

Accidental Surrogate For Alpha

#Chapter 171 – Sinclair’s Departure

Sinclair

The next morning Ella and I stay in bed as long as we’re able.

I wake early, but my mate is snuggled so sweetly in my arms and I can’t bear to disturb her – not even for an encore of last night’s lovemaking.

After we resolved our fight, I’d been perfectly ready to take Ella to bed then and there – however, before I could lay a hand on her, she looked up at me with those big golden eyes and said, “I thought we were going to run?”

I purred knowingly, sensing her wolf’s restlessness despite the fact that she’d tried to escape my plans for us. “So somebody’s wolf wants to come out and play before I rut you senseless, hmm?”

“Well,” She responded slyly, tangling her arms around my neck. “If you want to give me stability then following through on the expectations you set would be very important, don’t you think?”

I couldn’t help but laugh, throwing my head back and releasing a booming chuckle.

“You do remember the second part of the promise I made you, don’t you?” I teased, once I was able to speak again.

All mischief now, Ella batted her lashes, “something about not being able to walk until you come home to me?”

“That’s right.” I confirmed, running my hand down her back and over her luscious behind. “Only after your antics tonight I think we might need to add: not sitting for a week either.”

My brazen mate rolled her eyes, even as her pulse spiked and the scent of her arousal rose to combine with her already intoxicating fragrance.” Dominic, you are obsessed! You just spanked me yesterday.”

“Because you were naughty yesterday too – and don’t act like you don’t love it every bit as much as I do.” I warned, lowering my lips to my mark and nibbling Ella’s scrumptious neck. I knew the sweet human was still struggling to come to terms with this side of her sexuality, but I wasn’t going to show her any mercy. “I can smell your excitement, little mate.” I reminded her. “Besides, I wasn’t talking about spanking this time. You really pushed your luck today, so I’m going to have to get more creative.”

Ella blinked in surprise, or she tried to. Her head was lolling to the side as I laved the soft spot behind her ear, and she was struggling to keep the gears working in her mind. When I pulled back to switch to the other ear, her quick mind was obviously trying to piece together this puzzle. She was so distracted and consumed by her feverish lust that she eventually sent her confusion through our bond, but if it’s not that, then why wouldn’t I be able to... Deciding to help her, I trailed one finger down between the round globes of her bottom, tapping my fingertip against her back entrance through her bathing suit.

Oh! A shiver wracked her small body as curiosity, exhilaration and trepidation combined to make a sharp cocktail in Ella’s blood, flowing from her senses into my own. It was a delicious combination. I’ve never done that before. Ella murmured after

a moment, alight with nervous excitement.

I figured as much. I shared, delighted by this confirmation. It might have been irrational, as every first with my mate has been incredible, but I've always taken a certain smug pleasure in introducing Ella to new things. Especially the things that make her blush – the ones her human upbringing taught her to be embarrassed about but she can't help but enjoy. And even if you had, I doubt your abominable ex could have prepared you for me.

My words did exactly as I intended, and Ella's eyes widened as she considered our size difference. Will it hurt? She asked shyly, leaning into me for comfort even though I was the one scandalizing her sense of propriety.

It will in the beginning. It will feel strange and forbidden. But it's like taking my mark. I explained with a lethal grin, closing my teeth over that special spot once more. If your mate knows what he's doing, it can feel better than you'd ever imagined.

Then why is it a punishment? Ella inquired suspiciously.

Because it will take a bit of discomfort before you start to enjoy yourself, and because it puts you in a very vulnerable position, little mate. You have to trust me implicitly, and there is no better way to make you feel so thoroughly claimed – because there is no part of you that's off limits to me. No part that I haven't possessed.

Ella shivered again, and I didn't bother mentioning how much I was going to enjoy watching her blush and squirm over the new sensations. And Goddess did I.

After we returned from a long run on the shores of the lake, I spent a good long time preparing Ella, working her up to the edge of orgasm three times as I stretched and toyed with her tight back channel. Only then did I finally bring out my cock, gently rocking into her with lots of encouragement and praise as she grappled with the intrusion.

Sure enough, as intrigued as she'd been by the idea, her shyness and inexperience came out in full force once I actually began touching her in such a forbidden place.

She was crimson faced and making the cutest sounds of reluctant pleasure and embarrassment well before we reached the main event, and when I was finally inside her and began telling her how wonderful she felt – using the dirty words that scandalize and delight her in equal measure, she came to pieces in my arms.

Of course, that was nothing compared to the rapture she found when I began strumming her swollen clit and sank my fingers into her weeping sex on top of everything else. She cried out in ecstasy and slumped back against me, trusting me to support her as she disappeared to a heightened plane of erotic bliss. That was the point that I lost my own control as well, spilling my seed into her clenching sheath as I brought her over the edge again and again.

