

Accidental Surrogate for Alpha

Chapter 322



#Chapter322 – The Storm

Cora

The weather, bizarrely, gets worse as we drive. I'm usually not skittish about driving in bad weather, by as the miles pass I feel myself getting more and more anxious. The water pounds against the windshield and thunder booms around us, lightening flashing through the forests through which we drive.

"What the hell is this," Roger growls, leaning forward to look up into the sky. "I can't believe it's lasted this long and it's raining harder, not letting up..

"Can you even see?" I ask, my hands gripping the leather of my seat anxiously now as I

stare out the windshield in front of us. To me it looks like a vast sheet of grey water with

the occasional flare of the guard car's brake lights ahead of us.

wwwwww

"I can see," Roger murmurs in reply, a little annoyed, apparently, that I'd even call his skills

into question. I roll my eyes at this, but trust him there must be something about his

wolf senses that can see into the road ahead of us that my eyes cannot make out. Still,

despite my trust, I'm anxious. We could run into another car, or a fallen tree, or a lost animal at any moment – how could we even see it coming?

My phone lights up in the cupholder next to me and I release my grip on my seat to grab it,

looking at the new text from Ella. "Roger," I say, anxious, glancing at him. "Ella says it's not

even raining at home what –

I

—

But suddenly the car lurches, skidding sideways a little I see the diver's wheel shift in

Roger's hands, moving without his control – hear him curse under his breath as the car

hydroplanes and drifts at high speed to our left. I give a little shriek, pressing my eyes.

closed, my whole body tense – anticipating at any moment that we'll slam into a tree, or

fly off a cliff –

But we just slow, and then come to a stop, and I peek my eyes open.

"It's all right, Cora," Roger murmurs, frustrated but in control of the car again. "We skidded

but we're okay. We just hit some high water

"Where's the other car?" I gasp, still freaked out, looking steadily out the window.

"They got through it," he tells me, putting the car in park and picking up his phone, glancing at the road ahead of us. "I don't know how, though, it looks completely flooded..."

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the road ahead of us. Roger's on his phone now, speaking to the guards in the car, who

have stopped on the other side of the flooded road, separated from us. They speak for a few moments, trying to figure out a plan, but they don't come up with much.

"It's no good, Cora," Roger says, hanging up the phone and turning to me. "They can't come

back across the road. We're going to have to backtrack and find a new route."

"Seriously?" I ask, my eyes wide with anxiety. "We can't like... ford the river, or whatever?"

Roger raises an eyebrow and gestures towards the water in front of us, which looks like it's

rising by the minute. As I watch, what looks like an entire tree floats by what is quickly,

becoming a river across the road.

"How did that happen so fast?" I ask, a little breathless. "Between one car length and

another?"

"I don't know," Roger replies, his voice tight as he turns in his seat and puts the car in

reverse, backing away from the rising water line. I watch him, waiting for him to continue,

but he doesn't, his brows knit together.

And then, suddenly, I realize that he already knows what I'm just now figuring out.

That this storm...is not natural.

"Roger," I whisper, my words shaking. "What's happening?"

"We're going to get through it, Cora," he promises, his eyes on the road as he turns the car

around and heads in the other direction. "Do you trust me?"

And I do. I know it, deep down in my gut, that I trust him to get us out of this. But instead of telling him that, I just nod, sitting back tensely in my seat as we retrace the ground we've

already crossed. Even as we drive back down the road, though, the storm does not let up.

Lightening crashes around us and the tree limbs whip wildly above, threatening to come

down on us at any moment.

When it starts to hail, big golf-ball sized pieces of ice, I open my mouth to say we need to

do get out of this

But Roger beats me to it. "It's no good, Cora," he murmurs, glancing at me. "We have to stop."

"Okay," I breathe, somehow at once more anxious and simultaneously relieved. I want to stop I know that for sure, I don't want to ride on this road any longer in this storm – but what's waiting for us when we stop? Something is fighting to keep us here. What happens

"I think I remember..." Roger begins, peering out the window, but his words fade off as he looks. I wait, holding my breath, not wanting to interrupt his concentration, looking out the windshield along with him, unable to tear my eyes away. But as I watch – a red neon glow comes barely into sight in the distance. "Yes," he murmurs. "A motel. Thank god."

I breathe a big sigh of relief as Roger pulls into the parking lot, the wind hitting us so hard now from the side the car rocks as he slides the gears into park. The rain is coming at us sideways now, punishing and incessant. As I stare at it, baffled by the sudden hurricane conditions, Roger surprises me by taking my hand.

"We can stay in the car," he offers, "if that feels safer. But...I think we should get inside, Cora. What do you think? Make a run for the lobby?" He gestures towards it, just a few feet away, but somehow in this insane weather it feels as if getting there means running a

gauntlet.

"Roger," I say, anxious, looking into his eyes. "What's going on? What is this?"

"I don't know," he says, concerned, shaking his head at me. "I honestly don't, Cora. But we

can't drive in it not now. So our only choice, I think, is to weather the storm. And we can

do that here, in the cold car. Or...there," he says, nodding to the motel.

"In a flea-infested bedroom with rusty tap water," I murmur, grimacing a little and looking at the motel's run-down façade.

"Yup," he says, putting a hand out to me. "What do you think? Want to make a run for it

with me?"

Suddenly a huge gust comes, shifting the car so that it feels almost as if it lifts up on two

wheels instead of staying steadily on four, as a car should.

"Yup!" I say, giving him a big anxious grin. "Let's go!" and I slap my palm against his, tightening my fingers to grip his hand.

Roger gives me a little wink and then grabs his car door's handle. "On the count of three..."

"Wait!" I gasp, sliding my phone into my back pocket and then grabbing for the copies of the pages from the book and shoving them hastily under my shirt, where I hope they'll

keep relatively dry.

Roger pauses for a moment, still holding my hand tightly, and then smirks, murmuring "lucky paper." Then he meets my eyes and begins to count. "One?" he asks.

"Two," I say, meeting his eyes and smiling a little bit, despite myself.

"Three!" he shouts, and we both throw open our doors, leaping out into the elements. I am

almost instantly soaked as I sprint for the doors of the motel, Roger at my side for every

step.