

ACCIDENTAL SURROGATE FOR ALPHA

Read Novel Accidental Surrogate Chapter 351

Accidental Surrogate Chapter 351-Coral

Roger gives a rough, sarcastic little laugh. “Jealousy? Jealousy? Cora, this has nothing to do with jealousy-

“Then what is it?” I ask, confused.” Honestly, Roger – if it’s not jealousy, then what else is your reason for not wanting Hank here to take over for me, and treat these men when I need to rest?” And Roger goes still, at a loss for words, because...

Ella starts to laugh suddenly, and then slaps a hand over her mouth. Roger growls and glares at her, but she just shakes her head in apology, still unable to help it.

“He’s not jealous,” I say to Ella defensively, choosing allegiance over truth and working hard to keep a smile off my face as I stand close to my man and slip an arm around his waist. Because I’m little pleased, honestly, to see Roger want me all to himself, to be protective enough that he doesn’t want Hank anywhere near me. “He’s just...” and I hesitate, smiling up at Roger, shaking my head because I don’t know what to say.

“What I am is done with the two of you,” Roger growls, peeling his arm from around my waist and glaring at the two of us. “Sisters,” he scoffs, and then points a finger between us. “I’ll stay up treating these men all damn night myself, if that’s what it takes,” he continues. “But no Hank in the bunker. Are we clear?”

“Yes, baby,” I murmur, moving close to him again and laughing a little as I wrap my arms around him again.” Whatever you say.”

“Damn right, whatever I say,” Roger mutters, his feathers still a little ruffled. And then, after a minute, he whispers to me again. “We’ll send them out,” he says, “as soon as Sinclair wakes up. The ones you want to have further treatment? I won’t stop them from getting it, just because I...don’t want him here.”

“Okay,” I whisper, resting my head against my mate’s chest and smiling softly.
“That’s a good plan.”

Ella

We worked for hours more, to the point where I think that Cora was falling asleep on her feet. But I couldn’t leave her didn’t want to let the entire burden of healing all of the men who went on the mission on her shoulders.

We did send three out – Sinclair contacted Hank and arranged for the worst hurt to be transferred to the hospital once Cora got them stable enough to go, but there was still an incredible amount of work to do after that changing bandages, checking vitals, ensuring that everyone was fed and had water. We’re lucky, really, that Sinclair foresaw this as a possibility and had the bunker stocked and ready with a great deal of medical supplies.

Eventually, it was Roger and Sinclair who told us to stop. I was leaning over a sleeping patient, trying to see if he was healing, when suddenly I felt a warm hand on my hip. I didn’t jump – either because I had no more energy for it or because I knew who it was. I don’t know which.

“Enough, Ella,” came Sinclair’s rumbling voice, and I turned to look up into his face, and then peer down at our baby curled against his chest. Rafe was awake, blinking at me with his sweet eyes.

“Hey baby,” I murmured, reaching for my boy, and my mate passed Rafe to me easily before guiding me towards the door of the room. “But – ” I said, looking over my shoulder for Cora – not wanting to leave her – but I saw Roger having a small conversation with her, his hands on her shoulders, convincing her, too, that it’s time for bed.

“It’s all right,” I heard a voice call, and I turned, surprised, to see Henry at the door. “I’ll stay up.”

“But you’ve been up all day,” I murmured as Sinclair and I crossed to him.

“I’m an old man, Ella,” Henry said, smiling up at me and quirking his fingers so that I understood that he wanted like me to bend down so that he can see the baby. As I obliged him, Henry continued. “What time I have

left in this world, I'd like to spend awake anyway. I don't want to miss anything." He brushed Rafe's cheek softly before smiling at me again. "Go to sleep – I'll wake you if anything happens and we need you."

"All right," I said, standing up straight and heaving a huge yawn. We started to pass through the door but Henry called after us. "Sleep well," he said, "but in the morning...we have to talk."

I hesitate, wanting to go back, wanting to ask why, but Sinclair put a firm hand on my shoulder. "Talk tomorrow," he says, exhausted. "Tonight? Sleep."

And I put my head on my poor wounded mate's shoulder and let him lead me away to our room. Now, in the cold light of morning, I wake before Sinclair and take a moment to look him over while he's sleeping. The burns on his body were restricted mostly to the skin that wasn't covered by clothing, and I quickly look over his face, arms, and hands, pleased to see that while there are some tender pink spots, the skin shiny and taut, he looks much better than he did yesterday.

