

Accidental Surrogate for Alpha

Chapter 204

#Chapter 204 – Damon Plots

3rd Person

When James started transporting refugees from the embattled continent to the hidden territories, his job had seemed simple – dangerous, but simple. He would land his plane on the coast and hide it as best he could, taxiing into the forest and covering the aircraft with tarps and plantlife. He would then travel inland on foot. It was twenty miles to the nearest village, so James would often trek through the night until he came to the modest inn where Sinclair’s network of spies were ferrying hunted shifters to safety. Once they were handed over into James’s care, the spies would disappear back whence they came, and James would lead his new charges to the coast.

On a few occasions things had gotten dicey, like with Sadie’s parents. They had unknowingly been followed by Damon’s agents, forcing the entire group to scatter while James and some of the abler men stayed to fight. When Sadie’s father fell, her mother hadn’t been able to stay away, and the decision cost her life. Thankfully that sort of drama was a rarity, though every refugee was consumed by near constant adrenaline on their journey, only able to relax once the plane landed in the hidden territories. At least, that’s the way things started, back when he’d had the time to learn every face and name, hear every harrowing escape story.

Everything changed when the humans learned about shifters. Now the once-empty coast was crowded with bodies as far as the eye could see. There was no longer any need to travel to the village, because the refugees came straight to him. Landing had become something of a gauntlet, as the terrified people were too busy clambering to the front of the queue to clear an adequate landing strip. James was terrified that he was going to hit someone one of these days. Even with the extra planes and pilots Gabriel had provided to make these runs, there was never enough space for everyone. At best they could take a hundred people a day, but thousands were gathered – exhausted, starving, and injured.

James was also well aware that the operation was growing too large to stay secret, and he lived in constant fear of the day that Damon would send his army to slaughter the fleeing shifters. The only silver lining– if it could be called such a thing – was that his forces were so busy trying to manage the havoc they’d wreaked across the land, that there weren’t any soldiers to spare.

So as he helped the most urgently injured shifters and families with the youngest children board the plane, he was so distracted answering the pleas and cries from those who wouldn’t be able to travel this day, that he didn’t notice an extra man sneak onto the plane. He didn’t catch the way the shifty character slunk to the very back and huddled on the ground, wrapped in an emergency blanket. James didn’t see the dangerous glint in his eye as he surveyed the quaking passengers, and when they eventually landed in the hidden territories, he didn’t realize that one of his passengers hadn’t thanked him for his rescue.

The man prowled off into the triage tents, his hungry gaze taking in every detail, listening to every word spoken by his relieved companions. When he reached the intake tables, he gave a false name, accepted his tent assignment, and disappeared into the camp– as silent as a ghost.

“They’re here.”

Damon – now better known as Emperor Damon (as he insisted everyone call him) or the Usurper (for which he threatened to kill anyone caught calling him) or His Royal Fuckwit (his least favorite name of all) – swore violently, smashing his fist into his desk. “I knew it! That bastard Gabriel must be hiding them.” He complained, speaking so loudly into the phone receiver that the man on the other end of the line flinched. “Have you seen them?”

“No, I’m still in the refugee camp.” His spy replied. “But I have plenty to tell you regardless. This entire place is abuzz with intel, the idealistic fools never saw me coming.”

“Well get on with it then.” Damon ordered gruffly, pacing in his rooms.

“To start, Sinclair is apparently traveling around the Vanaran territories building alliances with the Alphas here, and the rest of his delegation stayed behind. Word is that the old man and Sinclair’s Luna visit the camp most days, and the King and that traitor Roger are busy trying to find local families to host the refugees.” The spy reported, derision heavy on his tongue.

“What else?” Damon growled, becoming more and more furious with every moment that passed. “Do you know if the alliances are successful? Are they building an army?”

“I don’t know, but there’s going to be a huge political summit next week. Every Alpha on the continent is going to gather in the Capital to either pledge or deny their support.” He answered. “They’ve made it into quite a lavish affair, with excursions, opportunities to hear from the survivors of the conflict, feasts and even a grand ball.”

“Trust Sinclair to wine and dine grown men like one of his fucking girlfriends. Does he understand nothing about war?” Even as he said it, Damon was grinding his teeth with barely contained worry. If Sinclair succeeded in his efforts, there was no telling the damage he and the Vanarans could inflict. With their next-generation technologies, they could probably wipe out his armies in a single stroke. “I can’t believe I didn’t think of this sooner. I thought they’d just gone to ground. I should have remembered how far back he and Gabriel go!”

“Well the Vanarans aren’t your only problem.” His spy remarked reluctantly. “They might not even be your biggest.”

“What the hell are you talking about?” Damon hissed.

“By far the biggest rumor swirling around this place is that they’ve figured out his Luna is the long lost daughter of King Xavier.” The spy shared, trying to hide the excitement in his own voice.

“That’s nonsense, Xavier and Reina never had children. Everyone knows that.” Damon argued, though he rubbed his neck, trying to remember if there had ever been a failed pregnancy or still-birth. “There is no way they could have had a pup without anyone knowing, let alone that the bitch would have ended up in a human orphanage.”

“Apparently it was by the Goddess’s own orders that she be hidden.” The spy explained, relating the events of the hypnosis session, which were now all over the city.

“What absolute nonsense.” Damon dismissed the tale before the last words were even out of the man’s mouth. “That sounds like the sort of fairy tale a child makes up to comfort themselves. People can’t possibly believe that shit.”

“But how could a tiny human child know about wolves? How could she know about a King and Queen when she didn’t even know monarchies still existed? That anything existed outside of the human world?” The spy questioned.

“I don’t know, kids are creative.” Damon scoffed, “Last week my son was talking to an imaginary cowboy all day long, the little idiot.”

“They’re calling her a demi-goddess.” The man revealed, “they believe she was sent to save them. She’s even more popular than Sinclair.”

“Then get rid of her.” Damon commanded sharply. “If they lose their hope, they lose their will to fight. Put an end to the bitch before it’s too late.”

“Do we even know if she can be killed?” The spy asked uncertainly, “if she’s truly the go–”

“Everyone and everything can be killed, one way or another.” Damon snapped. “Sinclair isn’t there to protect her and from the sounds of it, she’s running around the refugee camp without a care in the world, so just get it done.”

“I didn’t sign up to assassinate anyone.” The man countered. “This was just supposed to be information gathering.”

“Oh like you haven’t killed for me before.” Damon reminded him. “Don’t tell me you’re balking because she’s breeding.”

“No... but I’m not eager to kill the child of the Goddess.” He corrected.

“You can’t honestly believe that nonsense.” Damon exploded. “She’s not a fucking unicorn, she’s a regular she-wolf with a grandiose personality disorder.”

“I won’t do it.” The spy protested, gritting his teeth. “Even if I wanted to, she’s constantly surrounded by people. I might be able to get to her but it would be the end of me. Can you imagine what they would do to the man who murdered their savior.”

“Fine, if you’re too much of a coward to do what’s necessary, then at least kill Sinclair while he’s away from his reinforcements.” Damon suggested. “If he’s traveling then he’s vulnerable – meeting countless shifters he doesn’t know, moving through unsecured areas with minimum security. There are advanced technologies in Vanara, weapons and tools we don’t have. It could be as simple as planting an explosive on the road to intercept his car.”

“That’s assuming I can get my hands on their weapons and track him down in time, to predict his movements well enough to ensure he fell for the trap.” The spy explained.

“Is that a no?” Damon snarled.

“No,” the spy clarified. “It’s a question of how much you’re willing to pay. If you want me to kill an Alpha, my price just went up.”