to radiate his own warmth into my system. “Im sorry,” He
murmurs as quietly as
he can, his voice thick with emotion. I smell salt unlike my own tears or
the others’
sweat, and I realize they’re Sinclair’s tears. “Im sorry it took me so long
to reach you.”
I’ve been keeping my eyes tightly shut, terrified of adding more sensory
stimulation to
my already overloaded system, but I force myself to look up at him. It’s
dark in the
helicopter, which is a true blessing. I can see Sinclair as clearly as I
normally would
have in the light, his features are strained with the weight of his quilt and
sadness. I
can’t stand it, this isn’t his fault and I know he’s going to torture himself
for my rash
decision. “I sh-should have waited... been stronger.”
Sinclair’s face crumples with pain. He starts to purr then stops,
remembering my
sensitivity to noise. He opens his mouth to respond to my statement, but
before he
can get a word out something explodes inside of me, and I scream at the
top of my
lungs.
Sinclair grips me tighter, ordering the pilots to hurry up. “Faster! Her
shift is
beginning.”

Accidental Surrogate For Alpha By Caroline Above Chapter 138

Chapter 138-Ella Shifts

Sinclair

I don’t remember much about my own experience shifting for the first

time. I

remember the blinding pain, the torment of having every bone in my body broken,
every muscle torn to perform the strange alchemy of reshaping my into a wolf. I

remember it feeling as though it lasted forever, the certainty that it would never end...

that I was surely dying. I didn't understand how anyone could survive such torment,

but my Father was beside me every step of the way, holding me, comforting me and

promising that it would be alright. I recall the rumble of his steady, reassuring voice

more than anything else, but I never imagined how hard it must have been for him to

watch me suffer thus.

Now I understand only too well. It's worse with Ella, because all her senses are

coming in at once – the entire world suddenly becoming too sharp, too bright, too loud.

And her agony is deeper, because in becoming her wolf she's also losing our baby,

the baby she waited and longed for over so many years. I'm devastated to know our

son won't survive, and I can feel his immense stress through our bond as Ella's wolf

emerges, but the worst part of all this is knowing I can't fix it. I can't protect either of

them from the brutality of nature.

I would gladly take on Ella's pain myself. I would gladly suffer so that she doesn't have

to... but I can't, I can only be there for her and try to ease her distress.

When the

helicopter lands on the roof of the mansion, I carry Ella down to my room, struggling to

hold onto her as her small form jerks and spasms with more strength than she would ever be able to manage normally. She's still shivering with cold, and though her wolf is waking up, I'm worried that it may not be fast enough to save her fingers and toes.

"Look baby, look – it's your nest." I tell her, unwrapping her from my coat to deposit her on the bed.

Ella is still in the beginning stages of her shift, still lucid enough to know where she is and what's happening. It won't stay that way, of course. In a few hours she'll be so

consumed by pain that she won't know her own name anymore. She peeks through

the darkened room, taking in her surroundings. With a pitiful moan, she weakly crawls

deeper into the pillowy haven, both relieved to be in her safe haven and heartbroken

to know she won't need a nest much longer. I quickly bury her trembling form in

blankets, and drop a kiss to her tear-stained cheek, promising to return shortly.

I leave her only long enough to fill the bath with warm water, trying not to think about

how different this might have turned out if I hadn't waited so long to go in after her. I'd

been trying to respect her wishes, to make her escape as safe as possible. Instead

she ended up alone and helpless on the frozen mountain.

The sounds of Ella's inconsolable weeping and whimpers of pain provide a tortuous

soundtrack to my internal diatribe, and I return to the bedroom to find her writhing in

discomfort under the blankets. When I try to lift her she resists, "N-no."

She cries,
shoving my hands away. “I w-want to stay. If I h- have to l-lose him, it
sh-should be
here.”

“I’ll bring you back.” I vow, realizing what a mistake it was to offer her
this comfort and
then try to take it away – even if it is only temporary. “We have to get
you warm first,
sweetheart.”

But Ella won’t have it. She fights me tooth and nail as I forcibly remove
her from the
bed, as vicious as a tiny hellcat despite her exhaustion and depleted
state. It breaks
my heart to be so ruthless with her, but I know it’s for her own good. I
can’t get her to
be still long enough to undress her so I tear her clothes away and drag
her into the
bath. She goes in with a great splash, then whines as the warm water
meets her
numb extremities, no doubt sending pins and needles through her limbs.
Ella immediately tries to escape the tub, and I hold her down, wishing
there was any
other way. I’ve called for the doctor, but until her shift is over,
administering any kind of
care to her is going to be harrowing. Ella lashes at me the only way she
can, telling
me she hates me, that I’m a monster and she’ll never forgive me for this.
I know she’s
not herself, but I’d be lying if I said these words didn’t hurt, digging into
my already
aching heart like so many knives.
I can’t even purr for her, because the noise alone will make her pain that
much worse.