I'm sure Ella thought we were done after such an overwhelming mating, but I'm nothing if not good for my word. I kept my poor mate up all night long, exhausting her and putting my own endurance to the test. Luckily our ravenous appetites for one another were spurred on by the knowledge that this was our last joining for a few weeks, so we came together as many times as we were able.

So this morning, as I look down at my slumbering mate, overflowing with love and admiration as I caress her pregnant belly and commune with our unborn pup, I can only hope I did enough to satisfy and reassure her over the weeks to come. I've been watching her for a while when she finally stretches and emits a sleepy moan, making

me rethink whether this morning should be reserved for innocent cuddles after all. My wolf drags his attention from Rafe, quieting his continuous proclamations of love for the tiny babe, to focus on our mate.

When Ella's dark lashes part and her beautiful gaze focuses on me, her brow furrows much too quickly for my liking. "I don't want you to go." She whispers, sounding so vulnerable it nearly breaks me.

"I don't want to go either." I confess, hoping that hearing my own reluctance will offer her some comfort. I understand Ella well enough to realize that knowing she's not hurting alone can go a long way to easing this ache. "But I'll be back before you know it, baby."

#Chapter 172 – Separation

Ella

When Sinclair left, all my wolf wanted to do was climb up to the highest tower of the Prince's palace and howl into the sky, to cry out for our mate until our combined voices went hoarse. Instead I allowed myself a single hour of wallowing – I climbed into a bubble bath, turned on the saddest song I could find and cried until my tears ran dry. Afterwards I pulled myself together and got dressed, even though I could feel Sinclair slipping further and further away with every minute that passed.

We've never been this far apart since my wolf woke, and I'm amazed by how keenly I can feel his absence. As he drove away, Sinclair's beloved voice continued to sound in my mind, I love you, Ella. I love you, Rafe. But it faded in perfect synchrony with the widening gulf between our hearts, and eventually it went completely silent. Now the only way we'll be able to communicate through our bond is in dreams, otherwise we're stuck with the technologies I knew as a human: cell phones and emails.

I know the best thing for my agitated wolf is to keep busy, so I start my day by meeting Cora and Gabriel in the King's study, to begin planning the political summit Sinclair suggested. My sister is still half-asleep and sulking about the fact that Sinclair left Roger behind as added protection for us, but she offers me a sympathetic squeeze all the same. "How are you doing?" She murmurs, her arms locked around my back.

"Well I mate it out of bed and I'm not crying anymore... so better than expected." I confess, burying my face in her neck.

"Tsk, poor thing." Cora replies, rubbing my back. A note of humor enters her voice then, "My intrepid wolf sister, brought to her knees by a boy. I never thought I'd see the day." She teases, even though this isn't truly a fair assessment.

Sometimes I think my big sister is blinded by the relationship we had as children, because though she's remarkably perceptive about my personality in many ways, there are other facets that go over her head completely. She sees the protector, the martyr who suffered without complaint and then shut out all the pain for so many years. She doesn't see the love-starved girl so desperate for affection that she settled for scraps from a scoundrel. No, in fact if there's one of us who avoids attachments at all costs- it's her. Even as I think it, two new scents enter the room, as if they heard my inner musings and appeared to prove me right.

"If I were you, I wouldn't let Dominic hear you call him a 'boy'." Roger's husky voice has Cora pulling abruptly away from me, a scowl on her pretty face. He and Henry are framed in the doorway, though my sister doesn't seem to notice my father-in-law at all.

Her full focus is on Roger.

“What are you doing here?” Cora inquires rudely.

I give her a little pinch on her arm, and she yelps and pinches me back, “Hey!”

“Play nice.” I instruct in a low mutter, even though I know the men can hear us perfectly well.

“Tell him.” Cora snipes, crossing her arms over her chest and refusing to look at the wolf now grinning at her like the cat who caught the canary.

I shoot Roger a withering look, and he has the decency to wipe the smirk from his face. “Alright.” Gabriel chuckles, taking the opportunity to steer us back to the matter at hand. “Let’s talk about the summit, we’ve got a lot of work to do and not much time to make it happen.”

“What exactly are we expecting?” I inquire, trying to recall the details Sinclair had shared with me in between sessions of our marathon lovemaking.

“Well, if all the Alpha’s turn up we’ll be looking at about twenty pack leaders with their mates, betas and guards.” The King explains. “We have gatherings of this sort a couple of times a year, so luckily my staff is well versed in housing, feeding and entertaining the lot – that isn’t anything we have to worry about.”

