

Accidental Surrogate For Alpha

Accidental Surrogate for Alpha Chapter 156

Chapter 156 – Sightseeing Ella

The Vanaran capital feels like a different planet.

Everywhere we look crystals tower over us, carved into the most intricate forms I've ever seen.

The shifters populating the city are friendly and open in their curiosity, and we frequently stop so Gabriel can chat with the locals and introduce us.

It's all so easy and peaceful, no lies, no secrets, just wolves living openly together in harmony.

Watching Gabriel, I see a leader who is strong but compassionate, ruthless but openminded.

He's intelligent and has as much raw power as my own mate, though he lacks Sinclair's dangerous edge.

I expect Gabriel would be quite deadly if pushed, but he's much more easy going than my own brooding Alpha.

Then again, he's not the one exiled and preoccupied with planning a revolution.

Still, for a moment I envision a future world where Sinclair is the King of the united packs, and Damon's regime is a long-forgotten nightmare.

In my heart I know this is the kind of society my mate could create as leader; Gabriel's utopian world [n.ovelebook](#) could be our own, if only we could take back our home.

Maybe it's naive to think a traumatized society could recover completely and achieve this sort of easy comfort...After all it's not like Sinclair could simply snap his fingers and undo all the suffering caused by his predecessor.

No, if we can win this war we'll have a monumental task ahead of us in terms of healing and rebuilding the united packs, and earning the trust of an oppressed people. But I believe that if anyone can achieve this goal, it's Sinclair.

I turn to look up at the man in question, so inspired by this vision that I want to share my hope with him.

However when I see his face he looks a million miles away.

His granite jaw is clenched and his gaze is hawkishly scanning our surroundings.

He manages to smile and greet the various people we meet, but his grip on my waist never loosens, and he never loses the hardness in his eyes.

I lean into his side as a cool breeze flutters through the square, carrying the scent of rain.

"What good is coming out if you're not going to actually be present?"

I inquire, poking his muscular chest.

The huge Alpha looks down at me with dry amusement, closing his powerful hand around my offending finger.

"I said I would come along, I didn't promise to forget my worries."

"That's cheating." I inform him, narrowing my eyes to a scowl.

"Is it now?"

He asks, arching his brow in response to my accusation.

“Need I remind you that you’re the one who pointed out how dangerous unfamiliar territories can be? Especially for mischievous little wolves too clever and too brave for their own good.”

“You agreed to take a break.”

I counter, ignoring the bait he put out for my wolf, and laying a bit of my own.

“And if you get to break your promises then I don’t see why I should have to keep my own.”

I know he doesn’t need more explanation.

Before we left Gabriel’s palace Dominic made me vow to stay close to him, never go out of sight and tell him the moment I sensed anything off.

I knew he was just being cautious — and rightly so after everything we’ve been through, but now those same promises are providing my with the perfect button to push.

Sinclair growls, his wolf is naturally responding to my own, and in an instant I realize that the best way to get my mate out of his shell, is to do it literally.

“Ella—”

Sinclair warns, using my name as if it’s an admonishment.

“We should shift.” I suggest, cutting him off.

“Half the people here are in their wolf form.” I say, gesturing to the people cowering around us.

It’s true, it seems the Vanarans are so comfortable and secure in their secret lands that they feel no danger shifting in public, let alone in broad daylight.

“Your wolf is too inexperienced to be around so many strangers.” Sinclair cautions, shaking his head.

“It’s not a good idea.”

My wolf doesn’t care for this one bit.

Now that I’ve made shifting a possibility, she’s clawing at my skin, begging to get out. Yes, yes, yes! Freedom! Sinclair grips my nape, I said no, mate.

Too late! My wolf sings defiantly, and my body shudders as the painful shift begins.

Cursing, Sinclair shields me as I tremble, jerk and whimper through the next few minutes.

It’s over quickly, and soon I’m sitting in front of him as my wolf, my dress in tatters on the ground.

