

Accidental Surrogate for Alpha

Chapter 177

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#Chapter 177 — Hypnosis

Ella

"I don't want to wake up ." I complain, still snuggled beneath the covers of my dream bed with Sinclair.

"I know, but the sooner we do and get back to work, the sooner we can be reunited." Sinclair replies, sounding every bit as reluctant as I feel.

"Meet me again tonight?" I request, wondering how I'll ever force myself to untangle my limbs from his.

True to his promise, my mate had freed me of my guilt and helped me forgive myself, just not in the way I expected. I got to give him plenty of pleasure, but unleashing all of his Alpha power was like experiencing his wolf on steroids. He was so wild and feral, practically rabid with lust, and my wolf responded like a complete wanton. I imagine it's what being in heat will feel like after the baby comes, and the entire night passed in a blurry haze. My body is sore and aching from my mate's dominant treatment, but my heart is light and my conscience is clear.

"wild horses couldn't stop me." Sinclair promises, still bathing me in the glow of his astounding magic.

"We'll of course not." I joke, "your wolf is the size of a bloody horse already and he's got built in knives on his fingers and toes."

Sinclair laughs, petting my hip. "Fine, an army of vampires couldn't stop me." He amends.

I pause, "wait, are vampires real too?"

"No." Sinclair smiles, without judgment. He pauses then, seeming to be listening for something. "I think I'm waking up. Be good today, little mate. No skipped meals or forgotten naps."

"I'll be good as long as you stay safe." I agree, thinking I might cry and then feeling ridiculous for being so emotional over such a short time apart.

Sinclair rumbles wordlessly, but he seems to sense my words came from a place of vulnerability, so he doesn't chastise me. no.vel.ebook Instead he waits for me to look up at him again, "and please talk to Gabriel about investigating your past, the longer we put it off the more you'll dread it, sweetheart."

I nod in reluctant confirmation, "I'll make some time."

Sinclair simply kisses me, pouring all his love through our bond, and then he's gone.

I wake up a short time later, the wonderful, airy emotions from my dream turned bittersweet by my mate's absence. I scarf down my breakfast and throw myself into making arrangements for the summit, before visiting the orphans and departing for the refugee arrivals camp. When I arrive, I'm surprised to discover that my sister is already present, anxiously looking on as the Vanaran doctors treat injured shifters. She's so consumed in the events in the medical tent that she doesn't even notice me approaching beside her. When I place a gentle hand on her arm she leaps a foot into the air, yelping in surprise.

"Ella, you scared me." She breathes, pressing her hand to her breast.

"Dm sorry." I profess, giving her an apologetic squeeze. I follow her gaze to a surgeon setting a broken bone, placing the injured arm into a strange machine, which automatically projects a light image of the woman's skeleton, like a portable x-ray which requires no radiation. As we watch, the machine carefully bends and shifts the limb until the bones are lined up properly, and the shifter only emits a low hiss, making me think it must be a relatively pain-free process. "Admiring the Vanaran technology?"

I inquire, feeling amazed myself.

"It's so far ahead of anything we have back home, even in the shifter community." She shares, shaking her head. "These packs have a lot they could be teaching the rest of the world — a lot of good they might be doing. Instead they keep it to themselves."

"I can't blame them for hiding." I reply, "you know how humans are with people they don't know or understand.no.vel.ebook If they found out about wolves we'd have a witch trial reboot on our hands."

"But wolves aren't some marginalized group." Cora answers, " they are the ones holding the power. Yes, humans would be afraid and all the bigots in the world would probably demonize them the way they do with everyone who's different, but they'd be punching up. Shifters are the Goliath to their David, not the other way around."

"Humans outnumber wolves four to one." I remind her. "Yes, we might have strength and technology on our side, but I think it's a mistake to forget how much damage humans can do when they set their minds to it."

