

# Lita's Love for the Alpha

## Introductions

If the ringing in her ears and flushing up her neck was any sign, Lita was ninety percent sure she would murder one of these men.

Andres' eyes flashed bright green the second he touched her hand, strands of hair slipping forward over his brow. And still his handsome face would not spare him the violent rage building under her skin.

Up close, she could recognize him from his social media, and she begrudgingly accepted he looked even better in real life. Warm-toned white skin, intense brown eyes that seemed to catch the lights when he smiled. He'd been the first to stand up and properly introduce himself after they all laughed in a way that scratched down her insides like blades. Did they think it was funny she had to beg to be allowed to join the gym? Did they think it was all in good fun that she'd had to rip out a piece of her heart by bringing James' name up? And for what? All it had done was convince them she was a desperate stalker with a kink for dead fighters.

Her stomach rebelled at the idea, something toxic springing up in the back of her mind. How dare she get angry enough to fight with these strangers when she couldn't muster anything to fight off Brian? What did it say about her if all her fight left as soon as he turned those cool blue eyes on her? Did it say that she wanted it, that she liked the way he treated her? Lita wanted to vomit. She felt it churning at the base of her throat as the warm flush of anger spread everywhere, her fingertips throbbing and itching, her toes curling in her tennis until they hurt. It had only been sheer willpower that kept her rooted in place while they laughed at her expense. The skin on her tattooed wrist was raw from how she scratched it, weighing the likelihood of making it to her pills before she exploded.

Was she expecting a rave reaction? No, not exactly. They didn't know her, and she didn't know them. And truthfully, Lita knew she still looked like hell physically, but some part of her expected they'd find her at least decent enough not to laugh. That was the bare minimum bar to set for men, wasn't it?

Lita had never been too clear on her own beauty. Outside of Brian, no one really gave her a second look and since all of \*his\* looks meant misery for her, Lita wasn't entirely convinced he thought she was beautiful, either. Maybe he just found her attainable or a necessary means to an end with her parents.

And as Andres reached for a handshake, Lita reminded herself that she wasn't actually here to be a bunny, so it didn't matter what they thought of her or how pathetic they must have found her. She blew out a shaky breath, her misplaced rage was not new, and it hadn't killed her yet, so it wouldn't kill her now. His warm brown eyes flashed emerald for a moment as he studied her face. Andres' brows knit together, and he frowned.

"Are you alright?" he asked quietly. She counted \*one, two, three, four...\*

Certain she wasn't going to explode the second she opened her mouth, Lita blinked, looking up at the neon gym lights, the only reasonable explanation for his strange eyes.

"Perfectly peachy, considering I'm just one big joke here. I never seem to forget how ridiculous you all find me." Lita didn't know what to make of the light trick that changed his eye color, but she just shrugged. It didn't matter.

"You're not a joke and it's nothing but a pleasure to meet you," he said, leaning in to place a delicate kiss on her cheek, his heavy accent making her stomach do somersaults against her will. "I think you misunderstood our laughter, \*sweetheart\*." When he released her cheek, Andres stepped back enough for Lita to look at him and see the guilty expression on his face.

"Looking at it from your perspective," he pondered, "I can see why you would think something negative, and for that I sincerely apologize, but we weren't laughing at you lovely. We were laughing at Alex." As if his own words conjured up more humor, his cheeks turned pink, and he laughed all over again. "We're just thinking of how badly we're going to tease him for calling \*you\*—" he gave her a quick once-over —"a psycho bunny. Does he not have eyes?"

"Learn to share, bro," Mark cut in, saving Lita from having to reply. Her mind swam with ways to take Andres' comment as an insult, but she couldn't figure out how. He didn't appear to be teasing her. Nor did Mark. His smirk had deepened, showing a hint of canines that made him look hungry rather than mean-spirited. He patted Andres' shoulder then shoved him out of the way. "You can't hog the pretty newcomer, D."

The nickname made little sense for Andres. Then she remembered they called him Delta, and she almost snorted. A nickname for a nickname? It seemed ridiculous. Then Lita's mind seemed to catch up to what Mark had said. \*Pretty\*. It shouldn't have made her chest swell, but it did. When was the last time someone other than Brian gave her a compliment?

Mark took up the hand Andres let go of and leaned down to plant a kiss on it. The second his lips touched her skin, his forest green eyes fluttered up to meet hers and sparkled a bright amber for a split second. Lita inhaled, her insides turning to liquid heat at that gaze. She was definitely losing her mind when it came to those eye colors, but damn if she cared.

"Babe, it's positively a sin that we haven't met before today," he smiled, continuing to hold and caress her hand with those warm, calloused fingers. "If I wasn't sure that Alex was a stick in the mud, I'd swear he was keeping you for himself," Mark admitted, his eyes stuck on a point just below her collarbones. Was she blushing?

