

ACCIDENTAL SURROGATE FOR ALPHA

Read Novel Accidental Surrogate Chapter 381

Accidental Surrogate Chapter 381— Persistence Sinclair I wake up frowning, knowing immediately that something is...well, not wrong, but certainly off. I reach out an arm, seeking Ella, but my hand passes over cold sheets. My frown deepens as I sit up and realize that she's not here. A glance at Rafes bassinet makes it clear that he's not here either.

Where the hell is my family?

I sigh, swinging my legs out of the bed, wondering how much time has passed.

As I scrub a hand down my face I consider that it can't have been much – there's still no daylight peeking around the blinds. So, a few hours at most. But why the hell hasn't she come to bed?

I stand and head for the door, wondering what the hell trouble is getting up to now. I smirk a little to consider it. Ella...well, it's part of her appeal, isn't it? She's always up to something. I'll certainly never be bored by her side.

The hallway outside my room is empty but I head down it towards where I hear a few murmuring voices. But when I turn into the room, I'm surprised because the first person I see is my father, sitting quietly in his chair by the door, staring into the room.

We don't say anything to each other as I lean against the doorway by his side, because we're both aware that I didn't come here seeking him. I give him a nod and place a hand on his shoulder as my eyes turn to her – Ella, across the room, my infant son sleeping pressed against her chest while she holds her hands out over one of my wounded men, healing him.

"She's going to wear herself out," my father says quietly.

"How long has she been at it?" "Hours," he says, shaking his head. " She's been burning her candle at both ends for days, Dominic. She's...very dedicated, she wants to do good. But she gives too much." I nod, understanding, agreeing silently. My kind mate with her big heart she can't stop giving, even if it means giving all of herself. But that's where I come in.

It's my job to take care of her, when she'd burn herself out taking care of the whole world if I let her.

I stand for a few long moments with my father, watching her work, knowing it won't do any good to interrupt her in the middle of her task. I'm content to wait in silence, but my father surprises me with his next words.

"I'm so sorry, Dominic," he says, his voice thick with grief.

Shocked, I look down at him. "What?" He just shakes his head slowly, looking up at me with such regret – "I almost cost you – cost us everything. I played right into the enemy's hands and risked your mate, your child -" He covers his face with his hand, unable to look at me. "I failed you, Dominic -" "Stop that," I snap, tightening my hand on his shoulder.

"It was so stupid, to send you away and leave Cora and Ella unprotected – I should have seen it coming, that of course they would follow us back to the bunker after the first attack in the sewer that of course they were just biding their time – Xander has nothing but time -" "Enough," I growl, starting to get angry with him. "This was not your fault, dad -" "It was my plan – " "It was our plan!" My voice comes out louder, harsher than I meant it to. But my dad just looks up at me, more helpless than I've seen him...maybe ever.

"We all agreed to this, dad," I continue, working hard to bring my voice back down to a calmer register. " Me, Roger, Ella, Cora – all of our men, the whole team. We all fell for it, we were all..." I sigh, shutting my eyes and reliving the shame that flooded me the moment I realized that Xander was working to trap us in that house, that he was going after the girls and the baby. "We all messed up, almost cost ourselves everything. You are not alone." Dad opens his mouth to protest, to continue, but his voice fails him. And he just hangs his head, breaking my heart.

"What's all this?" I hear Ella ask, and I look up from my father to see her standing before us, her eyes wide with worry as she absently drifts a hand over the soft black fuzz of Rafe's hair.

I'm silent for a beat as I try to figure out what to say, but then I just shake my head. "It's nothing, Ella," I respond, not wanting to add to her plate. I can see by the darkness under her eyes that she's exhausted too. "Just ...the fallout." She nods, accepting my incomplete explanation, and focuses her eyes on my father. "Haven't we been through this already?" she asks quietly. "No one

blames you.” I nod, agreeing with her, looking down at my father for a response.

But he just waves his hands at us. “Let an old man have his guilt,” he sighs, working hard to give us a tired smile. ” It gives us something to dwell on to fill these long days. But you two -” he shifts his eyes to Rafe now, dozing against Ella’s chest. “You have better things to worry about. You should get that child to bed.” “Yes,” Ella agrees, a little guilty, starting to unstrap the baby carrier. ” Will you take him, Dominic? I wouldn’t have kept him out here so long – I just didn’t want to risk him waking you if he got up in the middle of the night – “Ella,” I interrupt, stern, and she looks up at me with surprise. “You’re going to bed with the baby. Come on.” I step forward and hold out a hand.