This is some relief, but my mind is lingering on all the refugees sleeping on rough cots in the camp near the air field. “What exactly is the palace’s full capacity? In terms of the number of shifters it can house?”

“We can support a few hundred people – not all at the same level of luxury of course. The guards and lower ranked members of each delegation will join my own in more modest quarters. Alphas will have suites similar to yours and Dominic’s, and betas somewhere in between.” Gabriel answers thoughtfully. “Why?”

“Well I know it’s not what we’re here to discuss right now, but I’ve been thinking about finding better lodging for the refugees from the continent. I hate leaving them in such stark conditions.” I frown. “I was wondering if we might be able to put them up here, though I know that’s a huge imposition.”

Gabriel offers me a gentle smile. “It wouldn’t be, but I’m not sure that’s the best option. We could feed them and put a roof over their heads, they could be near their leaders,” he acknowledges, nodding to me. “But in my experience coming into the lap of luxury when you’ve just lost everything you own can be a cruel reminder, and the palace isn’t exactly the warmest environment. I would suggest finding local families willing to offer their guest rooms so that the refugees can have a sort of home stay. Between us, we could find a way to supplement incomes to support the extra mouths being fed, and the shifters from the continent would be welcomed into the arms of a real family and a real home.”

“I like that idea.” I agree, “and it would also help them integrate into the community here, to feel accepted. If there’s resistance to their presence among your own pack, this would also be an important way to build support. It would be especially good for the orphans.” I add, my mind returning to the children. “Maybe we could even place some of the parents who lost pups with the unaccompanied minors.”

Henry smiles, “Brilliant. Though you’ll have a time convincing Isabel to give them up.” He has a point. The she-wolf I place in charge of the orphans has taken the job to heart, becoming a fierce protector and loving guardian for each of the parentless pups. The orphan tent has become something of a sanctuary under her leadership,

and I doubt she'll want to relinquish her new babies to other families. "I'll talk to her." I vow, "besides it's good to have someone like Isabel in charge of placing the children anyway, she'll ensure the foster families are top notch."

"Ella's right." Cora pipes up, sending me a meaningful glance full of understanding, appreciation and bitter memory. 'You can't be too careful with children in these circumstances. And we could move her and the unplaced pups here in the meantime.'

"Agreed." Gabriel nods, "And your point about public sentiment here is well taken.

That is going to be one of our challenges with the pack leaders at the summer. If Damon continues to expel people at these rates, we're going to need to expand homestay placements outside of the capital. No shifter would begrudge the wolves fleeing his violence, but some of the leaders will be worried about the strain on their resources. I can think of a few particularly stingy Alphas who will require significant funding before agreeing to such a thing."

"Sinclair has plenty of money to spare, even with the war effort." Henry assures Gabriel, and I belatedly realize I don't know the first thing about my mate's finances. I know he's a billionaire, but I don't truly understand the extent of his wealth or liquidity – especially after fleeing the continent. My father-in-law turns to me now, 'You two might have to make some hard decisions between winning the war and saving enough to rebuild afterwards, but I think that's a ways down the road. For now I can work with you to appropriate funds to support the refugee efforts.'

"Thank you." I profess, squeezing his hand before turning back to the King." And the rest of the summit? What do we need to worry about most?"

'Well, by the time they arrive, most of the Alpha's will have already made up their minds about whether or not they'll offer an alliance. One or two might withhold judgement to see which way the others vote – to follow the popular tide as it were.'

Gabriel explains. "Still, I think I can fairly predict who will be for and against you. It will be our job to focus on the latter.

There are four or five Alphas whose minds you'll have to change, and we need to structure the events around the summit so you can do that, Ella."

At first, I assumed he was speaking to all of us as a team, but when Gabriel calls me out by name, I blink in surprise. "Me?" I utter dumbly.

"Who else?" The King laughs.

"But I'm not... they don't even... why? How?" I stammer, sounding painfully uncertain of myself.

"Because Dominic will have demonstrated his strength and leadership and made all the logical arguments." Gabriel answers easily, "Where logic cannot sway, there is only emotion, and if anyone can soften their hearts to the cause, it's you. And as for the how? All you have to do is be yourself."

I can't quite believe my ears. I thought that my usefulness to Sinclair was strongest in terms of supporting him, not in the actual politics. "If that's true, then why didn't Dominic take me with him?" I question. "I mean I know he was worried but, if I can actually help..." I trail off, doubting my mate's explanations for the first time.

