

Seeds Cora The Goddess' smile only broadens as she continues her thought. "But you can tell your sister that I have not been so generous as to send her two mates at once. And because I know it will worry her now, you can tell her that I have made her only one mate in this world, even though her mate had two." I grin a little then, thinking about her phrasing it as a generosity and not the torture that it clearly is for Sinclair. "Why, though?" I ask, suddenly curious.

"Why did he get two?" "Because," the goddess says, laughing a tinkling little laugh. "I have bigger plans, Cora, that stretch generations into the future. One day, Dominic's experience loving two mates will help him empathize with another who likewise struggles." She smirks a little at me. "Though... maybe don't tell him that," she wrinkles her nose playfully, "Might be more fun if you don't." I laugh suddenly, delighted at the realization that my mother the Goddess is a little bit of trickster. How have we missed that before?

"So, what's the deal with the Prince, then?" I ask, and I ignore Roger as he mumbles something behind me about not understanding what the hell is going on.

"The bond with the Prince," mom says with a shrug, "it is something else. But some things, my love, must remain a mystery. The connection that I have built between Ella and the Atalaxian Prince – it is merely a seed." She glances at my stomach, and then her eyes move to Ella. "Seeds, like children, take time to grow. But when they do..." She smiles then and leaves the thought unfinished, shaking her hair back from her shoulders. "Is there anything else, daughter?" she asks, beginning to fade just a little bit.

“The baby?” I ask, suddenly desperate to know while I have her here. My hand moves instantly to my stomach. “Is he... will he be all right?” She grins at me. “Your child will be born safe and sound, Cora, do not worry.” A little laugh rings through the air as she fades almost completely from sight. “And tell Ella that I love her, and to keep trying. I am eager to lay eyes on my first granddaughter.” And quite suddenly, she’s gone.

I blink at the sudden absence in the room and then take a deep breath before looking around at my family, who all stare at me.

“That was super weird,” Roger says, his eyes wide.

“Well, you probably also looked like a lunatic talking to the air,” I say, rolling my eyes at him, “the night she visited you on the boat.” “Cora,” Sinclair murmurs, and all of our eyes turn to where he’s sitting behind Ella, his face tucked miserably against his palm. “Please...please tell me what she said. I’m dying here.” “Aww, Dominic,” I murmur, and I consider for just a second dragging it out a little further just to tease him. But he’s so miserable that I can’t. “Calvin isn’t Ella’s fated mate. She said that she only made Ella one mate, and it’s you.” “Ohmygod,” he whispers, all in a rush, and the tension visibly goes out of my sister and her mate. My heart breaks a little when I see Sinclair’s shoulders begin to shake with the relief of it as Ella presses herself back against him, murmuring sweet reassurances.

I smile as I watch them, but I’m a little relieved when Roger slips onto the couch behind me, pulling me into his lap. I turn my attention to him as he wraps his arms around me, giving Ella and Sinclair a minute.

“What about me?” Roger murmurs, nudging me with his nose. “How many do I get?” I lean back from him, suddenly a little appalled at his question. “You get one, Roger Sinclair,” I growl, grabbing his shirt in my fist.

“Awww,” he says, his face falling in pretend disappointment. “I was hoping for like eight or nine. Really start a little harem for myself -” “I would kill them all,” I hiss, though I start to laugh. “”Though I probably wouldn’t need to – they’d get one look at you and all reject the bond immediately – ” “That’s just what I’d tell you,” he murmurs, grinning at me and pulling me close.

“When secretly, I’d keep them all in a little cabin out in the woods, my secret wives – ” I burst into laughter at the idea, but my mate and I both turn to my sister when she calls my name.

“What else did she say?” Ella asks, her face happy and at peace. So, I tell her everything strange thing mom said about the bond being a seed, and seeds, like children, needing time to grow.

“That is so weird,” Ella breathes, her face scrunched up in confusion.