The sounds and chaotic scents of the city have already amplified the
pain she was

feeling in the forest, and I'm trying my best not to add to her plight. I wish I could get some food into her to help provide her energy for what is yet to come, but I know it will be impossible. It's probably for the best anyway, since her taste buds will be just as oversensitive as everything else.

Suddenly Ella's back bows violently as a horrible crack fills the air, and I know we're out of time. She howls with pain as she enters the second stage of her shift, and my wolf whines helplessly, rabid with the need to ease her torment. I pull her from the bath and return her to the nest, letting her feel my nearness and praying this will comfort her. Ella's shouts of anger transform into wails and begging for me to make it stop. I can only hold and pet her, whispering sweet nothings and reminders that it's only temporary. "I know, baby. I know it hurts. I promise it will be over soon."

At some point, Ella turns her eyes to me, her pupils dilated so wide with pain that her irises are nothing more than a glowing gold ring around pitch black pools. "I don't want to be a wolf anymore." She whimpers, her fingers digging into my skin with incredible force. "Just make it stop."

"I would if I could, little one." I answer miserably. "I'm so sorry." She turns her head away from me and seizes up as all her fingers break at once, her mouth opening in a silent wail, beyond the ability of making a sound. "Shh," I croon uselessly, "Shh, I know."

By the third hour of the shift, Ella's begging has ceased. Instead the pain

wracks her
body with vicious sounds of breaking bones and rending flesh,
contorting her into
unnatural shapes as she wavers in and out of consciousness, screaming
herself
hoarse when she's awake and falling limp when the darkness finally
takes her again.
My father enters after one such episode, finding me cradling her
sleeping, broken
body. I rock her and mutter in her ear, hoping she'll be able to hear me
somewhere
deep down. "I love you, Ella. You are loved, so so loved."

Accidental Surrogate For Alpha By Caroline Above Chapter 139

Chapter 139- Ella's Wolf

Ella

Everything is different the moment I open my eyes.

I don't really want to wake up, to face a world without my baby in it, but
my grief is

momentarily dimmed by my wolf's elation to finally be free. The
temptation to bury my

sorrows deep down and let myself be distracted is incredibly alluring,
and I throw

myself into denial with full force.

I feel as though I've been asleep for days, and maybe I have, but I feel
stronger and

sharper than I have in my entire life. The lights are searing bright, and
the city is still

too loud, but it's not excruciating like it was before. My body must have
acclimated

while I rested, becoming used to sensing the world around me in ultra-
high definition.

My limbs are delightfully sore, and I revel in the feeling of thick, downy

fur covering my
body. I flex my fingers and toes, experimenting with my sharp claws and
running my
tongue over my fangs.
Being a wolf is even better than it was in my dream, partly because I
know it's real this
time, but also because the world around me seems completely new. It's
as if I'm doing
everything for the very first time, and it's impossible not to be excited
and thrilled
despite the dark cloud hanging over my head.
I've been so caught up in my own head that I didn't even realize that I'm
not alone
until a familiar, rumbling purr sounds beside me, and then a large tongue
swipes over
my velvety muzzle. Good Morning Little Wolf. Sinclair's voice sounds
in my mind, and
I practically jump out of my skin. He chuckles and nuzzles his nose
against mine, How
do you feel?
I look up at the giant black wolf uncertainly, feeling guilty for my joy
when... when... I
can't even think it. If I acknowledge what I've lost, then I won't be able
to pretend
anymore. If I acknowledge it, then it becomes real, and I'm not prepared
to face my
sorrow. A whimper slips out of my mouth, and understanding washes
over Sinclair's
canine features.
Listen baby, how many heartbeats do you hear?
His question is more complicated than it should be, because I feel like I
can hear
every heart beating in the mansion. Still, I focus my attention on this
room, not yet
realizing why he instructed me thus. The gentle pulse of my own heart