"Because we don't want to give them too much time to think about it." Gabriel shares slyly. The logic will be weighing on them for weeks, and the emotional impact will move them in the moment, but it will likely wear off after a few days. That's why Dominic decided to do it this way. You can stay safe here with us while he travels and

plants seeds in the minds of the leaders, then we bring them here – and you make them bloom.”

My wolf swells with pride, but at the same time I have to wonder. “I don’t get it. If this was the plan all along, why didn’t he tell me?”

“Because,” Henry smiles gently. “You wouldn’t talk to him.”

I flush scarlet. “Right.” I owe my mate a big apology.

My dear readers, Thank you for stopping by and reading this story. I hope you enjoyed it. I’m trying my best to update assp. I’ll appreciate it if you explore my other stories as well. Please follow my f*****k page Caroline above story and group Caroline above story if you wanna chat or keep updated on my writing schedule. Yours, Caroline above story

Accidental Surrogate for Alpha by Caroline Above Story Chapter 173

#Chapter 173 — Convincing Isabel Ella

After concluding our three hour summit meeting, where the King, my hybrid family and I decided on a few special events, we kicked off preparations for a welcome banquet, refugee camp visit, an open forum for debate, and a grand ball.

I’m still brainstorming different ideas for other ways to engage the reluctant Alphas, while grappling with the idea that I could play a pivotal role in convincing them to join our cause and wondering how I can make up for my coldness to my mate.

Still I have plenty of time to sort out those issues — now my full focus is on the refugees.

I arrive at the airfield just as a flight full of new exiles from the continent lands, and I watch in horror and heartache as they disembark the plane.

From the looks of it, this is the largest group to arrive so far, and they’re mostly women and children.

We’re losing more and more male wolves to this war, the ones who stay behind to fight or die protecting their families.

I help the Vanaran volunteers usher the group into the camp, taking a screaming infant from one of the guards who led the group out of Damon’s brutal empire.

“Her parents died just a hundred yards from freedom.” He shares bleakly, gently transferring the pup into my arms.

“I promised them I’d get her here, so that it wouldn’t be in vain.”

Tears well in my eyes as I rock the babe gently from side to side. I haven’t welcomed my own baby yet, but my perspective on children has already changed so much. I’ve always loved them, always connected to and felt protective of them, but now that I’m learning the depth of a parent’s love, I can never look at a child the same way again. I’m painfully aware of how much this precious girl must have meant to her mother and father, and I know how much it would have meant to them that this man kept his promise.

“you did very well.” I praise him.

“Her parents can rest in peace now, and one day she’ll come to understand what you did for her. She has a future now — because of you.”

His face is still downfallen, and there’s a haunted look in his eyes which I recognize all too well.

“Would you like to come with me to the orphan’s tent? So you can see where she’ll be

in case you want to visit?"

He stiffens slightly, but there's a flash of longing in his eyes.

"I doubt I'll have much chance. I've got to go back this evening."

"If you keep making these runs you ought to get to know some friendly faces here."

I suggest, even though I know the face he'll likely encounter before he can actually see the orphans is anything but friendly.

"I think it's important you come and visit, so you remember what an incredible difference you're making. If you try to stay disconnected then you might stop yourself from seeing how much good you're actually doing."

He still looks uncertain, so I make the decision for him.

"Come on."

I order, putting some of my newfound authority into my voice. I turn and carry the whimpering pup towards the orphan's tent, and a glance over my shoulder confirms the big man is trailing reluctantly after me.

Sure enough, Isabel appears almost as soon as we enter.

She shoots the guard a suspicious look, but is immediately drawn to the baby in my arms. She moves beside me with solemn focus.

We're hardly friends, but she seems to trust me now.

Isabel peers down at the squalling pup, clucking sympathetically as she traces a finger down her red cheek.

"Poor darling."

She murmurs, glancing at me for my professional opinion.

"About eight months?"

"Thereabouts." I assess, still rocking the distraught pup.

"She's had a rough time of it."

"Do we know her name?" Isabel asks, clearing her throat to disguise the thick emotion in her voice.

"Sadie."

The guard pipes up from behind me, his deep voice low and gravelly.

Isabel's attention swings towards the rugged wolf, and her eyes narrow in suspicion.

At once I'm struck by how many of the women in my life have this response to strange men — of fear and mistrust learned through terrible experiences. My heart wrenches with the sting of her pain, but I know this man doesn't deserve her suspicion.

"Isabel, this is..."

I trail off, realizing I don't even know this man's name.

"James."

He offers gruffly, his eyes still on the baby.

"This is James."

I finish gently.

"He's one of the guardians getting families off the continent. He rescued Sadie here."

Isabel's accusatory glare turns suddenly wary, and I can see her rethinking her first impression of James.

