

Accidental Surrogate for Alpha

Chapter 209

#Chapter 209 - Isabel Comforts Ella

Ella

Four days. Four days since Sinclair's car was bombed in West Vanara, and four days since I last heard his voice.

I refuse to believe he's gone. I know the others have given up hope, but they don't know my mate like I do, and they don't have our bond. I don't know where he is or why we haven't heard from him, but I know he's out there somewhere. If the doctor would just let me out of this bed I'd go find him myself.

Unfortunately he's keeping me under lock and key, and a roster of babysitters have been assigned to watch me. Honestly it's insulting, but I suppose my first few escape attempts might have given him cause to worry. The first time I slipped out past my guards I made it all the way down to the second floor before Philippe caught up with me and hauled me back. The second time, I only made it down the hall, and the third was dead in the water before I could even finish making a rope out of my bed sheets. That was about the time the bossy wolves who seem to think they can tell me what to do now that Sinclair is... out of reach... decided I needed constant supervision.

I know everyone is trying to be patient with me, novelxo but they're dealing with their own grief too, and the doctor frightened them about my condition. If they would just listen, I would tell them that the best possible solution for my stress would be to find Sinclair and bring him home. Nothing will help more than having him with me... but they won't listen, so I'm stuck here - lying around in my nest and banned from working.

"This is stupid." I complain, glaring at Isabel. "Shouldn't you be in the nursery?"

"The King thought my experience dealing with whiny babies made me ideally suited to look after you." Isabel responds coolly. "And James is with the pups."

I glance at her curiously. "How's that going? You and James?"

Isabel shoots me a withering look. "Why don't you worry about yourself, Princess." Though many people now address me seriously with this title, from Isabel it's pure derision. "You haven't slept, you haven't eaten or washed your filthy hair. If you truly believe your mate is out there, then you might want to pull yourself together so he doesn't have to come home to a hot mess."

She has a point, but only just. I didn't sleep last night, but I was so rested from my long sedation that staying awake wasn't even a challenge. And how can a she-wolf have an appetite or think about hygiene when her mate is in mortal danger? novel.xo "You don't think I'm crazy?" I ask hesitantly.

"Would it matter if I did?" Isabel arches a brow. "You don't care that the others think you've lost your marbles."

"No..." I confirm, staring at my lap. "But you've lost a mate, you know how it feels."

"That's different." Isabel snaps, "I was there when my mate died. I saw it and I felt it, there was no doubt he was gone and no room for hope." She glances at me with an unreadable look in her eye. "If I were in your shoes..."

I expect I'd do exactly the same as you are."

"Can I ask..." her face shutters as soon as the words leave my lips, novéxo but I've already begun. "How did it happen?"

At first I'm sure she won't answer the question, but Isabel shifts in her seat and purses her lips. "It was more than a year ago, before any of this started." She explains, surprising me. Still, the emotion in her voice from sharing these basic details makes me regret asking this of her. "Our baby, Sophie, was only a month old, and we were both exhausted and overjoyed. Daniel was absolutely besotted with her, and in a lot of ways, he was better with her than I was. I had a really difficult birth and my body was wrecked. Nothing seemed to go right, not breastfeeding or my recovery - it was overwhelming and I was so worried about doing everything right that I forgot to enjoy it. I was in love with her too... I just didn't cope as well."

"Then one day we were out at the park, just having a family picnic. We heard someone scream, and then we saw rogues racing towards us. Daniel pushed the baby into my arms and told me to run... I didn't realize in the moment that he meant to stay and fight, to hold them off so we could get away. I thought he was going to be right behind us, but all my instincts were to protect Sophie, so I ran. Then I felt it. I felt our bond shatter and fall away, as if my own soul was slipping from my body." Isabel shares, tears streaming down her cheeks. "And when I turned back... I saw him lying on the ground with his throat ripped out, a rogue still standing above him, nvêlx.o goring him with his claws."

I'm reaching for her, and to my surprise, she comes into my arms. "At first, I didn't want to live without him. I fell into a terrible depression, and nothing anyone tried could bring me out of it. It wasn't until a couple of months later, when Sophie woke me up in the middle of the night." Isabel sighs, "I hadn't been... I'd wanted her so badly before she arrived, and then with all the difficulties and losing Daniel - I wasn't the mother I should have been, let's just say that. But that night I went to feed her, and her eyes had changed color. They were blue when she was born, but there she was looking up at me, with Daniel's amber eyes."

Isabel sniffs. "It was a wakeup call. A realization that I would always have a piece of Daniel as long as I had Sophie. And Goddess how I hated myself for neglecting her, for letting my grief make me forget what a miracle she was. Everything turned around that night. I finally became the mother I was meant to be, the one who would have made Daniel proud - the one Sophie deserved." She swipes at a tear. "She was my entire world... and then Damon took over, and we were forced to run."

I wait for her to continue, but I fear this loss was too recent. I already know what happened anyway... Isabel made it, and her daughter did not. "I'm so sorry, Isabel." I profess, cuddling her close, tears in my own eyes. "No one should have to go through what you have. I wish there was some way I could make it right."

"You've done plenty." Isabel hiccups. "You gave me the nursery. You brought all of us here."

For a long moment we just lie there in each others arms, and then the baby kicks in my womb, thumping his foot against Isabel's side. To my surprise Isabel smiles and reaches out to rest her hand on my navel. "Hello munchkin."

"Can I ask you something?" I inquired uncertainly.

She nods, and I confess, "The other day, after the phone call with Dominic, I was worried about upsetting the baby. So I tried to cut myself off from him."

"We've all made that mistake." Isabel replies knowingly. "It's a lesson every parent has to learn: that having you is better for them, even if you're upset." She grimaces, "and it tells you just how traumatizing losing a parent truly is for a pup... How much they need you, rely on you to guide and shelter them."

"Is it possible to bond with an adopted child that way?" I ask, thinking of all the children in the nursery.

"Of course, just like chosen mates bond." Isabel confirms. "You fall in love, and you claim them. It's a different kind of mark, but it's every bit as powerful."

"Will you claim Sadie?" I inquire, my heart aching to think the infant has been feeling the way my own babe did the other day.

"When I'm ready." Isabel reveals, looking torn. "I know it would be better for her to have it sooner, I just can't help feeling that it's a betrayal of Sophie." "That's nonsense." I tell her, knowing James already shared this sentiment with her. "You know as well as I do that loving one child doesn't mean you love another any less, or that you forget them."

"It's not just that... it's that I think if the tables were turned and Sophie had lived instead of me... I would have felt jealous if she bonded to a new mother so quickly. I was her mother - me, not some random she-wolf who accidentally stumbled upon her." Isabel relates guiltily.

"Isabel." I murmur seriously. "Think about how it felt when you tried to cut yourself off from her, how afraid and unmoored she was. Would you really rather she be in that pain, than connect with someone who will love her like only you could?"

She clamps her eyes shut, choking on her tears. "No." She cries, gasping. " No, I would be sad if she forgot me, but I'd much rather she always feel safe and happy."

"Exactly." I say, "Don't make Sadie wait. You already love her and there's no use denying it."

Before Isabel can respond, I feel a tug deep in my chest, a pang of intense love that feels very far away. I jerk upright in my nest. I know that feeling!

A moment after I've thought it, I hear a familiar, beloved voice in my mind. Ella?!

I'm out of bed in an instant, dislodging a suddenly disgruntled Isabel. "It's Dominic!"