"Brody! Go say \*hi\*, dammit, you're being rude," Jaz demanded quietly and practically dragged him up to Lita, shoving her elbow into his side.

Mark moved out of the way with an eye roll and a heated smirk that promised he wasn't anywhere near finished with her. The goosebumps breaking out over her arms were a strange feeling. She hadn't felt excitement or desire in so long, Lita didn't know what to do with it. Had she really changed so much with a month of workouts and a new bra? Maybe it was something else that made her appear more attractive. Maybe it was the new outlook, the hope against hope that she desperately clung to.

Thrust in front of her like the runt of the litter, Lita watched Brody swallow and blink, a muscle under his eye twitching.

"Hey," Brody said, waving his hand in the air with a pained expression, avoiding meeting her eyes as best as he could. He looked so uncomfortable. Lita knew he was trying his best to put on a brave face and while the others might not have thought his breakup that big of a deal, Lita could see the damage. She'd bet money that it had been a toxic relationship and he was trying to figure out his new reality. She could empathize with that. There was something so familiar about his mannerisms. Avoiding eye contact. Intense nervousness. Sudden nausea.

Brody needed a friend. Someone to give him a hug and tell him the pain would pass. Without thinking too much about it, she jumped forward and pulled him into an embrace. For the first second or two, he didn't move, holding his arms out like he was being attacked. But she didn't move or press for more. She just continued with the calm embrace. And eventually, when he realized she wasn't trying to force anything, he leaned in and embraced her back. She finally pulled away to admire his smiling face.

"Just seemed like you needed a hug," she whispered. He inhaled deeply, his eyes flashing yellow too. She shrugged like the hug wasn't a big deal, "Don't read too much into it, kay?" He gulped, nodding through a confused face.

"Well, you already know me, sticks," Alex said, walking around the group from behind Jaz. His tone left a lot to be desired, but Lita leaned into it, throwing a wave up over her head. He chuckled, "You don't look like absolute shit today, so I'm assuming Stace gave you the beginner learning curve?"

"Yea, well too bad you still do, Gymhead," Lita growled, giving him the finger as she stepped back from Brody. His eyes lit with a spark of blue, but instead of a temper, a grin spread over his face.

"Gymhead?!" Brody coughed, banging his fist into his chest as his eyes watered. "She's got balls, I'll give her that."

"B, you told us she was a dud," Andres crossed his arms, his brows curving. "You blind?"

"Don't go there," Alex grumbled, rolling his neck. "Nobody's blind. But trust me, as far as you lot are concerned, she's the worst dud you've ever seen."

"Fuck off, never seen a dud with cute little cheeks and a nervous dimple," Mark snapped, laughing huskily as he stared at Lita's blush. Then he turned back to Alex, "You should let the doc check you, bro, it's no way someone should be so uptight he can't see pretty when he's looking at it. Might be a medical issue. Something get stuck up there?"

Lita giggled so loud she clamped a hand over her mouth and took a couple steps back to give herself room. Her back collided with a wall. A wall that oddly enough had hands that slid onto her waist and held her still. Like her body had a supernatural awareness of him, Lita suddenly remembered the moment with Cole in the parking lot and knew exactly whose body was plastered to hers. Lita spun around to find Cole's eyes boring into her own. They were dangerously dark, more black than deep brown, and his nostrils flared as if he hated her smell. Instinctually, she clamped down her arms. Maybe she sweat too much during training? But these men were constantly sweating, surely, he could handle a little on her?

"Making friends, I see," he grumbled disapprovingly, never dropping his hands from her waist. His voice had a direct line to her chest, shooting heat and flutters throughout her. Did she know anyone with a voice so pleasantly rough? So deep and satisfying to her ears? Embarrassingly, she shook her head at her own question, and he cocked his head in confusion.

Cole gave her a once-over, eyes flashing red just as the lights changed, then nonchalantly released her and joined the others. That's it, she was definitely going to eat something tonight if the hallucinations were getting this out of control. Maybe the changing lights were aggravating her eyes?

"And you uh, know, this is uh, Cole..." Stace motioned, awkwardly, "A-Alpha..."

"We've already met," he dismissed, taking a stance up against the wall. "Several times." Lita could feel the anger radiating off him, and it made no sense. She hadn't done anything to anybody. Well, except flipping Alex off, but he'd taken it on the chin, so why did it seem like Cole was always mad at her?

"Well... it was nice meeting everyone," Lita chirped with a flick of her hair, trying to ignore Cole's eyes on her. She became increasingly aware of the sliver of skin showing between her top and bottoms because it grew warm. "I should head home. Ya know, school in the morning and all that." She tugged the shirt down harder.

"And we need to run," Cole co-signed, talking to the others, "Now."

