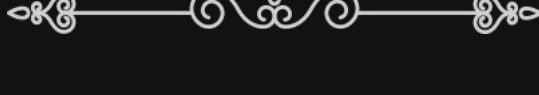


Accidental Surrogate for Alpha

Chapter 328



#Chapter 328 – Back to the Real World

Ella

I'm sitting anxiously by Rafe's basinet, watching him sleep, while my mind wanders impatiently elsewhere. It's been twenty-four hours since we heard from Cora and Roger and I feel, just a tiny little bit, that every passing minute is a knife in my heart.

Where is my sister? I wonder to myself, sighing as I look down at my baby and honestly barely seeing him. 1

It's okay, my wolf says to me, rubbing her body warmly against my poor aching heart, nuzzling

me with her snout. Roger will take care of her – I know it. He can't not.

But what if he couldn't, I think anxiously, my mind turning inevitably to that freak storm that they hit – the storm which separated them from their guards, which seemed....just, too precise.

Too convenient. Too perfect to be coincidence. What if the cult trapped them? And hurt them both?

I wail, inwardly, my wolf giving in a little and sitting back on her haunches to raise her nose to the

sky and howl a little along with me. She still believes, but she's overwhelmed, a little, by my

despair, even though inwardly she keeps the faith.

"Ella!" I hear Sinclair shout from downstairs. I jump a little, turning towards the door, but I freeze, not allowing myself to hope. If it was bad news – he wouldn't be shouting from downstairs –

But something very urgent could be happening so he can't come up –

"Ella!" he calls again. "Come down! There's a car in the drive!"

I gasp, leaning down to quickly scoop Rafe up into my arms. He gives a little half-hearted cry of

protest and I know that I should leave him here to sleep more – but damn it, with the cult out

there looking for him, there's no way I'm leaving him out of one of his parents' sight for an instant.

Not until I know he's safe.

I dash out of the room and pound down the stairs, looking anxiously into my mate's face as he

stands at the bottom, a hand raised to take mine. I slip my hand into his as I reach him, my eyes

not leaving his. "Is it "I gasp.

–

He doesn't say anything and I realize that he doesn't know he came to get me before he could

tell so, together, we both stride to the front door, which Sinclair throws open.

–

And I give a little moan of relief, sinking against Sinclair as my knees weaken, just a little, as I

door. And behind her – I can see Roger, turning towards her and saying a few words before they both open their doors and climb out.

"Cora!" I cry, tears filling my eyes as I dash towards her.

"Ella!" she laughs, giving me a big smile as I throw myself at her, tossing my arm around her neck. Cora takes too steadying steps backwards at the force of me, but wraps her arms around me nonetheless. "Easy, sis!" she says, still laughing a little.

"Don't crush the baby."

—

"Screw the baby," I mutter, angrily

the side as I hugged my sister, but well, in this moment, all I care about is that I have my sister back, safe. "Where were you?" I demand, stepping back and wiping at my eyes, shifting Rafe again so that he's safely against my chest. "Why didn't you call?"

– not meaning it at all, of course – I made sure to hold Rafe to

"Our phones died," Cora says, shrugging at me. "We were in the storm for a long time –"

"And you didn't have a charger?" I ask, exasperated.

"We didn't plan to stay so long

"No charging cord in the car?"

"No, there wasn't one –"

"Couldn't have stopped," I cry, "at a gas station to buy one?!"

"Ella," Cora says, stepping forward and looking into my eyes with her own wide with shock. "I'm

sorry I didn't know you were so worried. We were fine. – we are fine! We didn't want to stop

anywhere on the way home, we just wanted to get here quickly. I'm sorry I didn't think of it."

–

"Well, you should have," I say, sniffing a little and wiping my angry tears of relief away from my

eyes. "I can't lose you, Cora. I was worried I did."

"You didn't," she says, putting a warm arm around me. "I'm sorry, Ella," she says, as Roger and

Sinclair come slowly over to us. "You're right we should have called, or texted, or sent a smoke

–

signal. It's our fault. We were..." she hesitates here, but Roger finishes for her.