She gives him an acknowledging nod that would seem very reserved for most people, but which I know is a mark of great respect from Isabel.

"Thank you." She says softly.

James' eyes lift to Isabel's face, and his dark eyes widen almost imperceptibly.

Suddenly he's looking at her so intently that I feel as if I'm intruding somehow. Isabel turns her head away, but I see the slightest flush of pink on her cheeks. Interesting.

I think, with a flutter of excitement. I relinquish Sadie to Isabel so that she can get to know her newest charge, "Hello little one."

She greets her, and something in her voice makes me wonder if the child Isabel lost was a daughter... perhaps one around this age.

"It's okay. You're safe now."

As she carries her deeper into the tent, no doubt bound for a bath and a change of clothes that isn't flecked with her parents' blood, James and I follow.

He remains silent, but I broach the subject I know I must.

"Isabel, I've been talking with the King. We want to move you and the orphans to the palace so you'll be more comfortable. There will be lots of amenities and extra hands to help."

Isabel listens quietly, not responding immediately.

Instead I'm surprised to hear James inquire, "You mean, they won't be here much longer?"

"You'll be welcome to visit even after we move them. The palace isn't so far." I answer, earning myself a reproachful look from Isabel.

"Who will receive them here if we move?" She asks stiffly, clearly not liking the idea of change.

"Perhaps James could deliver any unaccompanied pups directly to the palace." I suggest slyly.

"That way you won't have to worry about them landing in anyone else's care, and he'll be confident he's delivered them into the safest possible hands." I pause, going very still as if she's waiting to hear the Guardian's thoughts on the matter before making her decision.

"I could do that." He agrees promptly.

"I mean, I'd like to, if it's alright with you."

Isabel nods without looking at him, and even though I know I'm dealing with two people who are hurting deeply, the hopeless romantic in me gets a thrill of excitement.

"Then it's settled." I decide, before either one of them can rethink it.

"Though there's something else." I add, pursing my lips.

Hearing my hesitance, Isabel turns her guarded features to me, clearly sensing bad news is coming.

"We don't want to keep anyone in these awful camps. We want to bring them into the city and are going to be asking for volunteers to host different families." Isabel's eyes narrow again, and I know she sees where this is heading.

"I grew up as an orphan, Isabel." I state abruptly, changing tactics.

"I was in a group home with a lot of problems. But even before things got bad, I can tell you that I spent my entire childhood wishing for a family of my own. These pups need someone like you to care for and look out for them, but there are a lot of families with love to give, a lot of parents who have lost their own children. I think the best thing we can do for them is to place them with fosters."

She opens her mouth to object, and I hold up my hand.

"I would work with you to make sure only the best, most well-intentioned families are

actually given pups, and that a system is in place to check in on their welfare. It wouldn't all be at once either. As long as the war goes on, there will always be new pups coming in – as terrible as that is.”

I shift a bit closer to her, speaking in a very soft voice.

“And if there's anyone that you are interested in fostering yourself... we can arrange that.”

Isabel's eyes widen, and she clutches Sadie a bit tighter.

“You make a good point.” She concedes stiffly.

“But I don't like it.”

“I understand.”

I concede, reaching out to stroke Sadie's soft hair.

“But parenthood is doing the right thing for your pups, even when it hurts. I know you understand that better than anyone. And I'll be here with you every step of the way.”

Isabel glances at James again, and I almost wonder if she's shy to speak in front of him, or if she might take some comfort in his steady presence.

“I won't give them to just anyone.” She finally agrees.

“And I won't settle for anything but the best procedures.”

“I wouldn't expect otherwise.” I assure her, feeling my victory within reach.

“When do we move?” Isabel inquires, with solemn resignation.

“James, how would you feel about making your first trip to the palace this afternoon?”

I ask, smiling at the big wolf.

“I know you've had a long day already but-”

“No,” He interrupts, his eyes locked on Isabel.

“Of course I'll do it.” Isabel nods, still not meeting his gaze, “I'll get the pups ready.”

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#Chapter 174 — The Heart of the Pack

Ella

It takes me a while to drag myself away from the orphans once they're settled in the palace. I know I have about a thousand things to do, but seeing so many little ones in need of love and care is simply too much for me to resist. I stay for a few hours to help Isabel and James set up, glancing furtively in their direction every now and then to see how things are going.

Isabel is as standoffish with James as she is with me, but he's gentle and steady, not seeming to mind her cold demeanor.

Every now and then I find the she-wolf returning my glances, but there's a distinct tinge of jealousy in her observation. I can't blame her — in her shoes I'd probably hate me for being so happy too.

After a while she marches over to me, interrupting me as I make up cots for the pups.