I heave a sigh of relief and swing my feet off the bed to turn to Rafe, who is just beginning to fuss in his makeshift crib.

"Hello, little boy," I murmur, bending over his cradle. I lift Rafe up into my arms, joy blooming in me as I consider him. He really is a good baby – he still wakes up in the night when he needs me, of course, but in the mornings he has this remarkable tendency of waking up just moments after I do. "Are you using your little wolf senses?" I whisper to him, carrying him over to the bed and adjusting my shirt a little so that I can feed him, "are you giving mommy a break?"

He doesn't reply, of course, but as I sit down I feel Sinclair move his hand over a little to rest against my thigh, letting me know that he's awake, but not yet up. I smile at him, pleased and understanding, letting him have his minute of silence, and then I feed my baby, savoring the slow start to the morning.

Because, I know, it is going to be a very busy day. And, considering Henry's warning the night before, one in which we are going to get some news that we really don't like.

The peace of the morning doesn't last long. As I'm still feeding Rafe a knock comes at the door and, groaning, Sinclair gets up to answer it. A few hurried

words there has him closing the door and crossing the room to our small bathroom, seeking a shower.

“Is everything okay?” I ask.

“Fine for now,” he says, “but Hank sent some reports from the hospital regarding how our men made it through the night.”

“Are they okay?” I ask in a whisper, anxious.

“They’re stable,” Sinclair responds as he ducks into the bathroom, but I can tell by the tightness of his voice that it’s not all as good as it could be. And suddenly my heart plummets for him as I realize how difficult it must be, ordering men to go into situations where they put their lives on the line. I sigh and finish up with the baby, grabbing a burp cloth to toss over my shoulder before I lift Rafe to my chest and begin to pat him on the back while I move to the bathroom door to peer in after my mate.

I can’t help the little thrill that runs through me when I see Sinclair in the little glass and metal shower, the water running over his powerful, naked form. I know that it’s inappropriate to be turned on by my mate at this moment but...well, I can’t help it.

He turns, perhaps intuiting something – or maybe smelling my desire on the air- and smirks at me while he quickly runs the bar of soap over his body.

“You like what you see?” he asks.

“A little too much,” I respond, precisely at the same moment that Rafe gives a little burp and spits up on my shoulder. We both laugh at his timing. But then I turn my eyes seriously back to Sinclair. “You’ll tell me?” I ask, my voice soft. “How I can help you?”

And my mate meets my eyes seriously as he says, “I will. Thank you, Ella. For being so selfless. For always wanting to hello.”

I smile a little and give him a wink.” It’s not completely selfless,” I reply with a little shrug as I turn away. “I was promised six more babies, after all. Gotta keep you happy until I get the last one, and then I’ll be done with you.”

“Six!?” he calls after me as I saunter away, making me laugh. “I thought we agreed on four!”

“Now it’s eight!” I shout back, laying Rafe on his little changing table and starting to get him ready for the day, listening to Sinclair’s groan from the other room.

“Daddy doesn’t mean it,” I whisper to the baby as I begin to change his diaper. “If your siblings are all as cute as you, we’ll have twelve.”

Rafe coos and chuckles as we hear Sinclair’s shout from the bathroom.

“I heard that!”

Accidental Surrogate Chapter 352-Ella

I’m the last one to the conference room – baby stuff but when I come through the door I’m very surprised to see that it’s just family gathering today.

“Where is everyone?” I ask, holding Rafe close to my chest so that he peers over my shoulder. He’s a very curious baby – he likes to look around, even though he can’t see much yet. I move over to the table where Cora, Roger, Henry, and Sinclair sit, all clearly waiting for me, all with faces which are ...drawn. Concerned. And turned on me.

“What,” I breathe, freezing before I can sit down. “What’s wrong? What is it?” “Sit, Ella,” Henry says, waving to the open chair between him and Sinclair.

“No,” I say, shaking my head, the word falling out of my mouth before I can even think. “No way this looks... this looks like bad news.’