I wag my tail as I look up at my mate, who stands there with his arms crossed over his chest, disapproval rolling off of him in waves.

I jump up and brace my paws on his rock-hard abs, wishing I was tall enough to lick the frown right off his face.

Instead I swipe my tongue over his neck and nuzzle his chest with my snout, Come on, Dominic.

Come play with me! I beg, Please, please, please.

I am not amused by this, Ella.

His grumpy voice sounds in my mind.

Ignoring him, I jump down and bound around his legs, nudging him and repeating my pleading over and over.

It’s around the time that I nip his ankles that the stoic Alpha finally caves, his massive wolf bursting free with a roar.

My wolf is in charge, and she only wants to celebrate.
Yay!!! She cries, pouncing on him the moment the shift is complete.
Sinclair's foreboding energy is tinged with humor now, and I know I've won.
We wrestle and play for a moment before he pins me beneath him, plopping his heavy body down on mine so that I'm completely trapped.
Is this what you wanted, trouble? He teases, mouthing my neck affectionately.
No, I want to run! I whine, squirming under him but finding myself stuck.
Hmm, I don't know.
I kind of like having you right here, your little paws in the air, completely at my mercy.
He informs me huskily.
Your mercy to do what? Suffocate me? I complain, trying to dislodge his enormous form.
How can anyone be this heavy? Sinclair doesn't budge one bit from my efforts, but he does release my neck and shift his weight so he can investigate my belly with his nose.
Look at this tummy.

#Chapter 157 – Cora Confides in Roger

3rd Person

As Sinclair and Ella raced away through the winding streets of the Vanaran capital, Roger found his gaze lingering on Cora. The human was staring after her sister in amazement, as if she couldn't believe her own eyes. The wind fluttered through her black hair, carrying her now-familiar scent to the rugged wolf.

Roger had been sticking close to Cora ever since they fled Moon Valley. When he first turned up on her doorstep telling her they had to flee the territory, she'd been too stunned to respond. He'd ended up packing a bag for her while she looked on in shocked silence, only speaking in response to direct questions. In the car he and Henry had explained the situation to her in as much depth as they could manage, but he could feel her fear as if it was his own. It called to his protective instincts, and he felt a strange affinity for this woman – like him, she was watching her younger sibling take the world by storm, and though she never expressed any dissatisfaction with her lot in life, Roger did wonder.

Moving beside her, Roger watched as the frolicking pair became no more than tiny dots in the distance, "Amazing, isn't it?" He remarked, startling the preoccupied woman. "A month ago we didn't even think she had a wolf – and now this."

Cora shook her head, "I can't even wrap my head around it. I've known Ella my whole life... and she's always been different, but I thought that was just... Ella being Ella."

"What do you mean?" Roger inquired curious now.

Her mouth stretches into a wry smile. "I don't need to tell you what it's like growing up in someone's shadow." She murmured after a thoughtful beat. "And don't get me wrong, Ella made incredible sacrifices for me, she cared for me through thick and thin. But I'd be lying if I said I never resented her for being so much better at everything, for being strong or brave enough to face the things I couldn't." Cora paused, clamping her eyes shut for a moment with obvious regret. "I'm not proud of it but sometimes I even blamed her for protecting me rather than letting me suffer – how's that for ungrateful?" Roger shrugged. "It's natural to want to fight your own battles." He empathized,

catching her gaze, “and just because you aren’t proud of a feeling doesn’t make it invalid.”

Cora’s eyes widened slightly as Roger’s eyes bored into her own, and she felt a slight flutter of excitement in her tummy. When had anyone ever watched her so intently? As if they were looking straight through her to the very core of her being? Roger’s wolf perked up when he sensed a spark of interest in Cora’s chocolate eyes, and he shifted closer as she forged on. “Well either way it makes sense now.” She continued. “Why Ella always seemed to draw people to her like a magnet, why she was always the smartest, strongest and fastest even though she’s the size of a doll.”

