

# Accidental Surrogate

Chapter 284 : A Long 2 1/2 Months



Ella

One and a half months later, and I'm gigantic.

Gigantic.

"Five months wolf pregnant," I mutter, stirring my yogurt with a little silver spoon, "is about thirteen months human pregnant." Leaning back against my pillows, I raise the spoon to my mouth, but hesitate before taking a bite.

"What?" Sinclair asks, glancing at me from his spot on the bed, where he's reading some reports on his tablet. "Has it gone sour?"

"No," I murmur, stabbing the spoon back into the cup. "I'm just afraid if I eat another bite, this baby is going to get even bigger."

"Good!" Sinclair declares, grinning at my swollen belly and reaching out a fond hand to rub my baby bump. "Let him get big and strong before he's born, that way he can come out running and we can play football within a week

"Absolutely not," I snap, giving him a little glare and hoping to hell that he's kidding. "I am not growing you a linebacker, Dominic, so get that right out of your head."

Sinclair chuckles and puts his tablet aside, moving lower on the bed to press his ear to my stomach just above where the baby has settled. "What's that, little Rafe?" he asks, loud enough for me to hear. I twist my lips and shake my head a little, knowing this is all for my benefit anyway. If he wanted to talk to Rafe, he could just do it through his bond. "You're perfectly comfortable in there and want to go to full term so you can get big and strong?" –

I feel the baby move, then, responding to his father's voice, pressing some extremity – a hand or a foot – across my skin, right where Sinclair's face is. Sinclair kisses the spot where the baby presses and I feel a little thrill of Rafe's happiness running through me.

"Tell him it's not true, Rafe," I say aloud, stroking the sides of my stomach, which looks honestly like I've swallowed a giant watermelon. "Tell him you're cramped in there, and would like to stretch out in your comfy little baby bed."

Rafe connects with both of us then, his emotions ringing with happiness, but, indeed, with a little ... pinched feeling, with the desire to stretch. "See?" I say, raising my eyebrow at Sinclair as he looks up at me with a big smile. "He's sick of it too. Time for baby to be born!"

"Well," Sinclair sighs, sitting up and giving my belly one last pat. "We'll see what Cora and Hank say this afternoon at your checkup. Sometimes wolf babies come sooner than six months."

"Really?" I ask, excited.

"Sure," he shrugs. "It's not common, but..."

"Well," I consider aloud, "maybe since he's one quarter moon goddess...he'll come fast, and leave me in peace. I wonder what their average gestation period is..."

Sinclair just laughs, coming to my side and putting out his hands to help me to my feet. I accept readily and head to the closet, eager to get out of my pajamas and head to this appointment.

I smile secretly at my mate as he heads back to flop onto the bed, continuing his work while I get ready. He's been so sweet and supportive, even though I've been a bit miserable for the past two weeks, but especially this last one. There's been some trouble, I know, with human insurgents who are unhappy with how well the peace talks are going. They think that humans are getting the short end of the stick and are threatening violence unless Sinclair and his teams make more concessions. I know it's stressing him, but he still makes a great deal of time for me in his day. I'm so grateful for him, for my sweet attentive mate.

As I pull on a clean top and stretchy pants, I consider whether I complain too much about this final stretch of my pregnancy. It's not that it's not that I'm not enjoying being pregnant – I have loved every minute of feeling my little boy grow stronger inside of me, every little twist and kick, and especially feeling the little messages he sends down our bond to me. He's gotten so communicative lately, really responding to us like a little baby might telling us how he feels and what he wants.

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It's all been so wonderful. It's just...I am so uncomfortable now. I've always been a petite woman, and even though Rafe was little at the start, it's very clear that he's Sinclair's baby now. He is heavy, and he presses on my back, and my ankles are swollen, and I can't find a comfortable spot when I sleep – even in my nest...

So, I admit that I'm a bit torn. As much as I love being pregnant, and I'm so happy and grateful for it, it in many ways feels like the end of a wonderful vacation where you start to think about how nice it will be to go back home. I sigh and lean down to pick out a pair of sneakers but stop, suddenly, when I realize that I can't bend down far enough over my belly to grab them. So I straighten, glare at the shoes, and then kick them out of the closet so that they spill onto the floor of our bedroom.

When I peek out the door, Sinclair is looking towards the closet, his eyebrows raised.

"Can you get those?" I ask with a big smile. "I need you to put them on my feet. Baby says no more bending."

My mate gives a warm chuckle and obliges me, coming to scoop up the shoes as I go to sit on the bed. "Sure thing, Cinderella," he smirks, kneeling down on one knee and lifting one of my feet up like the prince he is. "Let's see if the slipper fits."

When we get to the doctor's office, the receptionist gives us a big smile and takes us right back to a private exam room. I look around the crowded waiting room, opening my mouth to protest that we shouldn't be seen before all of these women who have been so patient, but Sinclair presses a hand to my back, ushering me forward. "I paid for this place, after all," he murmurs, giving me a smile. "You can accept just a little special treatment, just this once."

I hesitate but then let him herd me along, looking back over my shoulder and feeling guilty. It's true, though Sinclair brokered a deal with both Cora and Hank to have them on call for me at all times throughout the pregnancy. And, after Rafe is born, they'll be our personal physicians for our whole family. In exchange, though, they both requested that he set them up in private practice so that they can see refugee clients for free when we didn't need them. Judging by the swell of people in the lobby, they seem to be taking the latter half of the deal quite seriously.

My train of thought is interrupted by the sound of my sister calling a greeting to me, rushing down the hall to wrap me in a hug. "Ella!" she says, pulling back and looking me up and down. 'Wow, you're huge!"

"Thanks," I grimace, rolling my eyes and rubbing a hand over my stomach. "Just what every woman wants to hear when she walks into a room.

Cora gives Sinclair a nod of greeting and takes me by the arm. "It's different when you're pregnant and visiting your doctor who is your sister," she says, giving me a grin and taking me into the exam room/"We get cart blanche to say whatever we want."

"If you say so," I mumble, hoisting myself up onto the exam table with a helping hand from Sinclair.

Cora begins the standard exam, asking me for details of how I'm feeling, if there have been any issues. I report that everything has been fine, just general pregnancy discomfort which I think is normal for the later months of a pregnancy. She nods and listens to the baby in my belly, taking my vitals and generally assessing the baby's growth. Hank comes into the room as she works, nodding warmly to Sinclair and to me. When Cora is done, he performs his own basic exam of my general health as Cora gets the ultrasound machine working, ready to take a look at the baby.

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All is going well until Cora puts the jelly on my belly and starts to move the wand around, looking at Rafe on the screen and taking some measurements. I'm smiling at the image of my baby, so well -formed and big and real on the screen when he was just a little blip a few months ago! But I snap my eyes to my sister when I hear her gasp.

"Ella," she says, turning to me and biting her lip.

"What," I whisper, my eyes going wide. "What's wrong with my baby?"