And some part of me knows that I’m being ridiculous – that it won’t be good news miraculously if I don’t hear it but still. Fear stripes through me – I really, really can’t handle more bad news now, not after the few days we’ve had. And not if it, apparently, all focuses on me.

“Ella, please,” Sinclair says, looking at me with gentle eyes and pulling the empty chair out. “I promise it’s not as bad as you think.”

“Do you all know?” I ask, going rigid.

“Henry told us before you came in,” Cora replies, leaning forward towards me across the table, Roger’s hand on her back. “He just wanted us to be prepared, so that the focus could be on you when we told you.’

“Oh my god,” I whisper, slowly moving to the chair and sitting down.” Is it me?” I ask. “Did I did I do something?”

“Not at all,” Henry says, shaking his head at me. “I’m sorry, Ella – – I may have gone about this in the wrong way. I didn’t mean to frighten you. I just – it was convenient that you were last, so I told them first so that the focus could be on you now, as I believe that this news will affect you most.”

“And where ” I ask, looking around again for the members of the team who went on the mission yesterday. Some of them, I know, would be well enough to attend now, if they were wanted. ” Where are the other researchers?” I ask, knowing that Henry has been working all day and night with his own team.

“This is...” Henry continues, hesitating, “a family matter, Ella. Those who don’t know will be briefed soon. But I wanted to talk about this together, with the main parties involved.” Henry’s eyes drift, now, to Rafe in my arms, and I go tense.

“Okay,” I say, drawing my lips together in a thin line. “Let’s get on with it then. What’s wrong?”

Henry looks towards Rafe now, nodding to him, apparently giving him permission to talk in some kind of pre- arranged pattern. This, contrary to what they wanted, somehow makes me more nervous, that they’ve rehearsed how to tell me this news.

Is this some kind of intervention or something? What did I do? Feeling my tension, the baby starts to fuss, and Sinclair takes him from me tucking Rafe into the crook of one elbow before draping his other arm warmly over my shoulders. I feel at once calmer, and start to wonder – ridiculously if Sinclair isn’t just the baby whisperer, but the Ella whisperer as well.

“Ella,” Roger starts, and I turn my entire focus to him. “Yesterday, when we were fighting the priest, he said something...strange.”

I don’t say anything, just clench my teeth and stare at him, willing him to continue Fast.

“We had him pinned – he only got to whatever...I don’t know, whatever magical powder allowed him to really fire bomb us, by accident, and when he realized that he was going to be able to use it – I think he slipped.”

“Slipped?” I ask, confused. “Like on ice?”

“No,” Roger replies, sighing a little at his inability to be clear. “I mean, slipped on his words. Messed up. Because he said: ‘the master will have his boy.’”

“The master will have his boy,” I repeat, glancing down at Rafe sitting contentedly curled in the crook of Sinclair’s arm. He’s gotten a hand free of his swaddle and is clenching it and opening it, apparently fascinated by the movement of his fingers. “Do you are we assuming that the boy is Rafe?”

“We are,” Henry confirms, drawing my eyes towards him.

“But the master,” I say – and as I talk, I know I should just shut up and listen, but I can’t help myself. “Did he mean – did the priest mean the God of Darkness?”

“That’s where it gets complicated,” Henry says carefully, speaking slowly and calmly and watching my face to make sure I’m following along. I’m grateful for it because even though I’m not stupid, I’m panicked enough now that my mind feels like it’s in three different places at once.

“You see,” Henry continues, “I had my team working all night trying to parse this phrase, trying to figure it out. And we’ve done a great deal of research, so far, on this Monastic Cult of the God of Darkness. And never, in any of our materials both from centuries ago and today – have we ever seen any of the priests or acolytes ever refer to the God himself as ‘master.’ Instead, he is always God, Father, Dark Majesty things like that.”

“Oh,” I say, my eyes going wide. I understand but I mean, I don’t get it. Not yet. Not in the same way that the rest of them do, apparently, judging by the worried looks on their faces as I look around the table. “What what does that mean?”

“It means,” Sinclair says, picking up the thread, and I turn my head to look sharply up at him. “That...there is someone else ordering all of this to happen. That they haven’t done this merely to serve their god, or at his orders but that, instead, there seems – to be someone else, a mortal to whom they are responding.”