So, they all started moving. Lita and Jaz went to gather their belongings and the others toward the back door, stripping down to their spandex bottoms. Stace merely stripped off her tank, leaving the sports bra beneath. Didn't people usually wear clothes to run? It was late evening, and the temperature wasn't nearly warm enough to warrant no sweats. Was this a punishment? Or some extreme form of competition preparation? Cole had said 'we' and he was also stripping out of his clothes, so Lita doubted it was a punishment. Unless he was such a hard-ass that he'd watch their misery up close.

"See ya tomorrow, Lita and Jaz!" Stace called over her shoulder as she disappeared out the back door.

Jaz pulled out of the parking lot first and Lita followed close behind, digging through her bag in the passenger seat. The tightness in her shoulders and chest told her she needed her meds. Cole seemed to always get her emotions high.

Alpha, why did that name sound stupid until it was used to describe him? Her face flushed as she thought about the way his hands caressed her waist. No, he hadn't caressed her. He'd just held her still, kept her in place so she didn't murder his feet. Where were the damn meds in this bag? When she still didn't find them, Lita made a frustrated sound and pulled over. Dumping half the bag out on the seat, she realized the little bottle wasn't there. \*Shit\*. She'd have to go back to the gym and look for it. She didn't have another appointment with her therapist until the end of the week to get a refill and she wouldn't make it through the week like this.

Lita made a U-turn on the next street as Jaz turned right and headed back into the parking lot. Slamming the door a little harder than she needed to and leaving the SUV running, Lita stomped toward the gym's front door.

Why was Cole so far under her skin? They hadn't said more than a handful of words to each other, but it was like every time she saw him, her body couldn't help but respond. It had to be pent up attraction. She could admit that he was sexy as hell, but so were the others. Her stomach knotted. Of course, she wanted some pleasure, as so much of her adult life had been stripped of it, but was the cost worth the risk? A mental image of Brian standing over her trembling body convinced Lita it wasn't.

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Cole was the only one who made her feel this flustered and disorganized. It was damn dangerous. Hormones made her stupid, and stupidity got stronger people than her killed every day.

Lita swung the door and walked with purpose back to her training area. She wasn't paying any attention to anything else. Lita looked on the bench, then she looked around the boxing mats. Getting on her knees, she finally found the pill bottle that had rolled underneath the bench. Huffing, she swiped it up and spun around to find four naked people clutching their rumpled clothes to their most private parts. Stace, Mark, Brody and Andres. Lita's mind stalled to a complete stop. What the hell had she walked in on? An orgy? Hadn't they been about to run? Was that a code for something?

"Lita, what the hell are you still doing here? We saw you leave!" Stace barked suddenly, her cheeks turning red.

"Whoa! Shit." Lita laughed, "Sorry to interrupt, guys. Carry on, I'm leaving... You don't have to be embarrassed at all. Totally normal." Lita playfully covered her eyes and lightly jogged back to the front door. She was sure she'd feel flustered too if they caught \*her\* doing something frisky, not that she'd ever get the chance, but Lita wasn't one to judge.

"No! Wait! Don't go out there, Lita!" Stace tried to stop her, even letting go of her clothes to grab for Lita before she could open the door.

"Jesus! You're naked, Stace. It's fine, I'm not judging, okay? Just let me get out of your hair," Lita insisted, pushing open the front door only to come face to face with two large red eyes and a mound of dark fur.

She froze, every ounce of blood in her body running cold. Her thoughts scattered under a primal, desperate fear. One that made her want to cower, to show her belly in complete submission.

The black wolf was easily the size of the doorway. Not only in width but in height, towering over her. Those red eyes burned her skin as the beast drew closer, eyes as intense as the neon gym lights. Watching the animal blow steam through its nose, Lita pretended it wasn't inhaling her deeply. The puff of warm air hit her arms a second before her body shook, tremors working from her shoulders to her fingers as every bit of warmth fled.

Was this shock? Her mind lost the thought as soon as she had it. Then another wolf appeared in a blur of gray fur with bright blue eyes, tackling the first one to the ground. The ground shook, the air rippled with heat.

The scream that ripped through Lita seared her chest. She couldn't move. She couldn't breathe. She couldn't do anything but watch the vicious animals tear at each other. The black one seemed to want to kill her. Even as the other clawed and bit at it, the black wolf only bared its teeth and edged closer.

Lita saw its clawed digging into the concrete with the force, all while never taking its eyes off her.

She was a second away from peeing herself.

"Lita RUN! Get to your car and GO!" Stace yelled, pushing her frantically out the door and into the parking lot, "Alex is holding him back but it won't last long! GO!"

Lita's mind processed nothing. Instead, she just ran as fast as she could to her car, got in, and threw it in reverse. She silently thanked whatever god was watching over her for leaving the car running as she floored the pedal, speeding away from the ferocious wolf chasing after her.