“Oh no,” she says, shaking her head and backing up a step. “I have too much to do there’s – there are more – wounded men who I need to -” “Ella,” I repeat, closing the distance between us and putting a hand on her elbow. “You’ve done enough.” I lower my voice so that just she can hear me, so that it’s barely more than a rumble in my chest. “You need to rest, trouble. They want you to rest too.” Ella looks over her shoulder then at the room full of half-healed men. Most of them are asleep but those who are not look up at her with grateful eyes – not a single one of them looking at her with need, or anger, or desperation. They’re incredibly grateful for what she’s doing for them – I know they are because I feel the same way. She’s earned their loyalty through and through and each and every one of them would choose to let her rest, now, rather than wearing her out trying to fix them. Especially not now, when they’ve only got relatively minor wounds left.

Still, Ella bites her lip and hesitates. ” There’s just...so much more to do...” I step behind her then, wrapping my arms around her and letting her lean back against me. I give her a moment to collect her thoughts, but my embrace communicates in no uncertain terms that she’s in my care now. So, she’d better wrap it up.

As she looks around the room I follow her eyes. “Where’s Hank? Or Cora?” I ask quietly, looking for a doctor.

“Cora’s asleep,” she answers. “And Hank...well, he went to bed a while ago too.

And I...kind of snuck back in. And kept working.” “We told her not to, sir!” One of my closest soldiers calls to me. “She wouldn’t be budged.” I smirk a little and nod to the soldier before resting my chin on top of Ella’s head.

“Trouble, through and through,” I say, and she laughs a little, stroking Rafe’s sleeping head again. “Come on,” I say, giving her a little tug towards the door.

“It doesn’t feel right, Dominic,” she sighs. “To leave them here in pain.” “You can start again when you’re rested,” I say quietly, leading her away. “I’ll help.” “Are you coming?” she asks my dad when we get to the door. “It’s late.” “You go,” he replies, waving a tired hand at us. “I’m not tired yet.” “But,” she starts, all concern, but he looks up at her with worried make her fall silent. eyes that “I couldn’t sleep if I tried, my dear,” he says quietly. “Go rest – leave an old man to his thoughts.” Ella and I leave then, but I know that both of our thoughts are on him worried for him. Neither of us say a word as we return to our little hospital room and turn in for bed.

Accidental Surrogate Chapter 382— Future Plans Ella It takes days to finish healing all of the men – long days with Cora and Hank by my side, explaining the intricate details of the wounds. We’ve found that it helps me concentrate the gift more completely when I know what is wrong that it helps me to stitch all of the flesh together neatly instead of just throwing a bunch of power at it and hoping that it sticks.

The gift itself does not deplete – I feel no lessening of it as I continue to use it for hours on end, day after day – but I certainly feel the toll on my own body as the days pass. It’s good work and I don’t mind doing it, but healing men, being the mother to a newborn, and mate to a man who will soon be crowned King of our little war-torn country? It’s...a lot.

Sinclair tried to help at first, standing with me while I performed my work, but eventually I shooed him off with the baby because I knew his energies would be better put elsewhere and that he could concentrate on Rafe better than I can when I spend half the day in a meditative state. And I also knew that it was driving Sinclair a little crazy, just standing there watching me, trying to be supportive.

But now, as I finish up turning the final patch of burned skin on the final soldier smooth and clear, I stand up with a smile, brushing my hands against my leggings and wondering where he is.

“Thank you, Luna,” the soldier says, and I beam down at him happily.

“Glad to do it. Hopefully you get some lighter service, though,” I say, cocking my head as I smile at him. “Fancy being a secretary at all?” He laughs and shakes his head, running a hand over the freshly-healed skin and marveling at

it. "Not a chance, Luna," he says. "I'm a fighter, through and through. I'll go back on the field for you and the Alpha any day." "Well, hopefully not anytime soon," I sigh, patting him on the shoulder and turning away to go look for my mate.

I feel quite light, suddenly, at the realization that it's done. Hank gives me a wave from across the room where he's consulting with some of the men who are going to need physical therapy after their wounds the healing does great things, but it doesn't do everything – and I happily wave back as I pass out of the room, heading to the back of the clinic where Roger and Sinclair have tended to meet.