“Cora,” Sinclair says, his deep voice still very serious despite his mate’s clear peace and happiness. “You asked ‘why did he get two.’ What...what did she say to that?” I grin at him now, feeling a bit of my mother’s mischief coming through to me now. “She said Roger got two pop tarts this morning because they come in a pack,” I say, my voice slow and resonating with wisdom as I grin at him, “it’s only right that they be eaten together.” Sinclair narrows his eyes at me as Ella laughs. “Tell me,” the King orders, his Alpha coming forward in the command.

But Ella just turns to him with a scoff. “Cora’s conversation with our mother is hers, Dominic. You don’t get to make that demand of her.” “She told you the answer to your question,” he grumbles, glaring at her. Ella sighs and takes his face in her hands. “Does it really matter?” she asks, shaking her head. “I am your mate, Dominic, and you are mine, and that’s enough.” “Unless he has a third out there somewhere,” Roger murmurs unhelpfully, smirking.

Ella gasps and glares at Roger, but I just laugh and start to stand up. "Enough of this," I say, getting to my feet. "Are we done with all this serious Goddess chatter? You have a country to run, and I have a shift at the clinic this evening." Everyone starts to stand then as well, Ella coming close and wrapping me in a hug. "Thank you, Cora," she whispers to me, very seriously. "I'm so grateful." "Easily done," I say, smiling down at her. She starts to pull away from me but I hold her close for a moment longer, bringing my lips close to her ear so that I can whisper. "She said to keep trying, Ells – she wants to see her granddaughter soon." When Ella pulls away from me she's beaming with happiness, her eyes starting to fill with tears as she clutches Rafe close. "Really?" she breathes.

I nod eagerly and Ella spins away, throwing herself into Sinclair's arms with a happy squeak.

"What?" Sinclair asks, frowning and looking between me and his mate. "What did you say to her?" "Would you stop being so serious, Dominic?" I say, rolling my eyes at him as Roger comes and wraps an arm around my waist. "It was all good news this morning from our little chat with the Goddess – you need to cheer up! You don't need to know all the details." He sighs and glares at me a little, though his sigh lets me know that he realizes that I'm right. "You're really not going to tell me?" he says, chagrined. "What she said, about me having two mates?" "She told me not to," I say with a grin. "I think she wants you to figure it out yourself. But...I can tell you that she definitely gave you two mates for a reason." Sinclair's sigh is deep but I see a great deal of contentment come to his expression as he and Ella say their goodbyes and head out to their car, where several guards are waiting. As they go, Roger stands close at my side.

"Any goddess messages for me?" he murmurs, smiling down at me.

“Nah,” I say, grinning up at him. ” Just that the baby will be born happy and healthy. But that’s all I asked.” He smiles at me, pleased but curious. ” Really?” he says, stepping close and pressing a palm to my cheek. “You didn’t ask anything else? You’re not curious?” “Roger,” I say, shaking my head up at him as I wrap my arms around his waist, “I am so curious about our future and how our lives are going to unfold. But I have no real interest in being an oracle. I want to find out as we live it. It’s enough for me.” “And you’re enough for me,” he murmurs back, and then he leans in, giving me a perfect kiss.

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Departure Ella Sinclair and I dress very formally that night, knowing that how we bid our farewell to the Atalaxian delegation is going to be something that we handle with a great deal of care, especially as we know that Calvin will be there. We even wear our crowns, hoping that they oblige the Atalaxians to see us as representatives of the state which they intend to destroy.

Rafe, unfortunately, has other ideas about his formality.

“Oh, god,” I sigh when he shrieks and pulls his tiny crown off for the third time.

“Dominic, he won’t wear it “So don’t make him,” Sinclair says with a grin, coming to stand close to me in our closet, putting his hand on my back and peering down at our son.

Honestly, he’s a baby -” “He is the future King – “I huff as I slide Rafe’s crown around my wrist like a bracelet. “Without the crown he’s just our little baby meatball – ” Sinclair laughs now, taking the baby from me and holding him high up in the air, making Rafe shriek with laughter. “Did you hear how your mommy talks about you, Rafe!?” Sinclair calls, pretending to be appalled. Rafe just giggles harder, delighted. “A future King, and she calls you a meatball!” “He is,” I say, laughing and reaching for him. “He’s my little meatball, though,” I murmur, taking him back into my arms and leaning into

my mate. "He's just getting so big. And he's very round." "Wolf babies grow faster than human babies," Sinclair murmurs, leaning down to kiss me on the cheek and then Rafe on my head.