“I get that.” Roger nodded, looking after Sinclair and Ella one more time before turning away and encouraging Cora to do the same. “But making sense doesn’t make seeing it any less surreal.”

“You can say that again.” Cora chuckled, wondering why she’d followed the man’s movements so naturally. “And the funny thing is that the wolf isn’t even the strangest part – it’s how different she is with Dominic.”

“How so?” Roger asked, leading Cora towards an ice cream parlor with a firm hand on the small of her back.

“In the best way.” Cora smiled, though it didn’t entirely reach her eyes. Roger didn’t know Ella and Cora’s full story, but he knew enough to realize there were some skeletons in their closets. He was sure he was seeing some now, some past darkness that hung over the sisters even in their happiest moments. “I always knew our lives... the way we grew up... took a toll on Ella, but she’s always kept it bottled up. She’s never trusted anyone enough to rely on them and she’s never known how to open up or be vulnerable.”

As they stepped into the shop, Roger processed this information with dawning understanding. If there was one thing he knew about his baby brother, it’s that Sinclair would never stand for his mate keeping him at a distance or facing her troubles alone.

“I knew all that, but I didn’t realize how it weighed her down... trapped her. The Ella I grew up with wasn’t playful or free-spirited. She was brave, defiant and darkly funny at times, but this Ella? The one who throws off her humanity in the street and goes running off into the sunset to play, even though the world around us is on fire?” Cora shakes her head. “No one deserves such happiness more than Ella, and I hate that I’ve never seen this side of her before now.”

They hovered in the doorway of the parlor, and Roger studied Cora closely, trying to read between the lines of her words. “Do you feel guilty? That you weren’t able to bring out this side of her?”

Cora huffed a sardonic laugh. “I feel guilty for a lot of things,” she confessed ominously. “But not this. She needed to find her mate in order to feel safe coming out of her shell. That’s not something I was ever going to be able to do for her.”

“And you?” Roger asked slyly, guiding her to the service counter. “What would it take to make you come out of your shell?”

Cora blinked at him in surprise. “What makes you think I haven’t already?”

Roger chuckled, taking notice when Cora blushed bright pink at the sound. “A lifetime of experience.” He finally answered vaguely.

“Well it’s not exactly easy.” Cora hedged. “I’m on the run in a country I didn’t even know existed until yesterday.”

Roger flashed his fangs, "So? That's not stopping your sister."

"My sister is drunk on love." Cora reminded him. "Dreams she never even knew she had are coming true left and right."

"And your dreams?" Roger pressed, his demeanor growing more and more predatory by the moment. He wasn't sure what it was about this human, but the more she spoke the more intriguing he found her. The more he wanted to push her buttons, just to see how she'd react.

"What can I get you?" The teenager behind the ice cream counter was smiling at them, completely oblivious that he was interrupting a conversation Roger was finding increasingly fascinating. Cora, on the other hand, was more than happy to jump at the distraction. They ordered, and Roger followed Cora to a table out front, keeping his father and Gabriel in his periphery. The old Alpha and the King were in deep conversation, and though Roger felt he might be slacking off his pack duties, he simply couldn't drag his wolf's focus from the human.

"So what do you think of all this?" Cora asked when he sat down, gesturing to the glittering city surrounding them.

#Chapter 156 – Sightseeing

Ella

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Hmm, I don't know. I kind of like having you right here, your little paws in the air, completely at my mercy. He informs me huskily.

Your mercy to do what? Suffocate me? I complain, trying to dislodge his enormous form. How can anyone be this heavy?

Sinclair doesn't budge one bit from my efforts, but he does release my neck and shift his weight so he can investigate my belly with his nose. Look at this tummy. He croons, ignoring my outraged question and burying his snout in the downy white fur. So soft, so precious.