I sigh a little as I look around the clinic as I pass through it. We haven't left in days, instead turning it into a little barrack in itself. And honestly, part of me is very pleased to be done with this so that we can get out of here. I'm incredibly grateful for this place, for letting it be a place of healing but...well, I want to go home. I want to sleep in my big bed and tuck my little baby into his bassinet. I want a normal night's sleep.

But then I remember that...well, that the last time we left that bedroom there were corpses all over it. And I honestly have no idea what state it's in now – did Sinclair like...send someone to clean it up? Or are they just... rotting... I stick out my tongue a little in disgust and turn my mind away from the question as I arrive at the door in the back. But still the sentiment is there. I'm dying to get home. I miss my normal life.

But what even was my normal life anymore? Did it exist? Or did Xander wipe it all out when he came for my son?

I sigh, giving a little knock on the door as I push it open.

Four dark heads look up at me and smile as I come into the room, and I laugh a little again at the sight of my tiny baby strapped in his carrier across my gigantic mate's chest. He just looks so small against the wide expanse of Sinclair's body.

"There he is," I say, giving everyone a nod but fixing my eyes on my son as I move over to him. "And how is my baby doing?" "I'm great," Sinclair says, grabbing my hand before I can touch the baby and pulling me to his warm side, pretending a jealousy that makes me laugh.

“Well, I’m glad to hear that,” I say, standing on my tiptoes to kiss him on the cheek before starting to unstrap Rafe from Sinclair’s body, wanting him in my arms.

“Are you all finished, Ella?” Henry asks. Roger stands up straight and tucks his hands into his pockets, listening curiously.

“Yes!” I say with a cheerful sigh, bouncing my happy baby a little in my arms.

“Everyone is finally all patched up.” “Incredible,” Henry says with a marvelous smile that warms me from the inside out. He’s been so dour lately – it’s good to see him smile. “That kind of turnaround after that level of wounds – it’s quite miraculous.” “Powerful,” Roger adds, his brow lifting. “Imagine what you could do if you were actually on a battlefield, turning soldiers around...” I frown at him a little. “I’m not sure I want to think of my mother’s gift as a weapon in war,” I say, thinking aloud. “True,” he concedes with a shrug. That does seem...a little anti-goddess, doesn’t it?” “What are you all up to?” I ask, looking at the table before them which is predictably scattered with paper. “And where is Cora?” “We’re making plans,” Sinclair informs me, putting a steady hand on my back.

“For our next steps. We’ll want to know what you think.” “And Cora is in with a lady doctor she called to come and check her out,” ((

Roger says with a little shrug.” Although I don’t see why that’s necessary,” he adds with a tiny scowl. ” Considering she is a lady doctor.” “You can say OBGYN, Roger,” I say, laughing.

“He’s just mad,” Sinclair says to me in a false whisper that he knows is loud enough for Roger to hear, “because the lady doctor wouldn’t let him come in to the checkup so she and Cora could talk privately.” “It’s ridiculous,” Roger grumbles, leaning over the table and pretending to stare down at the papers. “My baby too – don’t see why I can’t be there.” I just laugh at my sister’s protective new mate who wants to be at her side at all times and take a step closer to my own mate. Honestly, I understand the feeling.

“So, what are the new plans?” I ask, nudging Sinclair with my elbow and looking up at him. “Do we know what we’re going to do next?” “We have...options,” Sinclair says contemplatively, staring into space a little.

“Honestly, a lot of it hinges on what you and Cora think is best□Before he can explain why, though, the door opens again and Cora’s bright face peeks

through. “Did I hear my name?” Roger crosses the room to her in a flash, taking her hand and looking her over as if the other doctor might have done her some kind of harm. But Cora just laughs at him and swats her hands at him a little bit, pushing the door closed.

“I’m fine, I’m fine!” she says before he gives a little growl and pulls her tight against his side.

“What did she say?” he asks.

“I’ll tell you later,” she says with a happy grin, and while I definitely want to know as well, I accept that there are some things that Cora wants to keep private between herself and her mate.” But everything is fine,” she adds, running an absent hand over her stomach. “Nothing to worry about.” “Good,” he says, all in a rush, and I can see the real relief on his face.

“But I heard my name?” Cora says, turning to the rest of us curiously.

“Apparently we have decisions to make,” I tell her, hoisting Rafe in my arms a little so that I can press a kiss to the top of his head. He’s starting to get a little fussy now – I know he’s hungry.

