

## Accidental Surrogate for Alpha by Caroline Above Chapter 299

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### #Chapter 299 – Godparent Duties

“Welcome,” a priestess **says**, coming out of the temple and giving us a big smile. I return her smile eagerly, walking up the stairs carrying the car seat and introducing our party. She knows who we are, of course – nobody could mistake Sinclair for anyone else anymore, not with his face all over the media every day and his coronation imminent.

But as she nods a hello to all of us and walks us into the temple itself, I do wonder if she knows ...that she’s running a temple dedicated to my mom. I mean, it’s not precisely public

knowledge, but I do wonder how much she suspects.

Cora walks next to me, looking around the beautiful open space of the temple, her eyes inevitably drawn to the gorgeous, giant gold mosaic of the Goddess built into the wall behind her altar. After she looks at the image for a moment, she turns to me and smirks a little.

I can’t help the giggle that escapes my lips and I cover my mouth in a hurry.

The image looks nothing like our mom. But, I guess it doesn’t matter, and it certainly won’t do any good to tell them they’ve got it all wrong.

The priestess looks at us curiously, but I shake my head in apology, silently asking her forgiveness. She just gives us a warm smile and leads us to a set of chairs set next to a calm reflecting pool in one corner of the room.

“So,” she says, smiling at the four of us as we seat ourselves and peering down at the baby. We’re here to plan little Rafe’s dedication to the goddess, yes?”

I quirk my head to the side, curious. “I thought it was a moon baptism?”

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She laughs a little and gives me a smile. “Yes, a more colloquial term, I think, but not in accurate. Though, of course, he will not be sprinkled with any holy water as in a Christian baptism. Many of the other traditions, though, are similar.”

The priestess looks to Roger and Cora now. “You two, I assume, are being presented as godparents?”

Roger nods solemnly but Cora looks anxious. I reach out and take her hand.

The priestess seems to notice Cora’s unease and gives her a smile. “That’s all right – it’s not a hard job, even though you two will have more to do than the parents. On the evening of the full moon, the two of you will take the child into the woods by yourselves – ”

“The woods? By ourselves?” Cora asks, a little aghast.

“Yes,” the priestess says, blinking at her in surprise. “Did no one tell you?”

“No,” she huffs, looking at me and Sinclair with wide eyes. “I thought we had to go to a church, hold him over a...baptismal font. Or whatever.”

The priestess shakes her head slowly, hesitant now at Cora’s apparent protest. “**No**, we plan the event here at the temple, but the actual ceremony occurs **in** the open air. Under the light of the first full moon after the child’s birth.”

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“What’s the problem, Cora?” I ask, confused but working to be gentle. “You’re an OBGYN – babies are your thing you’ll be totally fine

“No, it’s fine,” Cora says, looking down at her hands, clearly flustered. “I just...didn’t know.”

The priestess looks to me, still hesitant, but I smile at her encouragingly and nod. Then, she explains the details of the rest of the process to us, answering our questions and making sure that we all know our roles. It’s a new experience for me, of course – I myself was

not dedicated to the goddess under the light of the full moon. But Sinclair and Roger were, and it’s an important ceremony to usher my baby into his culture. I have to admit, I’m excited for it.

As I look at Cora, though, I’m shocked to see that she’s clearly uncomfortable. I frown, confused and a little frustrated. This was in no way out of her comfort zone, as far as I knew – all she had to do was carry a baby into the woods a little distance.

What the hell was going on?

When the priestess finishes explaining the details, she goes over some paperwork with Sinclair and I take the opportunity to talk to Cora alone.

“Cora,” I say casually, unbuckling Rafe from his carrier and lifting him into my arms. “Will you come help me? I want to feed him before the ride home.”

“Sure,” she says, unquestioning. Together, we head to the other side of the temple, to a quiet little alcove with a stone bench.

“What is going on with you?” I ask, spinning on her with a little frown when we’re finally alone.

“Wha-

” she says, blinking at me, her mouth falling open. “I thought we were coming to feed the baby –

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“Oh he’s not hungry,” I say, waving a hand to dismiss her concern. “I just said that to get you over here. But seriously – what’s wrong?”

“Nothing,” she murmurs, uncomfortable, wrapping her arms around herself awkwardly.

“Seriously?” I huff, swatting at her, getting frustrated. “Cora – I can read you like a book. I know you’re upset. Just tell me!”

“Ella,” she sighs, looking me in the eye. “I don’t think you’re realizing how weird this can all be for me. I mean, the world has changed now. It was different, when werewolves were a secret and I was one human who knew. Now everyone knows, and there’s a huge rift between our two worlds! And I know that you’re a wolf now, and I think that’s great **but**...”

She shrugs and looks awkwardly around the temple. “But I’m a human,” she continues, hesitant. “And it’s...weird. You should hear the way that humans talk about **the** wolves, and the way they look at me when

I say that I...I work with wolves, and I am an OBGYN for wolf kind as well as humans.” She shrugs and my heart sinks to hear the pain in her voice. “They look at me like I’m a traitor, Ella. Some of the human women refuse to be seen by me because I work with wolves too.”

“Oh, Cora,” I murmur, taking a step closer to her and wrapping her in a one-armed hug, the baby between us. “You know that we don’t feel that way, right? You are our family –”

“I know, Ella,” she says, nodding, but still looking at the floor. “But even in this family – I know that you feel that I’m not different but,” she hesitates and then glances over at Sinclair and Roger. “I’m not sure that’s true of everyone.”

I sigh, following her gaze across the room and focusing on Roger. He, I know, is the source of it all.

What on earth happened between them?

“Has he said something to you, Cora?” I ask quietly, dying to know, but also really, really wanting to help her, to fix this rift between them. Even if they’re never...what they were. It’s important to me that they both feel comfortable around each other, for the baby’s sake.

Cora bites her lip and I can tell that she doesn’t really want to share. “Not really, Ella,” she says, thinking through it herself. “It’s less about what he said and more about how he acted. Just...when we came home, and there were more humans around, it just became abundantly clear that...we’re from different worlds. And it’s not just me who noticed it. He feels weird

about it too.”