reaches my
furry ears a fraction of a second before the steady pounding of
Sinclair's... and there,
softer and tinier than both, is a precious thump in my womb.
Rafe? I think in amazement, certain I must be dreaming. I twist my body
so I can
press my nose to my belly, and I can smell him! Like a blend of Sinclair
and myself,
with something else all his own. I've never smelled anything so
wonderful in my entire
life – even Sinclair, who smells good enough to eat. Tears form in my
eyes, but I'm still
not convinced this is real. Am I hallucinating? Is this some sort of
psychosis brought
on by the trauma of losing him.
He's okay. Sinclair's deep bass intrudes on my thoughts, overflowing
with happiness.
The doctor was wrong.
But how!? I think, unconsciously directing the words at my mate and
stunned when I
realize he can hear them. I'm not sure how I knew how to communicate
this way – it
was simply second nature. I was so sure – how could he have survived
that?
The Goddess works in mysterious ways. Sinclair answers with a shrug,
before
searching my face with his glowing green eyes. Can you feel the bond?"
At first I'm afraid the answer is no, but then the pup flutters in my
tummy, and a wave
of contentment and relief radiates through my mind. I'm stunned to
realize these
emotions aren't my own, but my baby's. He's relieved that I'm happy
again, that I'm no
longer in pain. I suddenly understand the connection Sinclair described
to me, not

cohesive thoughts but bursts of emotion distinct from my own. Even though we're feeling some of the same things, there's something about his which are uniquely his. Now that I'm aware of it, it's impossible to miss. No wonder I was able to distract myself so easily! I realize belatedly. It wasn't only my own joy I was feeling, but Rafe's too.

My eyes widen in ecstatic excitement, and all I can do is launch myself at Sinclair, wagging my tail and yipping with excitement. He's okay, he's okay! I chant blissfully, momentarily thrown off balance when Rafe sends signals of happiness up at me, responding to my enthusiasm. I can feel him. I tell Sinclair in awe, stopped in my tracks and on the verge of tears again. I can feel you, my darling. I add to Rafe, overwhelmed when he pulses with pure love. Sinclair offers me a wolfish grin, Done celebrating already, trouble? He teases, and then he pounces, playfully wrestling and tussling with me – until we're rolling around on the bed like a couple of care-free puppies. I can hear his laughter in my head, just as I'm sure he can hear my uproarious giggles as he pins me and tickles my feet with his tail. I nip at his ears when he tries to nuzzle my neck, earning myself great slobbering kisses in reply. Eventually I manage to jump up, energy flowing through me, accompanied by an irresistible pull to take to the forest. Somehow I know it's night without seeing outside, and the moon is calling to me in a way I

can't explain.

Let's go for a run! I suggest eagerly, my body wiggling with excitement.

Can we, can
we?

Sinclair gazes lovingly up at me as I dance around on the bed. We can,
once you've
got some food in your tummy.

No! I throw my head back defiantly. I want to go now.

Sinclair shook his head and rises to his feet, giving me an imperious
look as he

towers over me. You haven't have anything in at least 72 hours, and
you've been
through hell in the meantime.

It hasn't been that long! The Prince fed me. I argue, thinking he's
miscalculating.

You've been asleep for two days, Ella. Sinclair informs me gently,
bumping my nose

with his. It won't kill you to wait, the forest will still be there in an hour.

When I still don't

look convinced, he adds, Besides, don't you want to fix the nest so that
it's ready

when we get back.

For the first time I look around and realize that my shift did quite a bit of
damage to my

nest. My teeth and claws must have been lashing out during my
transformation,

because my beautiful pillows and soft blankets are shredded to bits. I
whine with

sudden distress, at once beside myself to know my baby is alright, but I
have no safe

haven in which to grow him. Sinclair shifts back into human form, and
I'm amazed by

how different he looks through my wolf eyes. He's always been
annoyingly good

looking, but somehow he seems even more handsome than ever. His

bronze skin
almost glows in the bright lights, and the rugged planes of his face and
body seem
sharper, more powerful now. “It’s okay, sweet mate.” He murmurs,
stroking my cheek.
“I’ll have the servants bring new pillows and blankets while I fix you
something. Are
you craving anything in particular?”
I shake my head in denial, too preoccupied with my ruined nest to focus
on anything
else. In the end, the time passes in the blink of an eye, as I fuss and fret
over
remaking the space perfectly. Sinclair has to literally drag me away in
order to
convince me to eat, and only the promise of a moonlit run convinces me
to walk away
completely.
When we get to the forest Sinclair shifts again, and I immediately
provoke him into a
chase. Now that my wolf is awake, his power is starker, more visceral,
and I feel it
constantly. For some I supposed it might be frightening, but for me it’s
nothing short of
thrilling. It excites me and reassures me at once, while also tempting me
to no end. I
want to poke and prod at it, to see if it’s really as vast as it seems. It’s as
if his
dominance and authority is a giant red button saying “do not push” and
Goddess help
me, but all I want to do is push it.
I don’t think I’ve ever been happier than I am in this moment – even
though the last
few days have been a nightmare. I’m finally the person I was always
meant to be, I
have a mate who loves me, and a baby on the way. I feel so incredibly

free, and when

Sinclair catches me and pins me to the ground with a sexy growl, I only feel more fulfilled.