“What?” I breathe, and then I groan, closing my eyes and leaning my head back. It was so much simpler when I thought it was just a situation like that between the Goddess and my birth mother Reina, just a person-to-diety

contract that really involved the two of them the God and his priests. But now finding out that there's someone else involved, who a powerful priest is calling master? Someone who is directing all of this fighting, who planned the insemination?

My family gives me a moment to process this and they're all waiting for me when I sigh and open my eyes, looking around at them again. "Well?" I ask. "Do we know who it is?"

"We have...a lead," Henry says quietly, and I turn my attention back to him. I keep my mouth shut now, though, exhausted by this already – just wanting to hear the news. "I've had some of our more clever men working through the dark web, trying to find any trace of the members of the modern cult. And while they were unable to trace precisely who was doing the talking, they were able to discover a sort of...hub. For the communications. A location to and from which a great number of the messages were being transported."

"Oh?" I ask, encouraged. "Where?"

"It went to..." Henry hesitates here, taking a deep breath, as if he doesn't know how to say it.

"Just tell her, dad," Sinclair snaps, his voice irritated, probably because he can feel my tension coming to its breaking point down the bond.

"It is difficult for me," Henry says, irritated himself now and shooting his son a little glare. "As I am not..."

detached from this development." But he shifts his eyes to me, then. "Ella," he continues, "the team did a great deal of reconnaissance on this location and I have to admit that I was shocked when they told me what they discovered. That the man living in the residence... I had long assumed that he was dead. Or at least, so separate from the world of influence and politics that he may as well have been. It is my fault," he sighs, hanging his head, "for overlooking him."

"Who?" I breathe, my whole body locked with tension, my breath coming short. "Who lives there?"

"His name is Xander," Henry tells me, his voice grim. "He was...a Duke, when his brother – your father, Xavier – was King on the throne."

Accidental Surrogate Chapter 353-Ella

“D-duke?” I stutter out, completely overwhelmed by the information, my eyes going wide. “There are dukes? And I had I have an uncle!?”

“I’m sorry,” Henry says, and I can see the guilt written all over his face. “I overlooked this – honestly, no one has heard from him in years – and, considering what we think he was actually getting up to, it makes a great deal of sense that he wanted everyone to believe that.”

“Who,” I say, frantic now, looking between Henry, and Sinclair, and Roger – Cora, I see, looking at me with worried eyes, but I know she doesn’t have any answers – “who is he?”

“Relax, Ella,” Sinclair murmurs to me, leaning close. “It’s all right -”

“It is absolutely not all right -” I snap, not wanting to be mean but completely panicked right now. “My father is dead but I have an uncle? Seriously? And no one told me?”

Henry continues to hang his head, shaking a little, and I instantly feel guilty. It’s not his fault – it’s so complicated, the politics, and why would he tell me about an uncle if he hadn’t spoken to the man in 30 years had genuinely assumed he was dead –

“I’m sorry, Henry,” I say quickly, leaning forward to put a hand on his arm. “I’m so sorry – I’m behaving so poorly – ”

“No, Ella,” Henry says, moving his attention back up to me. “Your reaction is absolutely correct. I have failed you in this.” His eyes shift to Sinclair now. And you, son.”

“We have to stop this,” Sinclair says, shaking his head. “Honestly, the blame game does no one any good. No one blames you, dad and Ella, you don’t have anything to apologize for. We all know this is a lot. So, can we please?” he says, pausing now to look around the table. “Can we continue? There is... more...”

I groan a little and give Henry’s arm a little squeeze to let him know I don’t blame him for any of it, and that I love him dearly and am grateful for him every day. At least, I hope he gets all that from a squeeze, but the little smile

he sends me suggests that he understood at least part of that. And I feel instant relief.

“Xander was your father’s older brother, Ella,” Sinclair informs me briskly, I think a little irritated at the disruption and wanting all of the information on the table now so that we can decide to do something, instead of just talking about it. I smile at him a little, loving my all-action Alpha mate who is ready to go even though he almost got burned to a crisp yesterday.

“He was much older,” Henry says, ” and there were always...rumors about whether or not his father was his biological father. Either way, Xander was recognized, but he was never the favored son. That is why Xavier – stronger, faster, smarter, better-liked – took the throne instead of Xander.”