“Yes,” Henry says. “We’ve had news of Xander’s whereabouts,” he continues, which surprises me so much that I feel my blood go a bit cold. “And in light of them, we’ve got some...big decisions to make.” “Yes,” Sinclair adds, and I look up at him, surprised again to see that his eyes are fixed on Cora. “And much of what we do next really depends...well, Cora? It depends on what you want to do.” “Me?” she asks, baffled.

And I feel the same emotion run through me. How did Cora get placed at the center of all of this? I mean – it’s not that I begrudge her the spot, I’m happy to let Cora take the lead. But as the single human involved in wolf affairs – What is it that they want her to decide?

Accidental Surrogate Chapter 383-Cora’s Decision Ella “What?” Cora asks, laughing a little as if it’s a ridiculous notion. “What on earth could I have to pick and choose from?” “Let’s back up a little,” Roger says, tugging her into the room and gesturing towards one of the chairs around the table. As she settles herself into a seat Sinclair pulls over the little armchair that I’ve been using when I feed Rafe, and I murmur my thanks to him as I settle down in it. As Roger begins, Sinclair swiftly hands me all of the things I need to feed Rafe – a burp cloth, a little blanket to throw over my shoulder, etc. – and I smile to

myself at his consideration in anticipating my needs without me having to ask. My Alpha is a warrior, but he's also a sweetheart. And I'm grateful for him every day. Everyone waits for me to get settled, but then once Rafe is happily eating Henry begins.

"We discovered," Henry begins, his eyes moving between me and Cora, that "Shit," Cora sighs, slumping down in her chair. My emotions match hers. We knew that Xander was on the run we'd largely decimated any of his that martial forces in taking out his priests. But our great fear was that in the time it took us to regroup, that he'd leave the country and find allies who might help him. And it looks, now, like he did precisely that.

neighboring kingdom, especially as I was raised as a human and hadn't known that overlying the map of the human world there was a hidden world of wolf kingdoms with its own wars and politics. Of course, ever since Damon broke the secret of the of the wolves to the human world those maps have increasingly combined to become one, but still – what I don't know about wolf politics could probably fill its own book.

Which, considering that I'll likely soon be Queen, is...unfortunate. But I force myself to pay attention to Henry's answer.

strictly to what they perceive as the traditions of wolf kind even more than we do. In comparison to them we are...ridiculously liberal." "What does that mean?" Cora asks, crossing her arms over her chest, her face worried and confused.

"It means," Roger explains, "that Xander has likely found allies with a group who would not be on board with our own nation's current policy, which is that wolves and humans are equal and deserve to be treated with the same respect. They would also," he continues, hesitating now and looking between me and Cora, "really not like the fact that we're having this conversation with our mates. For "Second-class citizens, at best," Sinclair finishes for him. "And at worst, property." "What?" I gasp, my eyes going wide. "Seriously? Are they also a nation that's been frozen in time for five hundred years?" "I mean, it's not a bad way to think of it," Roger says, tilting his head to the side.

"Women there are not taught to read or write, they have almost a completely separate culture and stay strictly within their homes. It is...not great, in terms of rights." "Gross," Cora says, her face clearly displaying her disgust. "Though, it makes sense why Xander would go there, considering how he tried to use Ella as his broodmare." "Precisely," Sinclair says, nodding along with her.

“And they’re staunch nationalists and monarchists as well. They’re likely to respect Rafe’s claim to our future throne as Xavier’s grandson, not as my son. And, as such, would see Xander’s claim to the role of regent as... legitimate.” “That’s all so ridiculous,” I say, sighing as I look down at my baby, this innocent little person around whom so much revolves.

“Agreed,” Sinclair says, reaching out to place a comforting hand on my shoulder.

“It’s unfortunate that he was able to get there so fast. This would all be much easier if we had caught him at the border, had been able to prosecute him here without having to go through a foreign government to do it.” “Why?” I ask. “Can’t we just...demand that they give him back? Extradition, or whatever?” “We could,” Sinclair replies, looking seriously down at me. “If I was King. Which, currently, I am not.” I blink up at him for a second, confused, and then put all of the pieces together.

“Ohhhh,” I say, my eyes going wide. Because while all of the other claims to the throne within our country have been disposed of, and it’s rather a foregone conclusion that my mate will take the throne....

He hasn’t done it yet. Which means, technically, that he doesn’t yet have access to any of the powers which would allow him to make any of these demands.