"That's horrible," I murmur, clutching my little baby to me. I turn my mouth down at my baby. "You quit it, Rafe. Stay little." "Not forever," he says with a sigh. "Just through these first couple months so that they're stronger, then it kind of evens out. But yeah...he's going to start getting teeth soon." "What?" I gasp, appalled and looking up at Sinclair. "He's too little for that!" "Sorry, love," Sinclair murmurs, kissing my hair. "Our little pup needs his fangs." "Well," I sigh, turning to the room when Sinclair tugs me in that direction. "As soon as those show up, I am done breastfeeding." Sinclair laughs with me as

we make our way to the door. But both of us grow serious as we pass through it, because while we're certainly able to distract ourselves for a few minutes?

Well. We're still a nation on the brink of war, and it doesn't look like there's anything we can do about it.

At dinner we do our very best, trying every angle we can think of to get the Atalaxians to turn. Henry's there, doing the same, though Cora and Roger opted out of this one. I can't say I blame them – Sinclair told me on the ride to their house this morning that he's asked Roger to take charge of the military, and I have to say – it's probably given them a lot to think about.

But despite our best efforts, the Atalaxians turn away all of our last-ditch offers and ideas, apparently determined to go to war. Only Calvin, sitting across the table from us, looks towards us with any real regret in his expression.

Not that Sinclair is in any mood to look favorably on anything that Calvin says or does. Every time the Prince visibly moves or breathes, Sinclair sends a growl his way. I keep having to put a hand on my mate's knee, reminding him to reel it in.

"Let's not have any regicide tonight," I murmur quietly as the meal breaks up.

"It's not regicide if you kill a Prince out of the line of succession," Sinclair mutters back, sounding tempted and making me laugh.

I stand up with a sigh, turning my face up to my mate. "Dominic, I think I have to do this on my own," I say, knowing that it's time to have the difficult conversation with Calvin.

"Absolutely not," Sinclair snaps, livid.

“I’m serious,” I insist, looking up at him with clear eyes. Rafe, sleeping in my arm, fusses a little, I think disturbed by our heightened emotions on this subject.

“I’ll keep it together,” Sinclair growls, his words belied by a vicious snarl as he looks over to the corner of the room, where Calvin is clearly waiting to face us, his shoulders tense even though he has calmly slipped his hands into his pockets.

I give Calvin a little smile, honestly a bit impressed with the coolness with which he’s handling this. Not everyone would be able to stand straight and look Dominic Sinclair in the eye the night after hitting on his mate.

I smirk a little at the thought and quickly pass Rafe into Sinclair’s arms. ” Here,” I murmur. “Just – go stand outside of the door, and I’ll keep our bond wide open the whole time so you know exactly how I’m feeling, okay? And if I’m even the least bit uncomfortable, you can come in and bite his head off.” Sinclair’s growl deepens, but he takes the baby and glares over at Calvin. ” Dominic,” I say, putting a hand on his arm and making him look back at me. ” Please remember that I have a bond with this man. My mother wants us to have a connection. Any time you feel like killing him, just look down at Rafe and let his cuteness lull you into a new calm.” I stand on my toes to give my gigantic scary mate a kiss on the cheek, and then I step away, heading for Calvin. Sinclair moves to the door, grumbling his discontent. I smile a little when I see him stand just outside of it so that his shadow still falls into the room.

“Highness,” Calvin murmurs, giving me a short bow as the last of the Atalaxians filter out of the room past my mate.

“Ella,” I insist, stepping close and smiling at him, even as I feel a rumble of Sinclair’s unhappiness shiver down the bond. I smile, ignoring it, and gesture quickly to the other side of the room, where a couch and comfortable chairs wait. “Will you please come and speak for a little, Calvin? We have...to talk.” Calvin, to his credit, just glances once towards the door where Sinclair stands before sighing and heading towards the back of the room. I follow, sitting next to Calvin on the couch, careful to leave enough space for a person to sit between us.