“A stance which I actually think is quite clever,” Roger quips, and I’m shocked to find a smile on my mouth as he delicately raises his brows, looking up at the ceiling. “I mean, some of us think that the better-looking brother should always take the throne – ”

And while Sinclair growls and Cora elbows Roger not-too-gently in the stomach to get him to stop, I grin at my brother-in-law, grateful for the laugh which has drained some of my tension away. He gives me a little wink in response.

“Anyway,” Sinclair continues, glaring at his brother, “Xander was never a popular figure in politics – he was always fringe, always very much the King’s sullen brother rather than a real player. When Xavier died, Xander...he wasn’t even considered for the throne. No one said his name, not even him, as a potential heir.”

“Which,” Henry adds, “was perhaps... the mistake. That started all of this.”

“Started what?” I ask, confused again.

“Ella,” Henry says, taking my hand. ” Nothing is for sure. But our best guess, at this point, is that...well, that Xander put this in motion. That he knew he was never a contender for the throne when his brother died but he coveted it anyway 1 that Xander wanted it, perhaps his whole life, and certainly after his brother died, but when no one mentioned him as a potential heir he started to devise a new plan to get what he wanted.”

“A longer plan,” I whisper, sitting back against my chair. “To – to reclaim the throne. To keep it...in his family’s line.”

And my eyes drift back to Rafe now, cooing gently in his father’s arms. My baby, the grandson of a King. The nephew of a Duke that, perhaps, always wanted to be in charge.

“It makes sense,” Roger says softly. ” Honestly, it makes so much sense that we were fools not to consider it before now. Who benefits from Rafe being born? The man who intends to kidnap him and put him on the throne as a puppet, acting as regent for eighteen years before Rafe is old enough to rule himself.”

“I don’t think we’re fools to have overlooked Xander,” Sinclair rumbles beside me. “I haven’t heard Xander’s name since I was a child – I, too, thought he died in quiet obscurity. He’s taken great pains, I think, to ensure that everyone assumed that he did. He is playing the long game – we’re not total idiots for falling into the traps he’s taken twenty years to lay. We’re simply outplayed.”

“So,” I interrupt, still wanting more details. “Can you – I mean -” I exhale quickly, closing my eyes and gathering my thoughts, “is the assumption that we’re making here that Xander wanted Rafe to be born so that he would be a legitimate heir to Xavier’s throne? Is that it?”

“Yes,” Sinclair says, confirming what I’ve pieced together. “We know that Reina told Xavier about you on his deathbed he must have found a way, somehow, to communicate your existence to his brother before, or directly after, his death – I don’t know. A note, a letter perhaps.”

“So why didn’t he come for me?” I ask, brisk. “To be the heir?”

Sinclair and Roger hesitate, looking at each other. “Well,” Sinclair says carefully, “your mother did a very good job hiding you at the orphanage, which actually emphasizes the story. She could have had you raised by a well-known human family, but she chose an orphanage to disguise you.”

“But no,” I say, looking at Cora. ” They knew they knew we were there. Yes? The dark priests – if they were the ones who are looking to Xander for some reason as their master – they knew that Cora and I were in the orphanage. They followed us our whole lives! So...”

I draw my brows together, trying to figure it out. If Xander wanted an heir... why didn't he just come to get me?

"Ella," Sinclair says, tightening his arm around my shoulders. "Xavier and Xander they were deeply old-school Alphas. They come from a world where ." he hesitates again, looking down at the floor. My eyes flash as I figure out what he's not saying.

"Seriously?" I breathe. "Seriously, my uncle my blood family – left me in the orphanage because I was a girl? Because he didn't see me as a legitimate heir to the throne?"

Sinclair looks up at me with sad That's our best guess eyes. for Ella," he now, says softly, shaking his head slowly at me. "That he contracted the priests – or perhaps was always aligned with them, and called to them to watch over you. But that he had no real interest in you as a person. Merely in..." he hesitates, his eyes drifting to my stomach.

"Oh," I say, my heart sinking – though I don't know why. I just – just can't imagine someone being so callous to a child, especially their niece... "I was always just...a broodmare to him..." I murmur, looking over at my baby.

"Rafe, a male heir, was always the goal," Sinclair agrees. "We think Xander bided his time, and then – when all of his pieces were in place – he ...arranged it all."

"But why," I ask, suddenly confused. " Why did he pick you as the father?"