“Well, how fast can you do it?” Cora says, sitting up straight and looking easily at Sinclair. “Can we do like... some kind of quick and dirty coronation? Slap a crown on you and get you on a throne by morning?” We all laugh a little at the idea of this, but there’s no real cheer in it, because I think we all know the answer. “It’s more complicated than that,” Sinclair says, running a hand through his hair. “First, I have to claim it, and then my claim has to be ratified by the governors. It’s...all a bunch of bureaucratic nonsense.

Interestingly the kind of bureaucratic nonsense that the Atalaxians don’t care about. In their country, I’d have been king the moment I killed Damon. But,” he shrugs a little, rueful. “That’s what we get for wanting to live in a nation in which the people have a say in their lives. It’s a better process – but it takes longer.” “Well,” I say, looking up at him. “Can we get it started?” “We can,” Sinclair says, nodding down at me. “But this is where your choice comes in, Cora,” he says, shifting his gaze to her.

“Seriously,” Cora says, spreading out her hands on the table. “I can’t with the suspense anymore. Can one of you please just tell me what’s going on?” “Until Dominic is King and we have access to the state military and protection,” Roger says quickly, “we don’t think it’s a good decision to split up anymore.

Which we all agreed to.” “It has been a disaster, hasn’t it?” Sinclair says, looking down at me again.

“Every time we try to leave you two home for safety, we either get torn up or you do. Or both.” “So we’re staying together from here on out,” Roger says, gesturing around the room. “The six of us. Or, well,” he glances at Cora’s stomach. “Six and a half.” “I would like to point out,” Cora says, “that this was my plan from the start – but noooo, I wasn’t allowed to go to the sewer, was I?” “Yes, you’re very clever,” Roger says placatingly, rolling his eyes a little before moving on, which makes me laugh lightly. “But, Cora, if we get everything started with Dominic’s coronation, that means that...” He hesitates now, as if he knows what he says will hurt her.

“What?” she pushes, dying to know and getting a little frustrated.

“It means that you wouldn’t be able to go to the temple any time soon,” Sinclair finishes. “To ask your mother for answers to the big questions you have. About your baby, and about your mating.” “Oh,” she says, sitting up straight in her chair and thinking it through. “Oh, I see.” I nod along with her, seeing the point now. Because after we discovered that the priestesses of my mother’s temple in the city had been infiltrated by the Cult, it has been shut down for the moment. Besides, that temple was more of a place of worship than a true conduit for my mother – the closest of those temples, where priestesses live in dedication to her and are able to truly call on her presence, is hundreds of miles away.

And if Cora wants to go and ask her questions?

We either have to do it now, before the coronation begins? Or she has to wait and that waiting could take quite a long time.

I purse my lips, wondering what the right choice is. Because what matters more now – answering my sister’s big questions? Or chasing down the man who tried to kidnap my son?

Accidental Surrogate Chapter 384-Road Trip Ella I watch Cora struggle with her choice, biting her lip and trying to figure out how she feels. My heart goes out to her now, because I know that she thinks it is an impossible ask to tell us that she wants to put a coronation on hold so that she can visit a temple.

But suddenly, quite suddenly, it's all I want for her. Because Cora has been here for us through all of this – and she deserves answers to these questions. And I open my mouth to say this, but Sinclair beats me to it.

"I think we should go," he says, and I whip my eyes up to see him giving a casual shrug. "It will only take a few days," he adds, looking down at me to see how I feel. "And, quite frankly, we could...use a break before the madness begins again." A little smile creeps over my mouth. "Would it," Cora begins, and then hesitates again. But we all wait, letting her find her voice. "Would it be safe?" she asks.

"We think it would," Roger says steadily at her side. "Xander's on the run, which means he's scrambling. He's an old man and we took out the forces that he was using to physically attack us. Even if he's working to get more, we think that we have...at least a small window of time." "We would have to move quickly and quietly," Henry adds, more cautious now than he's been in the past – I think spooked, still, by the disastrous results of our last plan. "No planes or anything flashy – just...a small, anonymous family trip." I turn my attention back to Cora, wanting to know what she thinks. But she's still sitting perfectly still and quiet, clearly putting her thoughts together.

"I can't ask you to do this," she says after a long, quiet minute. "I – we need to get the coronation going, to keep us all safe." "You don't have to ask us to do it, Cora," Sinclair answers quietly, and I turn my eyes up at my mate. "We're telling you we want to do it. Right?" he looks at me now and I nod eagerly.

"Honestly, Cora," I say, leaning forwards her. "It's what I was thinking. I think it's right – I think we should go." Roger says nothing, simply staying steady at Cora's side, letting her make up her own mind. But she just continues to shake her head. "But there's already so much to do here." She sighs, putting her head down in her hands for a moment as she collects her thoughts.

