

# Accidental Surrogate for Alpha

Chapter 221

#Chapter 221 - Adoption

3rd Person 'You can't be serious.' James stared at Roger in shock, not believing his own ears.

"It's just a possibility we have to consider." The new Beta replied gently. "Trust me, no one wants it to be true."

"Are you suggesting that I might have been responsible for bringing the wolves who attacked the Alpha's convoy to this continent?" James clarified, wanting to know if the Alpha's concerns about Damon hiding spies among the refugees was purely hypothetical, or based on something more.

"We don't know anything for sure." Roger replied carefully. "But you said yourself that it was only a matter of time before Damon's forces found the meeting point on the coast. It's gotten too big to remain hidden."

"I did, but I was more concerned with increasing evacuations to try and save as many as we could before he brought the hammer down." James answered, wondering if he was at fault somehow. He'd certainly never viewed the fleeing masses clamoring for a spot on his plane as a threat, he'd only ever wanted to help those in need. Moreover, he thought it was dangerous to start viewing them as a security risk. But when he considered it, truly thought back on the hundreds of flights which all seemed to blur together, he couldn't say whether or not he may have missed something - or someone. "Have you checked the registration lists at the camp?"

"For what exactly?" Roger inquired, rubbing his jaw. "A spy is hardly likely to write 'hail Damon' on his entry forms."

"Well almost all the refugees are women and children, the only men who are fleeing have families to protect." James explained, thinking out loud. "The rest are staying behind to join the resistance. I can't recall any single men boarding my flights, but if there are any registered at the camp, they would be my prime suspects."

"And if the spies are women?" Roger countered, arching a brow.

"It's not impossible, but when has Damon ever hired she-wolves as anything but sex workers?." James shrugged, "Knowing him, he would laugh at the very idea of a woman spy."

'You may have a point there.' Roger conceded, making a mental note to review the registration records.

"What do you suggest for security in the meantime?" James probed, wondering if the Beta would have the gall to suggest screening at the coast.

Roger read the other wolf's expression with ease. "How bad is it, at the pickup point?"

James arched a brow, "How are you on planes?"

"As long as I don't have to fly one I'll be fine." Roger reasoned, already guessing what the pilot was about to suggest.

James smiled. "Then come and see for yourself. I could tell you, but it wouldn't be the same. And if you're going to advise Dominic about this, you need to have first hand experience."

"Then you've got yourself a copilot." Roger accepted, "When do we leave?"

"Five am." James looked towards the door, no doubt thinking of his next destination. "I have a visit to pay in the meantime."

"Uh-huh." The Beta grinned. "A certain she-wolf with legs for days and a vicious growl?"

James only laughed, "Something like that."

A little while later he was striding into the nursery. Pups immediately raced to greet him, and as much as he enjoyed seeing their happy faces - especially after witnessing the fear and sorrow they'd worn when they first arrived here - he only had eyes for the beguiling she-wolf who watched over them. His eyes flew to her like a magnet, only drifting elsewhere when he realized her arms were empty for once. He quickly spotted a sweet bundle snoozing in a nearby crib and, heart swelling, he allowed his eyes to return to the willowy beauty at the rear of the hall.

As the pups self-appointed guardian angel, Isabel was aware the moment a new wolf entered her territory, but for once she didn't look up to investigate the interloper. James knew she was already so accustomed to his scent and the children's moods that she recognized him without looking. Still, she refused to look his way, but the hardened soldier only grinned.

He prowled forward, breathing in her wonderful scent and relishing the spike of excitement in her blood. Silly mate, who does she think she's fooling. His wolf purred in his ear, more than a little amused by her cold shoulder.

She needs time. James reminded him, reveling at how quickly and completely his spirits had rallied at the mere sight of her. Her heart sped up as he neared, and the steady beat in his own chest changed to match its melodic rhythm. "Hello Isabel." He greeted her, not stopping until they were almost touching.

Isabel jolted slightly, as if she was so busy trying to cope with his sudden proximity that she wasn't prepared to hear his deep voice as well. Her bright gaze flitted up to his before retreating again. "Hello." She answered, turning her back and making herself busy folding laundry.

A lock of auburn hair had fallen loose of her messy bun, and it trailed along the curve of her neck - tempting him. He caught the silken tresses between his thumb and forefinger, toying with the soft strands.

Goosebumps rose on Isabel's neck, and the hair on her nape stood on end. He was tempted to lean forward and kiss her, instead he simply let her feel his warm breath against her skin. "How's our girl doing today?"

"She's perfect, as usual." Isabel answered tritely, trying and failing to smother a shiver as his other hand grazed her waist. Apart from a single kiss at the height of her turmoil over adopting Sadie, James hadn't pushed Isabel to act on their chemistry. Sure, he wrangled the stubborn wolf into a cuddle every now and then, but when it came to true romance the soldier was determined to make her come to him.

He deliberately brushed against her as he shifted to the crib where Sadie slept, an incandescent and entirely unintentional smile taking over his features as he laid eyes on the little girl. The infant was sound asleep with her arms and legs splayed wide, a peaceful expression on her tiny face. He couldn't stop himself from reaching for her, even though Isabel's sharp whisper attempted to halt him. "What are you doing! You'll wake her!"

"Oh ye of little faith," He murmured, lifting the slumbering bundle into his arms. Sadie didn't stir, and James rocked her back and forth, wondering if any pup had ever looked so sweet.

Isabel huffed, but sidled closer to study the child. "You're lucky, you should never risk waking a sleeping baby - no matter how cute they are."

"But no baby has ever been this cute." James expressed, ducking his head to kiss Sadie's downy head. "I'd have to be a monster to resist her."

"Every baby is this cute when you love them." Isabel corrected him, sounding far away even though she hadn't moved an inch.

James searched her lovely features, immediately seeing the love and longing in her blue eyes. Cradling Sadie in one arm, he reached for Isabel with the other, sliding his big hand around her waist. "And you? How are you doing today, little wolf?"

"Fine." Isabel replied curtly, squirming a bit in his hold. When James continued to intently stare at her, she added. "You shouldn't look at me that way."

"Why not? I've had a bloody wretched day. All I want to do is hold my Sadie bug and look at you." He professed, his lips curling into a smirk, "Well, that's not all I want to do, but I have a feeling it's all you'll let me get away with."

Isabel narrowed her eyes, but leaned into his warmth despite her sullen mood. "Why has your day been so hard?"

"Just pack stuff. Things I really don't want to think about right now." He revealed, dropping his head to the curve of her neck and breathing in her scent. Some of the knots in his stomach untangled as her fragrance washed over him, making his conversation with Roger feel like it was a million miles away.

"Well, if you want to think about something else," Isabel began hesitantly, sounding uncharacteristically nervous. James raised his head at the shaky tone, and Isabel's courage fled. She backed out of his hold, wringing her hands.

She'd thought a lot about the question she was about to ask, and every time she convinced herself it wasn't appropriate, her inner wolf pitched a fit. The stubborn creature insisted that, appropriate or not, it was right. The canine was certain James would agree, but Isabel wasn't sure... or perhaps she was afraid he would agree, and she wasn't sure what that would mean for them.

Throwing her doubts aside, she forced the words out, staring at her feet rather than meeting the intimidating pilot's piercing gaze. "I've decided that it's time for me to truly claim Sadie as my daughter... and I thought you might like to do the same?"