Despite myself, the baby sends something that feels like laughter to us both, and I melt, wanting more of this. I suppose now that Sinclair is out of his head and in a playful mood I shouldn't mind that he's lying on my like a living wolf rug. I should just let my mate enjoy himself at my own expense... at least, the human part of my brain can acknowledge this. My wolf on the other hand, she's still dying to run. >

Accidental Surrogate for Alpha Chapter 159

Separation

Ella

"What do you mean, you might not take me with you?" I demand, barely processing Sinclair's words. "We're mated, where you go I go."

"Baby, I don't want to be away from you." Sinclair sighs, sending a wave of genuine regret through our bond. This isn't the first time he's done this – let me feel his emotions to confirm their veracity, but this is the strongest I've ever experienced them. With the help of our connection, I can sense how terribly Sinclair hates the idea of leaving me behind when he travels. It's making his wolf positively rabid with anger, worry, and sadness. Even as the emotions are filtering in, I can already see a way to use them to my advantage. If he feels this strongly, surely it won't be too difficult to convince him to take me with him.

"The problem is that I have no idea what I'm walking into with a lot of these meetings." Sinclair explains. "I've been to Vanara before, and know a few of the Alphas, but most of the packs I'm visiting are complete unknowns. I don't know the territories or threats, I don't know how rough the conditions will be or how well we'll be received when we arrive."

"How much time are we talking about?" I question, needing to get a handle on the scope of this potential separation.

"Weeks, maybe a month." He shakes his head, and I can feel his frustration. "I've been trying to figure out which terrifies me more, taking you with me and putting you in danger as a result, or leaving you behind where I can't get to you if something happens."

"It's definitely safer to have me with you." I inform my mate confidently. "You're the one who said the only time I'm truly safe is when I'm in your arms."

Sinclair laughs warmly, squeezing me closer. "Why do I feel like you're not the most objective opinion on this?"

"Because you're so blinded by your love for me that you assume I'm in the same boat, but don't worry because I am completely unbiased." I declare, shifting to straddle his lap.

"Oh, so you aren't blinded by your love for me?" Sinclair teases, stroking my sides.

"It's different." I hedge, "I'm not exactly sure how at this moment, but there's no doubt in my mind that it is."

"You do know that being adorable won't make me change my mind, don't you?"

Sinclair asks gently, grazing his knuckles over my cheek.

"That makes it sound as if you've already decided." I murmur, my insides tangling into knots. My wolf whimpers in my head, and before I can think about whether or not I'd shared the sound with my mate, he responds in a way that guarantees he did. He begins to purr, gathering me to his chest and tucking my head under his chin.

"I haven't decided anything yet. I'm honestly very conflicted, Ella." Sinclair admits. "I'm leaning towards leaving you here with Gabriel, Roger and Dad. I trust them and I trust the security here. I want you with me, I just can't help but feeling it would be irresponsible... honestly it feels selfish, like I'm choosing my own comfort and happiness over your safety."

"But I want to be with you too. So if it's selfish, let's be selfish together." I beg. Pushing away from him, I make my eyes wide and push my lower lip out into a dramatic pout.

"Please don't leave me behind, Dominic." I continue, trailing my hands down his chest as inspiration strikes. "My wolf won't obey anyone else, you know I'll just get into more trouble without you... and when I do there certainly won't be anyone to bring me back in line."

A growl vibrates in Sinclair's chest, so fierce the hair on the back of my neck stands on end. His hand closes over my nape a second later, applying just enough pressure to make me quiver with the instinct to submit. "I have news for you, trouble. If I do go without you, I'll have the others keep track of all your mischief so that I can hold you accountable when I get back."

I fight back a shiver as his authority washes over me, so I change track. "Fine, but if you're not here then who will give me pleasure when I wake up in the middle of the night... aching for you?"

Sinclair laughs aloud, dragging my mouth to his. I gasp as our lips collide, and Sinclair takes the opportunity to slip his tongue inside, tangling it with my own. Only when my mouth is red and swollen, and I've forgotten our conversation entirely, does he release me. He keeps our eyes level, massaging my head through my thick rose gold tresses. I loll my head into his hand, and he takes the opportunity to dip his tongue into the hollow of my throat. "When that happens you'll call me to your dreams, and tell me exactly what you need. And then I'll happily ravish you to my heart's content."