"The Cult, and the priests, and Xander – it was already a distraction from the aftermath of a war with the humans that has been terribly complicated. There is still so much work to do here, and Ella," she looks up at me now, "we could be spending this time going to the refugee camps, actually helping people, now that we have the gift -" My face falls when I realize that she's right. That

there is so much to do here, that it's perhaps selfish to consider this possibility – "Two days, Cora," Roger says quietly next to her, taking her hand. "Two days, and then you can come back and save the world, and take on those problems and surely everything else that's going to come along with them. But," he gives her hand a little squeeze, "it would be okay to take two days. You deserve that.

You've earned that." And I find myself nodding, agreeing. Because as I consider what the rest of our lives are going to look like...it's going to be a lot of dedication to the people of this nation, of this world. And it will make me so happy to do that work – to help people.

But Cora is one of the people I want to help. She deserves it as much as anyone else. Plus, she's my sister. And that has to count for something.

"Let's go, Cora," I say, leaning forward and giving her an encouraging smile.

"Two days." She bites her lip and I can see that she's tempted, even if she hasn't given in yet.

"Would it help," Sinclair continues, cocking his head to the side, "if I told you that we'd be going in a very fancy RV? With a real bed that you and Roger could sleep in, and not be wedged together in a hospital bed?" Cora sits up straight at the idea. "You should have started with that," she says, her eyebrows going up almost to her hairline. "I was sold at 'real bed.' Let's do it." And then a little smile creeps onto her face.

I let out a little cry of joy, throwing up the hand that's not holding my baby to my chest. "Yes!" I shout, laughing now. "Road trip! This is so exciting! I've never been on a road trip in my life!" "Really?" Sinclair asks, smirking down at me, pleased to see me so excited.

"Really!" I cry, looking excitedly between him and Cora. "This will be so cool! I've always wanted to go on a road trip! This will be the best vacation ever!" "Well," Henry says, laughing a little along with me. "It's not precisely a vacation -" "Nope!" I say, getting to my feet, carried away a little by my excitement. "We get two days," I say, holding up two fingers to everyone in the room. "Two days before we dedicate our lives to helping the people of this world, and destroying our enemies, and running a nation. So if I get two days respite from all of the awful things that have been happening to us lately? They're going to be the best two vacation days we've ever had!" And then I'm laughing and dancing around the room, holding Rafe up in the air and asking

him if he's excited for his first vacation. I think my joy is infectious, though, because when I turn back to my family everyone is smiling, laughing a little, and chatting as we start to make plans.

Cora bites her lip again, but I can tell it's with excitement this time as I move to her side, swooping down to give her a kiss on the cheek. "I'm so excited," I say, grinning down at her. "You're going to get to talk to mom! And get all of the answers to your questions!" "I know," she says, a hesitant excitement building in her now. "I just hope...well, I hope that she tells me what I want to hear, you know?" "She will," I say, smiling and placing a hand on her cheek. "Things are going to start looking up for us, sis. I can feel it. Now let's get packed! Because we're going on a road trip!" And then I whoop again and throw my hand up in the air. Sinclair laughs as he comes to my side, his phone already in his hand as he starts putting the plan into action. "Come on, trouble," he says, glancing at me. "Let's go get packed – we're going to have to move fast now if we want to make this work." "Okay," I say, and then I glance back at Cora, wanting to make sure she's all right before I go. But she waves me off, standing up to start making her own plans with Roger. Henry, likewise ready to get started, starts to roll for the door to make his own plans. Excited, I take Sinclair's hand. "So, where do we get an RV?" I ask, pleased.

"You leave it to me," he says as we head out of the room and start to walk down the hall. "You go pack our things and I'll get our ride." "Okay," I say, heading for our little room. But before we part ways, I turn sharply and tug at his hand, making him pay attention to me for just one more moment.

"That offer of the big bed," I say, looking up at him with a frown. "That had better be on offer for me as well. Because if I have to squeeze into another single bed with your gigantic self for one more night," I add, pointing a finger into his face, "I am out." He laughs and grabs my accusing finger, placing a kiss on the tip of it before turning away from me and heading down the hall. "Your wish!" he calls over his shoulder. "My command!" "Damn straight," I mutter, smirking and watching him as he walks away from me.

And then I sigh a little in excited content. Because my mate has stolen me two days away from this crazy world and I couldn't be more excited for this trip.