We’re going to war with his people anyway, Sinclair mutters directly into my mind from outside the door. Just let me rip his head off.

Part of mom’s plan! I quip, again holding back a grin. Look at Rafe! Take comfort in his cute tiny face!

Calvin turns his head as he studies me, perhaps wondering where my little smile is coming from. But then he sighs, hanging his head a little. "Are you rejecting our bond, Ella?" he asks, as if afraid of the answer.

"Calvin," I say, leaning forward, wanting to touch him but refraining. "There's no bond to reject. Or at least, not the kind that you think there is." Calvin looks up at me, shocked. "Ella," he says, shaking his head. "Yes, there is. You're my mate!"

[HOT]Read novel Accidental Surrogate

Novel Accidental Surrogate Chapter 470

Friendship Across Boundaries Ella I ignore the soft growl that rumbles from the doorway, though Calvin glances briefly in that direction.

"No, Calvin," I say, shaking my head softly. "We did a little bit of research this afternoon. And I'm sorry to say it if it makes you sad, but you're not my mate." "What?" he breathes, confused, his eyebrows knitting together. "But –" "Why do you think you are?" I ask, honestly conflicted now.

And Calvin sweetly and awkwardly blushes, looking down at the carpet. "My wolf is...pretty convinced, Ella," he murmurs, probably fully aware that the words are enough to set Sinclair off again.

"Really?" I ask, pushing now, "Because my wolf – she says that you're important to me, but she wasn't sure enough to give it the name mate. And everyone else I've asked, Calvin...they were sure. Is your wolf absolutely positive?" He sighs now, looking down at his hands as he perhaps consults with his wolf inside. "It's...the strongest connection I've ever felt, Ella," he murmurs. "With anyone. Is it...is it not enough? Even if my wolf feels a little bit of doubt, and can't give you a certain yes?" And suddenly my heart breaks for this man who I realize is...lonely. Who had an arranged marriage to a woman I'm not sure he loves, who is surrounded by a Kingdom full of people whose deepest beliefs he at least doubts, if not outright disbelieves. Calvin – he saw the bond between us and he grasped at it desperately, wanting it.

Wanting the different life I potentially offered one with love in it, and a new world full of different ideas.

My heart – it absolutely breaks for him, and down the bond I feel Sinclair's own pity as he feels my emotions along with me.

But still I can't love him just because he wants me to. I have a mate whom I love very, very much.

"Maybe it would be enough," I say softly, "in a different time, a different... life.



But Calvin, we asked and had it confirmed. You're not my mate – I only have one. And it's Dominic." Calvin looks up at me now, his face twisted in confusion. "Who on earth would you ask about that?" "Well," I say, smiling a little bit. "She's not precisely on earth -" Ella, Dominic says down our bond in warning. Because the Atalaxians – they don't know anything about my divine origins right now, or at least we don't think they do. We honestly don't know how much Xander told him, but since they didn't bring it my or Cora's powers in the peace talks as a negotiating point, we're assuming Xander kept any knowledge of or lineage and our gifts to himself.

He deserves to know, Dominic, I reply as Calvin stares at me in confusion. It's his bond too.

"Can we trust you, Calvin?" I ask quietly, leaning forward and raising a single eyebrow at Calvin.

Slowly, Calvin nods and I bizarrely feel a little pulse of truth down...down what I can only assume is a new bond between myself and this prince. My lips part in surprise as Calvin stares at me in confusion, feeling it too, and then I feel almost a sigh down my bond with Sinclair as he gives me tacit permission to continue.

And so I tell Calvin everything – about the Goddess being my biological mother, and contacting her today, and everything she said about our bond being a seed.

By the end of it, Calvin stares at me with wide eyes.

"God," he says, leaning back against the couch's arm. "Now I'm just... embarrassed. Here I was, ready to confess my devotion to you, and all along it was...nothing romantic. Not at all. Instead just a seed, whatever that means." Sinclair lets out another low growl from the doorway, letting Calvin know that he needs to watch himself, but I ignore him, reaching out a hand between us. "Just because it's not romantic doesn't mean it's not important," I say quietly.