"You mean my heart's content?" I clarify.

"No. I meant exactly what I said." He answers with a smirk.

I laugh and drop my head to his shoulder. "Alright, big bad wolf." I concede, even as he continues to run his fingers through my long hair. "Just promise me you'll think about this. We'll both be happier together. We'll both be less anxious. I'll always be in your sight or reach. That's worth a lot."

"I'll think about it." Sinclair agrees. "There are a lot of advantages, I just need to make sure it's right."

"Thank you." I exhale, so comfortable and cozy that I already feel as though I might doze off again. Maybe I'm being a wild optimist, but I truly think I've gotten through to my mate. I can feel how strongly he wants to take me with him, and I think this conversation went a long way to convincing him to trust those impulses.

The next day I go to visit some of the refugees arriving at the port. Sinclair stayed at the Palace to plan, but Henry, Roger, Cora and I set out with a contingent of Gabriel's royal guards. The refugees are arriving in much the same way we did, cramming into small passenger planes carrying all their earthly belongings, arriving lost and depleted at the air base outside the city. Gabriel is trying to figure out where to send them all and has thus far been relying on local Vanarans who are willing to open their homes as shelter, but I'm determined to help – to find the best solutions possible for our people.

As we cross the Vanarium bridge spanning the crystalline waters of the lake, I can't help but feel a renewed sense of awe at our stunning surroundings. However my admiration quickly fades when our cars pull up outside a group of large white tents erected to triage the incoming shifters. As I understand it, some of the refugees are arriving injured and in need of urgent medical care, others have been separated from their families, while others still are grieving the loss of their home and loved ones. I try to brace myself for the harrowing experience ahead, only to become distracted by Cora's incessant fidgeting beside me. It hasn't escaped my notice that my sister is behaving very oddly today, she keeps shooting Roger wary looks, then pretending like he doesn't exist if he returns the gesture. This morning she would fall silent or walk away if Roger came near us, and though my instincts aren't sending up red flags about the interaction, I'd have to be blind to miss them.

So when we exit the car I sidle up to my brother-in-law, "Would you like to tell me why my sister keeps taking off like a startled hare every time you glance her way?" I mutter under my breath.

"I don't think she's a very big fan of mine." He concedes.

"Why not? What did you do?" I inquire, unable to keep a note of accusation from my voice.

"Why do you assume I'm the one at fault?" Roger jokes, pretending to look affronted.

"Because I know my sister and I know you." I snort, only partly serious. The truth is that my sister is as flawed as anyone, but I'm predisposed to take her side.

Roger shrugs. "We got to talking the other day, and I have the feeling she thought my questions were too personal."

I pause, surveying him closely. There's an odd note in his voice, one I haven't heard before. For the first time it strikes me that Roger's interest in Cora might not be entirely innocent. "What kind of questions?"

Roger laughs. "Nothing bad, I asked about her dreams and ambitions. I think she might be having a hard time with all this." He says, gesturing around us. "Leaving her job and life in Moon Valley."

A stab of guilt pierces me. Some sister I've been. I haven't even checked in with Cora about how she's doing. I've been so preoccupied with my own life and the war that I forgot that this transition won't have been any easier for her. I make a note to talk to her as soon as possible – about fleeing and Roger's interest. Still there's no time for that now. There are dozens of wolves waiting to see us, and though I'm more than a little apprehensive about the sorrows and abuses to which I'm about to bear witness, I know my people deserve to have their stories heard. I have to be strong – I have to make my mate proud and do right by the pack, no matter what.