“You should let us finish this. You must have more important things to do.” I shrug.

“Actually this is about the time I'd usually be taking a nap.”

I share, wondering if it was a mistake to reference my pregnancy or point out the easy comfort of my life, then hating the fact that it feels necessary to overanalyze my words this way. I've been through enough traumas to know that people walking on eggshells around you only makes things worse.

“Then go nap.”

Isabel instructs brusquely, gesturing towards my middle.

“You need your rest and you won’t have the luxury in a few months.”

There’s a strange undercurrent in her words, and I have the sense that she would give anything to go back to the sleepless nights and overwhelming days of being a new parent.

“If it’s alright with you, I’d like to stay.” I reply simply, fluffing a pillow before tucking it under the soft blankets of my current cot.

“I was thinking the pups might like to make this space their own. We could build a fort or —”

“They aren’t your practice dolls.” Isabel cuts in, her hands on her hips.

“They’re real pups who are hurting badly, they need comfort and safety right now. Getting attached to another adult who’s just going to disappear as soon as she has her own pup to cuddle, isn’t going to help them.”

Taking a deep breath, I carefully consider my next words before speaking.

“I don’t need practice, Isabel. I’ve been raising babies since I was one myself — children who, like these pups, have lost everything and need all the support they can get. Now I can’t promise that I’ll always have time to give — whether it’s because of the war or physical distance or whatever else might happen. But I can tell you that my son’s arrival isn’t going to make me forget about these children, I’m here because I care and I want to help.” I pause, studying the other woman closely.

“And I might not be a mother yet, but that doesn’t mean I have no wisdom to share.” Isabel’s mouth twitches, dangerously close to a quiver.

“Well you are wrong about one thing.”

She answers stiffly, turning her nose up.

“You’re already a mother... more of one than I am, at least.”

I want to hug her so badly that it takes all my strength to hold back, but I know she won’t welcome it.

Isabel has so many walls up at the moment she’d probably bite me just for trying. She starts to turn away, but I raise my voice, imbuing it with some of my newfound alpha female authority.

“Once a mother, always a mother. Your love for your child doesn’t end with their life, Isabel.”

She freezes, stopping dead in her tracks. She doesn’t turn back or say a word, but I see her shoulders cave and her head hang.

Isabel retreats into the bedroom we arranged for her, and a minute later I hear her muffled sobs floating through the door.

James appears at my side, with the helpless expression of an alpha faced with a crying she-wolf.

“What happened?”

There’s a note of accusation in his voice, and I realize just how quickly he’s bonded with the grieving mother.

“She’ll tell you her story when she’s ready.”

I answer, the palpable anguish of her cries making me want to weep myself.

“She’s a stubborn one, and she’s hurting. You’ll need to give her time.”

James looks at me sharply, and I can sense his wolf’s agitation.

"This isn't something I can fix, is it?"

I almost want to smile, but I'm still aching for the other woman.

"No."

I murmur gently, "nothing can ever fix this.

But if you can get past her teeth and claws, you might be able to give her a shoulder to cry on." He looks at me uncertainly.

"You don't think it's too soon?" I shake my head.

"It's never too soon for a hug when someone is suffering."

James sets his shoulder with the expression of a warrior going into battle, then marches determinedly towards Isabel's room.

The door closes behind him, but I can still hear Isabel's outraged snarls and a small scuffle before James rumbles a dominant growl.

Then there's stillness, and a piteous moan.

Isabel's keening grows louder then, no longer dampened by her efforts to hold in the pain or muffled by prideful attempts to stay quiet.

Her sobs are soon joined by purrs, and suddenly I'm so glad that I stayed here with our people that it's staggering.

It was a very small thing, I know, but I can't help but feel as if this is right.

These orphans, the refugees, need someone to look out for them, and I can help but think I'm the person for the job.

Suddenly I remember what Sinclair told me about Lunas being the heart of a pack, and then Henry's explanation about my role inspiring the Alphas at the summit.

A torrent of guilt rains down on my senses as I realize just how badly I messed up with Sinclair.

Not only was he right about me staying behind in the capital, but we never even got to discuss all the reasons why it's important, because I shut him out.

I'm so ashamed of myself A little while later I find Roger in the palace kitchens.

"What are you doing here?"

I ask, good naturedly, taking a seat beside him at one of the work tables.

"I'm scheming."

He reports slyly.

"Cora ran off the other day before she was able to eat the ice cream she ordered, so the pastry chef is going to help me by making some fresh."

He looks so pleased with himself that I have to laugh despite my gloomy mood.

"Oh she's going to be furious."

"Bad idea?"