Accidental Surrogate Chapter 385-Long Miles I gasp a few hours later when I see the gigantic RV that rolls up front of the clinic.

"Seriously?" Hanks says, crossing his arms over his chest and staring at it, somewhere between impressed and revolted by the extravagance. "The gas

mileage on that thing must be horrible “Ohhh,” I say, laughing and swatting him on the arm with one hand, the other holding Rafe’s carrier where he’s already bundled and ready. “Don’t spoil my fun, Hank – you’re just jealous because you’re not coming.” “Yes,” Hank murmurs, giving me a good-natured side eye. “Yes, there’s absolutely nothing I want more in the world than to be cooped up in a tin can with Roger and Cora for forty-eight hours. You’re right.” I laugh when I consider this point, stepping closer to Hank and wrapping him in a one-armed hug that he’d probably rather avoid. But we’ve grown a lot closer in the past few days, working together, and well? If he’s going to be my friend, then he’s going to have to get used to a great deal of affection.

“You’ll be all right here when we’re gone?” I ask, pulling away.

“Ah, don’t worry about me,” Hank says with a little smirk and a shrug. You guys have bigger things on your plate.” “When I come back,” I say, looking at him seriously now, hoping he understands how much he means to me – to all of us. “We’re going to do big things, okay?”

Help a lot of people. With the gift, and with your skills.” “That’s all I want, Ella,” Hank says seriously, giving me a nod and a little smile that’s likely the most emotion I’m going to see from him anytime soon. But then his eyes drift to Cora and Roger who come through the door of the clinic and I know...well, I know that what Hank says about this being all he wants is a little bit of a lie. And my heart aches for him because I know now, for sure, that he’ll never get it.

I purse my lips a little, trying not to let him see me pity him. But he catches me in the act.

“Don’t,” Hank sighs, shaking his head at me. “I’m good, Ella. I really am.” “I know,” I say, putting a hand out to his shoulder. He gives me a sad little smirk before turning back into the clinic – intent, clearly, on busying his mind so that he doesn’t have to think about her. Cora and Roger call brief goodbyes to Hank before coming to my side to admire the RV.

“It’s huge,” Cora says, her eyes wide.

“It’s not so big,” Roger says with a shrug. But Cora and I both roll our eyes at him as Sinclair parks the vehicle and climbs out of the driver’s seat. Cora and I didn’t grow up with much as kids, and we’ve certainly never been on a vacation like this – with a whole fancy vehicle reserved just for us.

I'm so incredibly excited I can barely contain it.

"Ready?" Sinclair asks, opening the door to the living compartment of the RV and pushing a button that activates a little metal platform that lowers itself to the ground so that Henry can wheel onto it.

"Yes!" I say, taking Cora's hand and pulling her with me to Sinclair's side. "Is it nice? Are there enough beds? Is there a kitchen? How do you -" Sinclair just laughs at me, shaking his head as Henry maneuvers himself onto the lift. "Just go in, Ella," he says, nodding towards the door with the short flight of stairs. "Explore. Let yourself be surprised." I eagerly do as my mate suggests, hurrying up the steps and gasping with excitement again as I look around. It's absolutely gorgeous inside, and everything is so shiny – "Oh, wow," Cora says, her eyes as wide as mine as she climbs in after me. "This is...amazing." My sister comes with me as we wander around the space, admiring the gorgeous kitchenette with its white leather table space, the little living area that comes after that, the adorable, cleverly designed bathroom that makes the most of the minimal space allotted to it. But I really gasp when I see the bedroom tucked away in the back – with its king-sized bed, and plush downy linens.

"Oh my god," I say, quickly unbuckling Rafe from his carrier and groaning as I sit down with him on the bed which is as comfortable as it looks. "Oh, I missed big beds –" "Um, Ella," Cora says, smirking at me from the doorway. "What do you think you're doing?" "Huh?" I ask, confused.

"That's my bed," she says, her wicked smirk growing.

"What!?" I gasp, and then I groan as I remember Sinclair's promise to her – a big bed for her and Roger. "Well then where do I sleep?!" "Out there," Sinclair says, appearing in the doorway behind Cora. "The couches transform – one into a queen for me and you, and the other into a twin, which my dad will take –" "Noooo," I moan, tossing my head back and settling deeper into the pillows.