It's time to go home, trouble. He commands huskily.

But I don't want to shift back. I complain, not for the sake of challenging him anymore,

but because I'm genuinely afraid of the process.

Why not? Sinclair inquires, nibbling my nape.

I'm scared... it's going to hurt. I admit.

No, sweetheart, not this time. From now on you'll be able to shift in only a few

minutes, and the more you do it, the sooner it will be that you can change in a split

second. It will hurt a little – but not like before. He explains tenderly.

I don't know how to do it. I object then, purely making excuses.

Well that's too bad. Sinclair replies, giving me a sly look as he feigns nonchalance.

Because I can't claim you until you shift back, i

Claim me? I respond curiously, my wolf perking up with sensual interest.

That's right. He confirms, a flash of fire in his sultry gaze. Unless you no longer want

my mark?

No! I correct him, embarrassingly quickly. I want it.

Then shift, mate. He orders again. And I'll give it to you. «

Accidental Surrogate For Alpha By Caroline Above Chapter 140

Accidental Surrogate for Alpha Chapter 140

Ella

“This isn't fair.” I complain, sitting naked in the back of the limo, glaring at Sinclair.

“You said you would claim me if I shifted.”

“Greedy mate.” He teases, kissing the soft spot behind my ear. “I didn’t say I would do it in the middle of the forest.” He hadn’t, but I was still very displeased when – instead of ravishing me the moment I finished the painful but brief shift back into being a human – he pulled me to my feet and strolled back to the waiting cars and guards. “I don’t see why not.” I grumble, “I like the forest.”

“Because we’d be too exposed in the forest, I wouldn’t be able to really enjoy myself because I’d be too on my guard.” He answers in a low rumble. “And it’s our first real time together, I’m not going to make love to you up against a tree.”

“Then how are you going to do it?” I ask, peeking up at him and discovering his eyes already glued to my sulking features. “In the back of a limo, maybe?” I suggest, stroking his muscular thigh and batting my lashes.

“No, you naughty thing.” He chuckles, pulling me a little closer, even though we’re already flush. He pauses to claim my lips, then trails kisses over my jaw until his warm breath is fluttering over my ear. “I’m going to take you home and lay you out on my bed–”

“My nest.” I correct him, not caring for this mischaracterization. Sinclair emits a wordless rumble, heavy with amusement. “Fine then. In your nest. I’ll lay you out like my own personal feast, and then I’m going to kiss every last inch of your lovely body before I even consider touching your sweet pussy.” He declares, his deep voice turning my entire body into liquid fire. “And when you’re so

desperate and
needy that you're all but begging for relief, I'm going to make a home
between your
legs and absolutely gorge myself on your honey. I'm going to make you
come so
many times that you think you can't take any more pleasure... and then
I'm going to
prove you wrong."

His big hands trail over my naked body as he speaks, stroking and
caressing me with
such intense focus that I feel like I'm the only thing in the world... in his
world.

Suddenly I understand why he hadn't wanted to do this in the forest,
where he has to
worry about safety or privacy, where he can't disappear into the
moment. "And every
time you beg me to go faster, I'm just going to go slower." He continues
darkly,
sending delicious shivers down my spine. No one has ever spoken to me
this way,
and there's something about it that feels so forbidden that I can't help
but feel even
more turned on. "And when I finally drive my cock into you, and stretch
your tight little
sex until you're full to bursting, I'll let my wolf take over."

Oh Goddess, I think, my body flushed and smoldering simply from
listening to him

speak. Is it possible to climax from words alone?

"I'm going to take you so fiercely, so ruthlessly, that your own wolf is
going to come to
absolute pieces." Sinclair states huskily. "I'm going to possess you so
completely that

you won't even feel whole again unless I'm inside you." I shudder and
he purrs,

cupping my breast and brushing his thumb over my beaded nipple.