Accidental Surrogate Chapter 354-Ella

"Um, excuse me," Roger says, and Sinclair and I – mutually surprised snap our attention to him. " Obviously," he says, pointing a slow hand between the air between him and his brother, "the question of why the Sinclair blood was desired is the only one with the clear answer – "

"Oh my god, Roger," Sinclair murmurs, leaning back in his chair and raising a hand to cover his face, exhausted.

"The quality of these genetics," Roger continues, grinning, "I mean, who wouldn't want these babies -"

“Not me, anymore,” Cora quips, folding her arms over her chest and smirking at Roger with a raised brow. “Baby for sale! Highest bidder!”

“You’re worth millions,” Roger whispers towards Cora’s stomach, leaning his head low to pretend to speak to the baby. “Don’t let them undersell you -”

“Enough,” Sinclair snaps, though he does it half-heartedly. I can’t help but laugh a little, and honestly, when I consider it, I can’t disagree. I look at the proof still curled up in Sinclair’s arms.

“We did make a stone-cold cutie,” I say, leaning over to run a fond finger down my baby’s belly. “If mean Uncle Xandy was going for good looks, he certainly picked the right stud.”

Sinclair pulls his hand away from his face and shakes his head a little at me, as if he can’t believe that I, too, am making jokes at this time. But I smile up at him and shrug one shoulder. If we can’t laugh, what the hell are we doing in this life? And then I send a little pulse of love down the bond, letting Sinclair know that I appreciate him and am taking it seriously.

I just also need...well, a little bit of lightness, sometimes, to balance all of the horrible things that have happened on the way to bringing our wonderful baby into the world. Sinclair nods, understanding, and sends me his own pulse of love right back.

“Our best guess,” Henry says, softly bringing this conversation back on track, “is that Xander...he never meant for Dominic to ever know that you were pregnant, Ella. It was by chance that Dominic was in the clinic that day – that he sensed the child in you. A wonderful mistake for us, considering the result, but very bad luck for him.”

“God,” I breathe, looking over at my mate and my baby. “I can’t imagine...if I had just gone through this thinking I was a human, giving birth to a twelve-pound baby before six months had passed...and then, so soon after that, someone coming to steal him away...”

“I would have found you,” Sinclair promises me, reaching out to brush his knuckles against my cheek. “There’s no way I wouldn’t have. This was meant to be. The Goddess had her hand in it as well.”

“I know,” I say, believing him. “But... if that was Xander’s plan...”

“Yes,” he agrees. “It would have been ...awful.”

“But really,” Cora says, sitting forward. “Beyond the desire for genetically blessed, gorgeous kids,” she says, smirking at her mate, “what is the rationale for choosing a powerful werewolf like Sinclair?” she asks. “I mean, why not any other wolf? Why not,” she hesitates, looking to the man at her side, “well, why not Roger? Same genetic package...”

“I think,” Henry says, interrupting Roger, who opens his mouth to say something smart but closes it when his father sends a little look his way, “that Xander was working towards a dual claim to the throne. That Xander was betting that Dominic would beat Damon and take the throne next, and that if Xander were able to kidnap and raise a child who had not only Xavier’s blood, but Dominic’s as well...”

“It would be very hard to contest,” I finish, fascinated by the depths to which my uncle had – apparently – thought this through. “A child of two thrones, uniting them...”

“Indeed,” Henry agrees, nodding his head a little. He then looks at Sinclair, a little apologetic. “I wouldn’t be surprised, Dominic, if he even had a hand in your inability to have children with Lydia. I don’t know quite how he would have managed that, but clearly you are capable of fathering children...” he shrugs, sighing a little at the mystery of it. “It would have fallen quite neatly into his plans for you to take the throne without any biological heirs of your own.”

“God,” I say, slumping back in my chair, shaking my head in wonder. “He really thought of everything, didn’t he?”

Around the table my family nods in confirmation, but Henry holds out a hesitant hand. “It is important,” he says, moving his gaze to each of us in turn, “that we all realize that this is a theoretical explanation. We only have a very little bit of evidence that Xander is himself involved. And while I admit that the story that we can spin out from these details is compelling...”

“It’s just a story,” I finish for him, nodding, understanding. I look around. “Do you think we’ll be able to get more evidence for it?”