Calvin reaches out as well, hovering his hand above mine until we feel that pulse between us. Until the glow forms between our hands, eventually raising sparks in the air. We both stare at it and a smile finds

my lips.

"See?" I say. "Magic." "Incredible," he murmurs, shaking his head. But then he pulls his hand away and tucks it into his pocket, glancing towards the door.

"I'm sorry... I realize what I did was selfish, and hasty, and it likely caused you a great deal of stress." "Stop," I say, scootching forward across the couch now

so that we sit close together. “Calvin, you have nothing to be embarrassed about – ” He huffs a laugh, looking down into his lap. “I was ready to leave my wife, Ella,” he murmurs, “to leave my entire country behind-” “No,” I interrupt, and he looks up to see me shaking my head. “You’d have gone home, Calvin. For your children. And eventually, you would have figured out that what’s between us? It’s special, but it’s friendship. And you’d have been glad for it.” Calvin sighs and raises a hand, pressing it softly to my cheek. “For what might have been, Ella,” he murmurs, “I’ll at least treasure that always.” The connection burns between us, humming through me and raising the hairs on my neck. I stare at him, smiling a little, marveling at the magic that swirls in the air. But before I can get truly lost in it, someone clears their throat from the doorway.

I smile as my eyes fall on my mate, my sweet baby in his arms, glaring at both of us. Rafe lets out a little happy squeal and waves his hand, clearly choosing to respond to my emotions instead of his father’s. Calvin hastily drops his hand from my cheek.

“I should go,” Calvin murmurs, starting to stand.

“Do you have to?” I say, sorry to see him leave. There’s so much left here we need to explore – “Yes,” Sinclair and Calvin say at once, making me grin and look between them.

“All right,” I say, putting my hands up and admitting when I’ve been outvoted.

“But Calvin, you always have friends here. I hope that you truly believe that. The Goddess has wrought a bond between us, though it may be a mystery why for a long, long time.” “And you’ll always have a

friend in Atalaxia, though I may be the only one,” he says with a little shrug. Then he looks over at Rafe, sleeping in Sinclair’s arms.

“Though I hope the numbers grow as our children do.” “Me too,” I say, standing and daring to put a hand on his shoulder, feeling the little pulse pass through me like a zap of electricity. Calvin grins at me a little when he feels it too.

Enough, Sinclair says in my mind, and so I take my hand away, though I hope Calvin doesn’t notice.

Calvin looks at me for a long, long moment before he nods once and turns.

Then he nods tensely to Sinclair as he crosses the room. He takes a moment to study Rafe before he walks silently out the door.

I sigh as I watch my friend leave. He doesn’t look back.

Sinclair slowly walks to my side, wrapping a supportive arm around me when I press myself against him. "Are you all right?" he murmurs.

I look up at him. "Yeah," I sigh. "I wish that it wasn't so awkward now. I mean, I really like him, Dominic. He feels like an old friend. I don't want to part on bad terms." "It's not bad terms," he says quietly, his lips turning up at the corner. "He's just disappointed because he thought he was finding the love of his life a very pretty love of his life at that – and as it turns out it's just some weird sparky Goddess bond that does not get you in his bed." I laugh out loud at the bluntness of my mate's words, shaking my head at him and wrapping my arms around his waist. "Don't sound so smug about it, Dominic." I can't help a little smile though.

"I'll be as smug as I want," he says, smirking at me before dipping his head to press a kiss to my mouth. "I get you in my bed, after all." "My bed," I say, narrowing my eyes. "I picked it." "I paid for it," he

counters. I laugh, and when I do Rafe fusses and reaches for me, sending a little pulse of want down our bond.

"Ohhh baby," I say, taking Rafe in my arms and cuddling him close. "You're right, let's get you to bed, little boy." And even as I walk quietly back to my room with my baby in my arms and my mate at my side, a little coil of grief still curls in me.

Because even if I have a new friend in Atalaxia, one my mom picked out specifically for me?

Tomorrow, we still go to war

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