Roger asks, apparently having second thoughts now.

"No, good idea. That's why she's going to be pissed." I explain.

"She loves ice cream and if she finds the strength to resist she'll be grumpy because she won't get to enjoy it, and if she gives in she'll resent you for making her happy."

Roger chuckles darkly.

"Excellent."

He smirks, looking at me curiously.

"You don't mind? My interest in her, I mean?"

"No," I share honestly.

"Actually I think you two might be good together, but you've got your work cut out for

you.”

“Don’t I know it.”

Roger agrees, not sounding the least bit bothered by this prospect.

“Of course, if you hurt her I’ll rip your arms off and beat you with them until you’re dead from blood loss or blunt force trauma.” novelebook I add smoothly, in a perfectly serious tone.

“I would expect nothing less.”

He nods, solemnly adding.

‘But I have no intention of hurting her, Ella.”

“Good.” I reply shortly, my eyes exploring the room for food options.

“And you?” Roger inquires, watching my curious exploration.

” Afternoon snack? Pregnancy craving?”

Accidental Surrogate for Alpha by Caroline Above Story Chapter 175

#Chapter 175— Ella Apologizes

Ella

After my snack, I meet with the chefs to talk about menus for the summit, then ask to have dinner sent up to my rooms. I’m feeling too pensive and tired to be social tonight. I’m still reeling from discovering how badly I handled my troubles with Sinclair, and I’m both dreading and eager to make amends. I know I won’t feel better until I do, but the prospect is more than a little daunting. I’m too much of a chicken to call him on the phone, and I don’t know where he is or what he’s doing right now anyway. So I decide to wait for our dreams, where I’ll be able to feel his touch and let my wolf take over if things get too hard. I know Sinclair probably won’t be asleep for hours, but it was a long, emotionally draining day.

So as much as I want to put off our meeting I take a quick shower and climb into my nest.

It smells like Sinclair, and that blessed comfort is enough to whisk me off into my dreams.

When I arrive in the dream forest I have nothing but time to kill, and I spend it thinking about what I want to say to Sinclair when he appears.

Of course, the more I think about my mistakes, the worse I feel, and soon I’m fighting the urge to cry.

When my mate finally takes shape in the distant trees, I feel a deep pang in my chest. I can’t bring myself to look at him. I kneel at the foot of the bed, my hands resting on either side of my belly as I stare at my lap. I can perfectly picture his handsome face, rugged lines and bronze skin practically glowing in the light of the moon, his blazing wolf eyes piercing me through the darkness.

“Hello trouble.”

Sinclair’s deep voice wraps around me like a warm embrace, and I can see his blackclad legs just in front of me.

Strong fingers catch my chin, and then he’s tilting my face up to his. He searches my features with lethal intensity, and his voice is husky when he speaks.

“What, no smile?” He asks, running his thumb over my lower lip, his longer fingers splayed across my cheek and delving into my hair.

“If I didn’t know any better I’d think you weren’t happy to see me.”

I can feel his wolf prodding at our bond, trying to tempt my own inner animal to rise to the surface.

“What is it, little wolf? Talk to me.”

“I owe you an apology.” I admit, wide eyed and trying to stop my voice from quavering.

“Already?” He inquires, the corner of his lip twitching upward.

“I’ve only been gone a day, how much mischief could you possibly have made? Other than skipping lunch of course.” My jaw drops, and in my surprise and outrage, I forget some of my shyness.

“He actually told you?! That rat!” Sinclair chuckles, stroking my hair back from my face.

“You missed our bedtime call, so I checked with Roger. He explained that you’d had along day and probably went to bed early.”

A new stab of guilt assails me.

“I forgot.”

I bury my face in my hands, “I’m sorry, I wasn’t thinking. I just didn’t get a chance to nap and I was sleepy and the nest smelled like you and —”

“Ella,” Sinclair pulls my hands away from my face, his brow furrowed with concern now.

“Baby, it’s okay.”

“No it’s not.” I insist, furious with myself now.

“I keep letting you down, you’re always there for me and every time you need me to be there for you, I fuck it up.”

My words are met with a deep growl, and I know Sinclair is warning me to stop this, but I can’t help myself.

I forge on, my voice thick, “I’ve been such a horrible brat to you.

You’ve got the whole world on your plate and you were still thinking of me every step of the way — figuring out how to best use my talents while also looking out for the pack and keeping us safe.

All I did was give you a hard time for being stressed and then run away when things got hard!”

I’m on my feet now, pacing back and forth while the huge Alpha patiently waits out the storm, watching me with the bearing of a wolf about to pounce, his hands in fists at his sides as he glowers down at me.