“We’ll try,” Sinclair says with a little shrug. “Especially now that we know where Xander is located, we can refocus our attacks from his priests to him, under the theory that he is, indeed, the master that the priest spoke of.”

My stomach twists a little at this. “I imagine,” I say softly, “that the master would be...well guarded.”

“Yes,” Roger confirms, steadily holding my gaze. “We need to be better prepared. But unfortunately, we also need to move fast.”

“Why?” I ask, suddenly tense. The last thing I want – in all of the world – is for Roger and Sinclair to go darting out of the bunker again, getting themselves killed.

“Not immediately, Ella,” Sinclair says, working hard to put me at ease. We have a few days. But in order to find this information...” he shifts his eyes to his father now, letting him take over.

“In order to find traces of information on the dark web, Ella,” Henry explains, “one must, unfortunately, leave their own traces. We were careful, our tracks were faint but,” he shrugs, “there is every possibility that Xander could himself discover that we know where he is. And that he may be involved. And if he does...” Henry shrugs.

“We lose any advantage,” Sinclair finishes. “He could disappear, and regroup elsewhere.”

I sigh, turning my head and focusing on my child, letting Rafe center me and root me to the world. He, after all, is the most important thing here, in my whole life. “All right,” I say softly, reaching out a hand to softly brush my son’s dark hair. “Please, just tell me how I can help.”

“We can’t do anything,” Cora says, her voice firm, “until we get your men back into shape. And that will take a few days. Ella,” she says, and I turn to her, surprised. “I could use your help. You were a wonderful nurse yesterday. And Hank will be sending our soldiers back at some point – we’ll need to be able to continue their care here.”

“Of course,” I say, agreeing without thinking. If Cora needs me by her side, then that’s where I’ll be. She nods firmly at me and I smile, glad that I can be of assistance.

“Good,” Henry says, nodding and pressing his hands together, forming a triangle with his fingers. “While you’re doing that, we will come up with a plan regarding our next steps.”

I nod, starting to stand up, getting ready to move on when Henry puts out a hand to stop me. Confused, I settle back into my chair, looking towards him.

“Before we break up,” Henry says quietly, “there is one last issue which we must discuss.”

We’re all silent before Cora, unable to help it, breaks the silence. “What is it?” she asks, worried and confused. Henry turns his gaze sternly, but not without apology, to her. “We have to discuss the problem...that is Dr. Hank.”

Read Novel Accidental Surrogate Chapter 355

Accidental Surrogate Chapter 355-Cora blinks rapidly in disbelief and my own mouth falls open. I see Roger go tense in his chair and feel Sinclair do the same beside me.

“Wha- what?” Cora asks, aghast, leaning forward to stare more closely at Henry. “The problem that is HankJ; FJA

Hank? What the hell kind of problem is Hank?”

I grimace a little when I see her get defensive and dart my eyes to Roger, seeing him rankle at it, just a little bit. Roger, I know, is jealous of Hank – not very jealous, not in a bad way. Just...as much as he doesn’t blame Cora for her previous hesitations, or hold them against her...

...well, he’s not going to be thrilled about Cora’s ex’s continued presence in our lives, is he? Especially when he sees Cora defend Hank like that..

“Please, Cora,” Henry says, putting a peaceful hand out towards her. “Just... hear me out.”

“What is wrong with Hank,” she insists, continuing to be angry, which just upsets Roger more. I glance at Sinclair, worried. His face is a mirror of my own.

“Please “Henry says again, leaning forward and staring at Cora only at Cora intensely. “I mean no insult. I just want to...discuss.”

Slowly, not giving in yet, Cora leans back against her chair and crosses her arms over her chest again, not happy about it but willing to listen.

“I am just concerned,” Henry continues, “about this man’s continued connection to this family.”

“Damn straight,” Roger mutters, his face turned down towards the table. Cora shoots Roger a dirty look he pretends he doesn’t see.

“Why?” I ask, confused. “He’s he’s our doctor – he did such a good job caring for Rafe -”

“Yes,” Henry says, turning to me and holding my eyes. “He did a very good job taking care of Rafe. He was at your beck and call. He was very conveniently available when you were hurt after the temple and worked incredibly hard to keep you and Rafe alive beyond the point when other doctors would have given up.”

