

## Her Brother, Her Mate Epilogue 2

4 Months later

Carli POV

I went almost my whole pregnancy without showing much, just a small bump, but over the last 3 weeks, it's like I tripled in size. Simone and Elena just threw me a private baby shower for Rosie Elaine Snider, the little snot currently crushing my bladder. Parker wanted to hyphenate her last name, but I wanted Rosie to grow up knowing exactly who her daddy was. Courtney's and Casey's son, Calum, was born last year and he can carry on the Childes name. Rosie will be a Snider, just like Parker.

I gave in and am taking time off from work. Elena is filling in for me, and I'm very grateful. I put up a fight to continue working, but it was wearing on me. Parker would smirk while rubbing my feet every night, knowing my stubborn butt was just standing my ground for the sake of being stubborn and not wanting to give it.

Last week, I started suffering from dizziness and even fainted during morning training. I probably would have tried to hide it from Parker, but Matt had already mind linked him. He was there before I even came to. He commanded me to stay home until Rosie was born, and I gave in. I didn't want to put her at risk by fainting while I was working and no one was around to catch me. I was planning on going on maternity leave after fainting anyway. I didn't really give in, I just let Parker think I did.

I was waddling down the stairs and made it halfway down the first flight when I felt a dizzy spell wash over me. I mind linked Parker, asking him to come save me as I slowly sat down, waiting for him. We have an appointment at the hospital to make the arrangements for the delivery, and I wanted to raid the kitchens for pickles before we left. Pickles are my biggest craving. I ate the last of ours at 2 in the morning, and need my fix before we leave.

Parker comes jogging up the stairs, sighing in relief when he finds me sitting on the middle step.

“Thanks for not pushing yourself,” he smiles as he bends down and lifts my fat body.

“No problem,” I kissed his cheek.

“Where we going? We still have an hour before we need to leave. I was going to come get you.”

“Kitchen. Pickles.” I stated, swinging my legs as he carried me down. He chuckles softly and kisses my forehead.

“I’ll stop at the store and buy more on our way back.”

Parker sets me in a chair in the dining hall, bringing another over for me to rest my feet on, then goes back to the kitchen and asks the chefs for a whole jar of pickles. He also brought me a huge glass of water and a stack of napkins.

“Do you need anything else?”

“Nope,” I popped the ‘p’ and sat back, crunching on my first pickle, moaning in satisfaction. “Thank you, babe,” I smiled up at him, mouth full. He laughs, then bends to kiss my lips softly.

“Can you stay put until I come get you in a bit?”

“Yep. I got my phone. I’ll read my nerd pictures,” I told him.

I’m opening up my comic app, ready to get into my favorites, when my mom comes walking in. I tried to ignore her, hoping she was just stopping by the packhouse to see Parker and came into the dining hall for a snack, but I had no such luck.

“Carli! There you are. I came to speak with you.” Her tone is friendly, but by her demeanor I can tell she’s expecting me to argue with her about whatever she wants to speak to me about.

I sighed in frustration, setting down my phone, and picking up my water to take a big gulp. She sits across from me, and looks at my jar of pickles with disdain. I intentionally pick up the jar, lifting another pickle, and bite into it, then smile at her.

“What’s up?” I asked, mouth full of pickle.

She huffs and shakes her head in disapproval before shaking it again, and pasting back on a fake smile.

“I wanted to talk to you about the birth of....of the baby,” she didn’t like the name ‘Rosie’, “I know you are going to the hospital today to create your birth plan, and I just wanted to ask you....to tell you that I want to be there.”

I scoff, “No way. I’m good.”

Her lips twitch, but she tries to keep the fake smile in place. “Carli, be reasonable. I should be there. I’m your mother and that child’s grandmother.”

“Say that child’s name then,” I stared coldly at her. Her face finally falls.

“Rosie,” she muttered.

“Rosie what?”

She huffs, crossing her arms across her chest, “I don’t see how that’s relevant. If you just want to point out that you won, naming your daughter after the two women I detest most in this world-”

“Winning isn’t always what the victim wants, Mary. This isn’t about winning. Sometimes they just want to live in peace, without those who once bullied them in their sights. Not having you there when I give birth to my daughter, a daughter I will always love and protect, unlike what you did for me, is not about winning against you. It’s about being at peace with myself. You may be Parker’s mom, and I’m sure he will bring her around for you to meet, but I do not want you in the delivery room with me. I don’t even want you in the hospital. I want to give birth peacefully with the woman who raised me, and loved me unconditionally even without being the one to give birth to me. Elena will be with me to teach me how a real mother should treat her daughter. If you aren’t okay with that, that’s of no consequence to me.”

She stands abruptly, and I can see her stance change to how it used to right before she would rear back and slap me. I met her fierce gaze, trying to show her how little her tantrum truly meant to me without backing down. I wasn’t someone she could bully anymore. After a few more seconds, she turned and stormed out of the room. Good riddance.

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1 week later

Parker POV

“Push, baby, push,” I told her, tears streaming down my face as I watched the strongest woman I know push life from her. She’s a f\*\*\*\*\*g warrior, through and through. She opted to go completely natural, no pain meds or epidurals, and she hasn’t shed a single tear. She’s been cussing like a sailor for the last 12 hours, at anyone and everyone who even looked at her in a way she found offensive, and my arm is probably broken in 3 different places from her squeezing it so hard with each contraction, but she’s fighting through this like the warrior goddess she is.

Elena is holding one knee, cooing reassuringly in her ear, and I’m on her other side, trying not to complain as her nails tear through my skin. So close. My baby girl is crowning and we just need her to give one more good push.

“Is that f\*\*\*\*\*g baby here yet? Goddess damn it, hurry the f\*\*k up in there,” Thomas yells from the hall, angering Carli. He’s been more wound up than anyone, and with Elena in here, he’s wreaking havoc on the hospital staff since no one else can calm his anxiety. He fought with Carli about doing the epidural, saying he wanted it to be easier on her, and now he’s frustrated because there’s nothing he can do to help her. He had to wait for her to do it her way.

Carli, fueled by her anger, pushes with everything she has and, finally, Rosie Elaine is born. The room soon fills with her sweet little wails and everyone breathes a sigh of relief.

She’s gorgeous. She has a head full of dark blonde hair, and the cutest little nose. She’s absolutely perfect, just like her mother.

“Thank you,” I wailed, kissing Carli’s face, nuzzling into her as the nurses cleaned up our baby. “Thank you so much, baby.”

She smiles, resting her face against mine, “Chikfila. I need a spicy chicken sandwich now,” she tells us, making everyone laugh. They didn’t let her eat anything after checking in, and I knew that was going to be the first thing she wanted, so I already had Simone on her way with her spicy deluxe chicken sandwich, extra pickles, with mac’n’cheese and a lemonade. All her favorites.

The nurse hands me Rosie, and I bring her over to my mate. I set her gently on Carli's chest, then kissed both of their cheeks.

"Welcome to the world, Rosie Elaine. I'm your daddy. I'm going to protect and love you for the rest of your life," I whispered gently to my daughter.

When I looked up, Carli had tears glistening in her eyes. Giving birth, dry eyes. I tell our daughter how much she will always mean to me, and Carli is finally getting emotional.

"I love you so much, Parker. I'm so happy you're her father. I'm so happy it was you," she chokes out, her tears breaking free. I stroke her cheeks, gently wiping them away.

"I love you too, baby. I'm so happy it was me too."