“When we started out I gave you so much flack about communicating with me, but when you tried I refused to listen because I didn’t like what you were saying. I wasted our time together and whined and complained — and even now I can tell you’re pissed that I’m being hard on myself and you’re getting ready to comfort me and tell me I’m wrong and I won’t have it, Dominic!” I command, pointing my index finger at him sharply.

“I deserve your anger, I deserve to be held accountable and I’m not going to let you smooth this over because I’m breeding or new to being a wolf! Yell at me, or walk out on me, tell me I’m a spoiled hypocrite — anything!”

I’m breathing hard and near tears, my emotions swirling out of control. I’m prepared for the worst, and I even welcome it, anything to ease my guilt.

However Sinclair simply crosses his arms over his chest, his expression dark and foreboding.

For a minute I don't think he's going to speak to me, but then he rumbles, "Get on the bed, Ella."

I blink, taken aback by his stark command.

"Why?"

My mate arches a menacing brow, one which has me scampering onto the plush blankets.

When I'm kneeling in front of him again, he steps forward, and I don't need to tap into our bond to feel his disapproval. It rolls off him in waves.

"Who is in charge here, mate?"

I shudder at the pure dominance in his voice.

He lets his alpha power flow out of him freely, and maybe for the first time, I feel the full force of his strength.

I'm confronted with the reality of exactly how much magic courses through his veins, the reason why all the other wolves on the continent were prepared to bow down to him.

I've always known he was strong and fierce, I've always understood that he's clever and kind, but before now I never quite realized how much more raw power he possesses than everyone else.

I'm also astounded to realize how much control he must employ every second of every day in order to keep it in check, to stop it from coming out this way and terrifying everyone he meets.

A moment ago I might have challenged him, but now I have no option but to submit.

"You are." I answer meekly.

He nods, not showing me any mercy.

"And who decides how I feel? Who gets to choose whether or not I'm angry?"

"you do?" I squeak, my wolf squirming with the desperation to cease the onslaught of his power.

She's on her back, belly up with her tail between her legs, but still Sinclair does not relent. His clenched jaw twitches dangerously.

"And who gets to tell me how to deal with my mate?"

"Well technically your wo— no one!"

I cut off my defiant response when Sinclair unleashes yet another wall of power, disproving my earlier assumption that I was feeling all of it.

"That's right, little wolf."

Sinclair affirms, finally uncrossing his arms so he can grip my nape.

"On all counts."

He growls wordlessly, and I shiver in his hands.

"You may be feeling guilty, and if you ask me nicely, I can help you work through those feelings. But you do not get to tell me how to feel about you or our relationship."

"I'm sorry." I sniffle.

"This was all supposed to be an apology, I just got so upset when I realized I -missed our call."

"You don't say?"

Sinclair intones sardonically, his thumb brushing up and down on the side of my neck.

"Now, would you like to try your apology over?"

I nod, amazed when I realize how much steadier I feel now that he's taken me in

hand.

"I'm sorry that I didn't talk with you, especially after making such a big deal about communication. I'm sorry that I ran away, and that I've been self-involved and unsupportive. I'm sorry for lashing out when I knew your heart was in the right place."

"And?" Sinclair prompts me ominously.

"And I'm sorry that I lost my temper and yelled at you and tried to tell you how to feel and how to treat me."

"And?" He says again, still radiating with an overwhelming amount of strength.

I rack my brain, trying to figure out what I'm forgetting.

Sensing my confusion, his wolf's voice sounds in my head.

Food and rest, sweet mate.

"I'm sorry I didn't take care of myself today."

I add at last, feeling a huge weight fall from my shoulders now that everything is out in the open.

"Good girl."

Sinclair praises, and my wolf preens happily.

"Now I'm going to tell you some things you're not going to like, but you're just going to have to deal with it." He warns, pulling back on his overwhelming power at last, and I'm surprised to find I miss it.

"You haven't let me down, Ella. And I'm not angry."

We're in an unimaginable situation here, and despite what you may think, you have supported me and comforted and inspired me in a hundred different ways since we arrived, and that is not up for debate." I nod, understanding that he needs me to accept this without complaint.

Sinclair sends a rush of genuine emotion through the bond, reassuring me that he's not only saying these things to placate me, but that he actually feels them.

"Now, if you don't mind, today was the longest fucking day of my life, and I haven't even gotten to kiss you yet."

Feeling a bit more centered and brave now, I peek up at him from beneath my lashes.

"And if I do mind?"

Sinclair chuckles, flashing his fangs, as he leans in anyway.

The moment before his mouth crashes into mine and heat explodes through every inch of my body, I hear his sensual purr.

"Too damn bad."