Henry stops there, staring at me, letting me figure it out. “No,” Cora says, breaking in and shaking her head vehemently. “Henry, you’re wrong-”

“Oh my god,” I whisper, a frightened hand going to my mouth. “Do you seriously think...”

“This is ridiculous!” Cora cries, but Henry speaks as if he didn’t hear her.

“We know that the Cult is incredibly good at infiltrating lives,” Henry says to me and to Sinclair. “We also know that they tend to place their people in high-powered positions – lawyers, bankers, doctors. We also know that Xander, if he is behind this, is very content to play the long game.”

“Christ,” Sinclair mutters, and I turn to see him again covering his face with his hand. “How did we not see this coming-”

“Because it didn’t happen!” Cora cries, standing up now. “Hank is not part of this – he – he’s my colleague! We work together!”

“At a clinic that we built, Cora,” Roger points out, clearly working hard to keep his temper even. “At a clinic that we pay for. This man is...very suddenly very involved in our lives. Dad has a good point

“You’re all ridiculous,” Cora growls, shaking her head around at all of us.” Hank is a good person who has only done wonderful things for this family. I know him. I know that he only has good things in his heart, and wants to help, and to bring wolf and human culture together.” She pauses, furious, glaring

around at all of us. “And now you all owe him an apology for doubting him for a single second.”

I nod, understanding, and feeling sorry because Cora has a point. Henry does too we need to be careful, especially because we know that the Cult has a history of deploying sleeper agents. But Hank himself? He hasn’t given us a single reason to doubt him.

But Henry, Sinclair, and Roger don’t nod along with me. Instead, they just quietly look away from Cora, not saying the words that echo in the back of my mind as well.

That Cora...she might just not want to believe bad things about Hank because she got so close to him. That if he tricked all of us, then he tricked her the most. And that would be a horrible thing to realize.

“You’re all ridiculous,” Cora growls, and when I look up at her I see that she intuits what we’re all thinking. Without another word Cora seals her mouth shut and strides from the room, slamming the door shut behind her. Roger gets to his feet to follow but I hold up a hand.

“Let her go,” I advise, sighing. “Just... let her cool off. It’s...harder for her to hear than for us. All right?”

“Why does she even care,” he growls, and I can almost feel the jealousy radiating from him.

“He’s her ex, Roger,” I say softly, “but ...they didn’t have a bad breakup like I did with Mike. If anything, she’s the bad guy in this situation who cheated on him and got knocked up.” I slowly shake my head at my brother-in-law as I watch his jaw drop when he considers the situation from Hank’s side. “Cora doesn’t hate him,” I say softly. “And you can’t ask her to.”

I see Roger clench his jaw as he processes my words, and then turns away from us with a sigh, raising both hands to twist his fingers frustratedly in his hair.

“I’ll handle it,” Sinclair says softly to me, gently offering Rafe to me so that he can stand and go to his brother. I take the baby and watch my mate slowly walk over to Roger to say a few words, or talk it through, or just be there with him while Roger processes his emotions. And I’m suddenly very glad, again, for my steady mate who cares so deeply for those he loves.

“Are you all right, Ella?” Henry asks softly beside me.

“I am,” I say, turning to him and heaving a big sigh. “I...it was a lot of news, wasn't it?” I ask and Henry raises his eyebrows as he nods, communicating that he thinks that's a bit of an understatement. “But I'll get through it,” I say, sure of it. “We all will, because we have each other.”

“That's the spirit,” Henry says, reaching out to pat my hand. And then he leans forward further to look at little Rafe. “See the trouble you've caused, grandson?” he says to the baby, teasing him. Rafe lets out a little squeal that sounds like a protest, making us both laugh.

“He's no trouble,” I coo, smiling at my baby and wrinkling my nose at him as well. “That's everyone else's job. Rafe is just here to be our perfect little prince,” I sigh.

“Truer words,” Henry says softly, shaking his head a little as he watches his grandchild. “A prince he is. And some day, a king.”

“Goddess willing,” I murmur, shaking my head at the idea. Rafe's future – on days like this, it feels so far away, like there are so many obstacles ahead of him. But I steel myself, knowing that it's my job to work through those for him.

Because my little boy deserves the world, and I will give it to him. And anyone who stands in my way had better watch the hell out.