Cora looks at me with an unreadable expression now, and I'm surprised to find a gulf between us. Our relationship didn't change when we found out I'm a shifter, but in this discussion we're suddenly separated by our identities. "On our side?" She repeats, her brow furrowing. "You mean your side. Have you forgotten, sister, that I'm one of the hateful humans you're talking about?"

"I didn't mean it that way." I sigh, replaying my words in my mind and realizing how cold they must have sounded.

"You were a human for thirty years Ella, and you've been a wolf for less than a month. I thought your allegiance was stronger than that." Cora remarks, "You're so concerned for all these displaced shifters, for your pack.. have you even thought about how this war is affecting the humans on the continent? They're suffering the same violence and instability, but unlike us, they don't have any idea why it's happening or where it's coming from. It must just seem as though the world's gone mad." thuy Her chocolate eyes shine in the fluorescent lights.

"And they don't have anywhere to run, there is no magical continent to offer them refuge."

My heart sinks as I realize she's right. I've been concerned for everyone left behind, but until this moment I hadn't given any specific thought to the humans. The shame I so recently banished comes back to strike at me full force. Where are all the humans I once knew? The children I nannied? Are they even alive?

"I'm sorry." I choke, "You're right. I've gotten so caught up in my own life these last couple of weeks... in trying to figure out where I came from, that I forgot the people who took me in when the shifters abandoned me."

"Well, if anyone has an excuse to be a bit self absorbed right now, it's you." Cora appeases begrudgingly. "And I'm probably just taking out my frustration on you, which isn't fair."

"No, you were right." I insist. "I have to think about the humans too, Sinclair might already be monitoring the situation or planning things, but if he isn't, I'll make sure we start." I decide, thinking aloud. Almost as an afterthought, I add, "Frustration with what?"

It's possible she was referring to Roger's advances, but then it's also possible that I've been an even more negligent sister than I realized.

"Ella, my whole world got blown up too." Cora scoffs, sounding annoyed. "My job, my home, everything I knew is gone. And now I'm here like some sort of third wheel to you and the refugees — an interloper with no rightful place or role. I can't even practice medicine here because they're living in the fucking space age."

My eyes fall shut, a heap of guilt joining my shame. "Cora, I should have realized. I'm really sorry, and I know I keep saying that but it's the truth. I feel terrible." I take her hand in mine, half afraid she'll reject it.

"We'll find you a role. Maybe it can be helping with the efforts to support humans back home, or maybe you can help here." I suggest, gesturing to the medical tent.

"You were just saying how much we have to learn from the Vanarans. Well, this is a chance. Just because you don't know this technology yet doesn't Mean you can't be trained. You have all the medical knowledge, this is just new methodology right?"

"Well yes and no, because they probably understand things about disease and physiology that we haven't figured out yet, but... I would love to learn." Cora shares wistfully. "The science nerd in me is geeking out already and I don't even know the tip of the iceberg. Do you really think I could find an apprenticeship or something here?"

"If they try to say no I'll just sick Dominic on them." I promise, proud and pleased to see my sister so excited. "We'll make it happen."

She hugs me tightly, and slips a little bit closer to the procedure happening in the medical tent. I retreat gradually feeling anew weight on my overburdened shoulders. "Something on your mind?" Gabriel inquires, entering the room for his own daily visit to the camp.

"You know when you think you have a handle on your to-do list, and then 8 thousand new things pop up that you should have already accounted for but didn't because you were too stressed or too preoccupied with your other tasks?" thuy I ask, exhaling with exhaustion.

"yes." He chuckles. "Anything I can help with?"

I set my hands on my hips, working up my courage. "Well, I'd probably prefer to have your help on some of the things I was just talking about with my sister, but I know I should really be asking about DNA and hypnotists."

He nods in understanding, looping an arm around my shoulder. " I'll tell you what, why don't we go back to the palace and get my royal physician to run some tests for you. I'll call in the hypnoterapist, and in the meantime, we can talk about the things you'd rather focus on."

I hang my head, really not wanting to do this. "Deal."