“That’s right,
gorgeous. I’m going to make you crave me as wildly as I crave you, and
only when
I’ve brought you to another climax on my cock, when I’ve gotten so lost
in your
beautiful body that I won’t be able to hold back any longer – will I claim
you.”

Sinclair drops his head to the spot where my neck meets my shoulder,
grazing his
teeth over my sensitive skin. He closes his fangs over my flesh, applying
gentle
pressure, and my wolf begins howling with need. How can a man
touching such an
innocent spot cause so much pleasure? So much desire?

I whine aloud when he releases me, and an amused rumble accompanies
his next

words. “I’ll bring you back to the edge and sink my fangs deep. I’ll
claim you as my

one and only mate for the rest of our lives... the force of the bond will
scare you, but

you won’t have to worry because I’ll be right there, holding you tight.”

He promises,

filling me with an entirely different kind of warmth. “It will send us both
into the fucking

stratosphere, and when it’s over we’ll sleep for a while, but then we’re
going to wake

up and do it over, and over, and over again.”

I’m nothing more than a puddle in his arms at this point, and the smug
Alpha knows it.

When I look up at him his wolf is glowing in his eyes, and even though
he’s turned my

brain to mush, I can’t help but notice that I’m not the only one who’s
gotten excited by

his dirty talk.

He’s as naked as I am, and I have to fight not to gape at the size of him.

Surely he
hadn't been that big in our dream? Either way my wolf is preening with
the pride of
knowing his desire is for me and me alone. I have the strongest impulse
to reach out
and take his hardness in my hand, and my mouth positively waters.
“And will I finally
be allowed to... to touch you?” I inquire shyly, not brave enough to use
the same blunt
terms he does.
“If you ask very nicely, and you tell me exactly what you want to do.”
He replies,
pressing his mouth to mine and nipping my plump lower lip.
My heart skips a beat as I realize he wants me to speak as he is, to be
explicit about
my desire and shrug off my inhibitions. I want so badly to give him
pleasure,
especially after all these weeks of receiving his selfless affection and not
being able to
return it. Still, I've never spoken about sex this way – even with Mike.
At best he would
ask if I was in the mood, then lie on top of me for a few minutes before
groaning out
his release and patting my bottom to reward me for a job well done. In
hindsight I hate
that I was such a doormat with him, but I didn't know what sex could be
like until I met
Sinclair.
The car pulls to a stop in front of the house before I can conjure a reply,
and Sinclair
wraps me up in a robe before donning one himself, and carrying me
inside. He
bounds up the stairs to his bedroom, then sweeps into the bathroom and
sets me on
the ground. “Bath or shower?” He asks, pulling off my robe.

“What? But I thought...” I stammer, thinking of his promises in the car. “Are you so eager to get your nest dirty?” Sinclair inquires, quirking his lip and

gesturing to the conifer needles and streaks of mud on our legs. I forgot we’d been

romping through the forest as our wolves, and even the snow couldn’t keep the dirt

away entirely.

“No!” I immediately object, despising the very idea. I try to focus on his first question,

but the thought of a bath raises images in my mind, fuzzy memories of being held

down as Sinclair tried to warm my frostbitten fingers and toes.

“Dominic,” I murmur, for the first time coming out of the joyful haze that has consumed

me since realizing my baby survived the shift. I’m quickly recalling everything my mate

did for me in the last few days and worse, I remember the horrible things I said to him

in that episode, and horror washes over me. “I’m so sorry for the things I said when

you were trying to help me, I didn’t mean them, I—”

“Later.” Dominic presses a finger to my lips, stroking my hip with his free hand. “We

have all the time in the world to talk about it, Ella. And that’s the last thing I want to do

right now.”

I nod, gulping down my welling emotions. “Shower.” I decide, more determined than

ever to show my mate the same generosity he showed me.

We wash ourselves quickly, or perhaps I should say we wash each other quickly.

Sinclair insisted on cleaning me himself, and it’s no surprise when his attention gets

sidetracked, his powerful hands taking detours to my breasts and

between my legs as
he extracts fevered kisses from my lips. I eagerly do the same to him,
and he kneels
in front of me, kissing my belly and breasts as I try to clean his
shoulders, face and
hair. Of course, when I try to pull the same trick he did and reach for his
hardness, he
catches my wrist. “Ask me, baby.” He rumbles sensuously.
My eyes widen with alarm, and my cheeks flush with color. I can’t! I
can’t talk about
these things the way he does... Can I?