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Sinclair laughs aloud, dragging my mouth to his. I gasp as our lips collide, and Sinclair takes the opportunity to slip his tongue inside, tangling it with my own. Only when my mouth is red and swollen, and I’ve forgotten our conversation entirely, does he release me. He keeps our eyes level, massaging my head through my thick rose gold tresses. I loll my head into his hand, and he takes the opportunity to dip his tongue into the hollow of my throat. “When that happens you’ll call me to your dreams, and tell me exactly what you need. And then I’ll happily ravish you to my heart’s content.” 1 “You mean my heart’s content?” I clarify.

“No. I meant exactly what I said.” He answers with a smirk.

I laugh and drop my head to his shoulder. “Alright, big bad wolf.” I concede, even as he continues to run his fingers through my long hair. “Just promise me you’ll think about this. We’ll both be happier together. We’ll both be less anxious. I’ll always be in your sight or reach. That’s worth a lot.” “I’ll think about it.” Sinclair agrees. “There are a lot of advantages, I just need to make sure it’s right.” “Thank you.” I exhale, so comfortable and cozy that I already feel as though I might doze off again. Maybe I’m being a wild optimist, but I truly think I’ve gotten through to my mate. I can feel how strongly he wants to take me with him, and I think this conversation went a long way to convincing him to trust those impulses.

The next day I go to visit some of the refugees arriving at the port. Sinclair stayed at the Palace to plan, but Henry, Roger, Cora and I set out with a contingent of Gabriel’s royal guards. The refugees are arriving in much the same way we did, cramming into small passenger planes carrying all their earthly belongings, arriving lost and depleted at the air base outside the city. Gabriel is trying to figure out where to send them all and has thus far been relying on local Vanarans who are willing to open their homes as shelter, but I’m determined to help – to find the best solutions possible for our people.

As we cross the Vanarium bridge spanning the crystalline waters of the lake, I can’t help but feel a renewed sense of awe at our stunning surroundings. However my admiration quickly fades when our cars pull up outside a group of large white tents erected to triage the incoming shifters. As I understand it, some of the refugees are arriving injured and in need of urgent medical care, others have been separated from their families, while others still are grieving the loss of their home and loved ones. I try to brace myself for the harrowing experience ahead, only to become distracted by Cora’s incessant fidgeting beside me. It hasn’t escaped my notice that my sister is behaving very oddly today, she keeps shooting Roger wary looks, then pretending like he doesn’t exist if he returns the gesture. This morning she would fall silent or walk away if Roger came near us, and though my instincts aren’t sending up red flags about the interaction, I’d have to be blind to miss them.

So when we exit the car I sidle up to my brother-in-law, “Would you like to tell me why my sister keeps taking off like a startled hare every time you glance her way?” I mutter

under my breath.

“I don’t think she’s a very big fan of mine.” He concedes.

“Why not? What did you do?” I inquire, unable to keep a note of accusation from my voice.

“Why do you assume I’m the one at fault?” Roger jokes, pretending to look affronted.

“Because I know my sister and I know you.” I snort, only partly serious. The truth is that my sister is as flawed as anyone, but I’m predisposed to take her side.

Roger shrugs. “We got to talking the other day, and I have the feeling she thought my questions were too personal.”

I pause, surveying him closely. There’s an odd note in his voice, one I haven’t heard before. For the first time it strikes me that Roger’s interest in Cora might not be entirely innocent. “What kind of questions?”

Roger laughs. “Nothing bad, I asked about her dreams and ambitions. I think she might be having a hard time with all this.” He says, gesturing around us. “Leaving her job and life in Moon Valley.”

A stab of guilt pierces me. Some sister I’ve been. I haven’t even checked in with Cora about how she’s doing. I’ve been so preoccupied with my own life and the war that I forgot that this transition won’t have been any easier for her. I make a note to talk to her as soon as possible – about fleeing and Roger’s interest. Still there’s no time for that now. There are dozens of wolves waiting to see us, and though I’m more than a little apprehensive about the sorrows and abuses to which I’m about to bear witness, I know my people deserve to have their stories heard. I have to be strong – I have to make my mate proud and do right by the pack, no matter what.