"Can I sleep in here with Cora and Roger? I won't take up much space – you can take the baby and -" "No chance in hell," Roger declares, pushing past Sinclair into the room with little travel bags filled with his and Cora's stuff which isn't much, considering we haven't had access to any of our possession since we left the bunker. Roger places the bags on the ground and snaps his fingers at me when he straightens up. "Up, Ella. That's my bed." "No, I need it," I whine, pouting at him.

“Ella,” Cora says, unable to keep the mischief out of her eyes even though she pretends she’s serious. “I’m pregnant. I need my rest.” I sigh then, glaring at her for playing the pregnancy card.

“Fine,” I growl, making them all laugh as I huff my way back to the living room.

“But this queen-sized bed better be comfortable,” I say to my mate as I pass him.

“Fit for a Queen,” he says, following me back into the main living area of the RV and giving Roger and Cora a moment alone.

To my surprise, Henry has already settled himself at the front of the RV, locking his chair into a space where the passenger seat should be. He gives me a little wave before turning back to a set of maps. I take a moment to admire the ingenuity of the vehicle and how cleverly it’s been made accessible for someone in a wheelchair.

“You two ready?” Sinclair says, wrapping an arm around my shoulder and looking down at Rafe, still in my arms and looking happily around at all of the bright lights.

“Yes,” I say, meaning it as I give him a big smile. “How long do you think it will take to get there? To the temple?” “We’ll probably get there sometime tomorrow,” Henry calls over his shoulder and Sinclair nods in agreement. “Oh,” I say with surprise. “So where will we sleep tonight?” “A campground somewhere,” Sinclair says with a shrug. “We have to see how far we get. It’s part of the adventure, and part of staying anonymous. No reservations for people to know where we’ll be staying.” “Do you think,” I say, glancing out the windows. “That we’ll be followed?” “I don’t,” he says, placing a finger beneath my chin and turning my face back to him. “It’s all right, Ella,” he says softly. “You can relax. Enjoy it. You’ve worked so hard lately – let me... let me give this to you, as well as to Cora.” And a soft smile finds my face as I realize that Sinclair’s willingness to take this trip was about ensuring that Cora and Roger get the answers that they need, but that it’s also about me. About us. About giving us a minute as well to just... breathe. To have a nice couple of days.

I nod to him, letting him know that I understand.

Roger comes out of the bedroom area, Cora close behind, and he claps his hands, asking if it’s time to get started. I settle myself down on one of the little

grey couches, eager to see what happens next, and Cora sits next to me, likewise buzzing with excitement.

Then, as one, our mates turn towards the front of the RV and take a step towards the driver's seat.

"Um," Sinclair says, putting out a hand and settling it on Roger's chest, stopping him. "Where do you think you're going?" "To...drive," Roger says, as if it's obvious. Sinclair lets out a sarcastic little laugh. "Funny," he says, gesturing towards where Cora and I sit with his other hand. "Go play checkers with your mate, Roger." "How can I do that, Dominic," Roger says, his voice deadpan, "it will be very distracting to be playing a game while I'm driving." And then the two of them start to bicker about who is going to drive, making Cora and I dissolve into laughter.

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<https://en.novelxo.com/accidental-surrogate-for-alpha/r1026986.html> 7/9 "Do you think there's really checkers?" I ask her, looking around at all the clever little compartments around me.

"I hope so," she says, starting to open a drawer which I gasp to see is indeed stacked with a bunch of games – most of them magnetic so that we can indeed play them while we're driving." Because I'm going to need a distraction if we're going to listen to that all day," she says, nodding towards the brothers who still continue to fight.

It takes them about fifteen minutes to come up with a driving plan that they both find equitable and Roger sits down next to Cora in a huff, letting Sinclair take the first shift.

"Red or black?" Cora asks him with a smirk, unfolding the board and placing it between them. "Black," he sighs, scowling a little and looking jealously at his brother in the front of the RV.

"Poor baby," Cora coos, running a hand through Roger's hair. "Don't worry – you can have your turn soon." His scowl deepens, making me laugh, and then – with a lurch – we're on our way. My stomach twists with excitement. A road trip! I can't even begin to think of anything I want to do more with my family right now.

“I get winner,” I declare, leaning back against the cushions with Rafe sitting happily in my lap as Roger and Cora begin to play. I’m looking forward to this relaxing little vacation, but deep down?

I’m most excited about Cora getting answers to her questions. Soon, I think, my stomach giving an excited little twist. Soon we’ll know the answers to so many mysteries about this baby.

Mysteries I’m absolutely dying to have solved.