"Distracted," he says, smirking smugly at me and sinking his hands into his pockets.

"What?" I ask, confused, looking between the two of them. "Distracted by what?"

Cora blushes –

Blushes?!

My mouth drops open.

And then Cora, a little chagrined but smiling a little at Roger, explains. "The storm was bad – we stopped...at a little motel. Just to weather it out." She doesn't say anything else but the big smile that creeps across her face then says everything I need to know.

"Oh, ew!" I shout, shoving her a little. "I'm sitting here, for hours, worried to death, and you're out there having motel sex!?"

"You should try it sometime, Ella," Roger quips, and when I turn to him I see that he's smirking at me again. "There's nothing 'ew' about it."

"Oh my god," I say, suddenly realizing the implications of this. "Oh my god," I repeat, taking a step forward to shove Roger for his comment for good measure and then turning to Cora. "Does this mean – are you two –" I'm unable to finish my sentence, my mouth hanging open in hope and

awe.

"We're together," Roger says smoothly, ignoring my little shove and closing the distance between

him and Cora to take her hand.

I stare at them, frozen in shock, for so long that Cora's smile falters on her face and she looks at

me with new worry in my eyes. "Ella," she starts, "are you –"

"Yes!" I shriek, tossing my head back and shouting the word to the sky. "YES! FINALLY!" I pump a fist into the air and then start to dance in a little happy circle, laughing with my glee. "Codger

exists! Codger forever!"

"Roger," Sinclair sighs, and I see him glare at his brother on one of my happy loops. "You know

you need to tell her these things slowly – she's going to shake the baby

"I'm not shaking the baby," I scold, giving my mate a happy little glare and continuing to dance,

Rafe safe in my arms, awake now and giving me a happy little smile. "See?" I say, "he likes it!"

Then I turn my little dance into a song, dancing a loop around them all, "Baby Rafe is haaaaappppy!

He is also team Codgerrrr! He knewwww it was gonna haaaaapppppen!"

Sinclair laughs at me, putting his hands in his pockets, shaking his head but grinning at me. I

give him a wink and wiggle my hips and he sends me a little pulse of happy lust down our bond

that lets me know he likes it. A lot.

"Not dating," Roger said, putting an arm around Cora's shoulders. "Mated."

"What," I gasp, laughing a little as I spin towards my sister and, apparently, now, her mate. "How did that happen? Let me see!" I reach out my hand to pull back the collar of her shirt – which looks wrecked, by the way, like it's been through the storm and back.

"Ella," Cora says, pursing her lips at me and swatting my hand away. "There's no mark yet. We don't know if..." she hesitates, looking at him.

"We don't know what will happen," he says, "if I try to mark her."

"Oh," I say, my eyebrows going up. Because, obviously, I don't know myself. "Well," I say, turning to look at Sinclair. "Is the intent enough?"

"Yes," he says, smiling at his brother and holding out a hand, which Roger grasps warmly. "Yes, it certainly is. Congratulations, brother," Roger says something serious back to him, but I don't hear it because I'm shrieking with happiness again and hugging my sister close. She laughs and hugs

me as well.

"Oh geeze," I say, laughing as I pull away from her. "It has been...a lot of emotions for me in the

past ten minutes," I say, putting a hand to my head. "I thought you were dead, and it turns out instead that you're mated!" I smile softly at her now, taking her hand. "I'm so happy for you, Cora," I say sincerely, squeezing her fingers in mine. "I think...it's right."

"It is," she says, nodding and smiling at me. Then she looks at Roger, distracted by Sinclair, and sighs a happy little sigh. "We have a lot to figure out, but..." she shrugs. "We're going to figure it

out."

"You will," I say, stepping closer to her and wrapping my arm around her waist. "You really will,

Cora. I can feel it."

And inside me, my little wolf gives a little howl of victory and starts to dance around herself.