

# Lita's Love for the Alpha

## Bank Run

Lita angrily sat in a very stuffy bank office as she waited for her trust fund paperwork to be finalized. She'd already initiated this process at another bank branch closer to her apartment a few days ago, but she didn't have much time before her mother would know she wasn't on her way home. The sum left to transfer shouldn't have been an issue. Thankfully, Lita had been transferring her assets slowly over the last month, worried that large money moves would trigger some notification system and her parents would find out.

Lita huffed, she should have been happy to be out from under their thumbs, and yet... She couldn't put her finger on exactly why she was so upset but it didn't make it any less true. Brody sat in the chair next to her, tapping away on his phone.

It still frustrated her how she ended up with a babysitter. Cole kept saying bodyguard but the real meaning was clear, they did not trust her to be alone. Especially since Andres said no one knew where Cole's pack grounds were, so it wasn't like she'd be followed. Plus, who would know exactly what bank she was going to and at what time? That was ridiculous, even for supernatural creatures.

No, it was more likely they didn't want her to run off. Or maybe they didn't trust her with their secret. She rolled her eyes. Cole thought she would run off and start telling people something insane? No one would believe her. She didn't even believe her own own eyes.

After what happened in the bedroom, Cole was on Lita's last nerve, and she was determined to steer clear of him when she got back.

When she realized she needed to iron out these banking details before her mother knew she wasn't coming home, Lita seized the opportunity to get away from him for a little while. She'd had to call in a favor with the bank supervisor she worked with for her other transfers. The commission she promised would cover opening the bank for her on a Sunday.

She had never noticed, but now assumed, that control over Lita's life was her mother's number one goal. Why else was her money use monitored so heavily? Because if anyone had this much money to their name, they didn't need to ask permission to spend money at the mall.

Her mother just wanted to keep tabs on her. And it terrified some part of Lita to find out just how far that control really ran. Where had things really gone wrong? Had it been like this when she was a kid? The more she tried to think, the more she realized she remembered little her childhood at all.

Lita intended to continue the conversation about her family, and Brian too, when she got back to the house, but her head was already swimming with details that didn't quite make sense as it was. Perhaps she would be better off leaving it for another day.

Lita just wanted to go back to the way things were on Wednesday. Before date night. Before Cole. Before all this new information. How could she know how much her life would change? She desperately wanted out of her situation and now she was, but at what cost? What did she owe Cole in exchange?

Because that's the type of transactional love she was used to with Brian. Something given for something received. Why the hell was she putting love and Cole in the same sentence any fucking way? That was the bigger worry.

Of course when she'd mentioned needing to go to the bank, who was the first to demand she have an escort? Cole. And who was hell-bent on being that escort? Cole. After several spirited refusals, she settled on Brody, the least ego-driven of the bunch. He'd exposed her photograph, which say he was distrustful, something she could understand. And he was standoffish with her but Lita figured that means less talking.

Lita drummed her fingers on the desk as she waited for the manager to make copies of her signatures. Oddly enough, after popping three pills, she shouldn't have been capable of any jitters. But she found herself still on edge without a straightforward explanation.

"You're fidgety," Brody sighed, "It's kind of annoying."

She cut her eyes at him, but couldn't really find a reason to be upset. It was annoying her even more. She rolled her eyes, "Sorry. I think Cole just put me on edge."

"Yea, Alpha does that. Though it's not really the effect he usually has on women," he laughed, shaking his head at his phone. "He keeps texting me to see if you're okay, you know. It's interrupting my phone game. Maybe you two should exchange numbers?"

Lita scowled, "He's an ass. I'm good."

Brody's eyebrows shot up as he turned to stare at her, "He definitely pissed in your cereal this morning. I get it. This is all a shock, but, I thought you'd be grateful?" He shifted in his seat, giving her a perplexed look.

"Grateful? For insulting me and annoying me? No, I'm not," Lita stared him back down.

"Seriously? No, I meant grateful for rescuing you? He's going out on a limb to do that. You get that right?" He squinted at her, like he couldn't make sense of what was going on in her mind. Did he think she was selfish? Self-centered?

"What do you mean?" Already, Lita's big talk and bravado had taken a back seat. She'd somehow forgotten all about what brought her to this specific set of circumstances. And in her defense, it had been a lot to absorb in such a short amount of time. Wolves, manipulation, and lies seemed to be what they built her whole life around. People didn't just warm up to those thoughts in an hour.

"Come on, what do you think?" he tucked his phone into his pocket, "An Alpha intervenes with another Alpha's property? Excuse the phrase... mate or not, and trashes his apartment. Basically kidnaps you from your boyfriend—sorry ex-boyfriend—who I'm assuming is as high profile as your family if they're forcing the marriage... In the human world, it's not that big of a deal, but in the wolf world, we're very territorial. He just picked a fight with what's-his-face's entire pack. And probably your parents too. That's high-profile shit for a pack that likes to stay lowkey."

"Brian. His name's Brian," Lita gulped. She hadn't ever considered it like that. Cole had really gone out of his way for her, taken risks for her. And she hadn't even thanked him. Suddenly she felt guilty, and without having a better word to describe the feeling, ungrateful.

"Yea, Brian-piece-of-shit-Alpha. Anyway, I see my mate beaten up by a wolf? I'd have probably done the same thing. Hell, maybe even for a friend. I don't like abusers. But I'm not an Alpha. That comes with certain responsibilities that ain't in my job description, you know? I've got more freedom in that aspect. Alphas have to put their pack before everything else. And you are the only thing he's ever put ahead of the pack. You need to understand that. You need to get that?"

"I-I'm sorry," she whispered, "I didn't realize... maybe I should..."

"Don't even think about it. He'd never let you. Bringing you in was a huge statement. Whether he's going to admit it to himself or not." Brody sat back in his chair. "Plus, it's not that big of a deal, nobody died... yet. And we all love a good fight." He was smiling, excitedly.

"What do you mean, 'whether he's going to admit it to himself or not'? He said he's planning to reject me, anyway. I don't think doing the right thing is that much of a statement."

"Yea, that's what he'll say but listen," he leaned forward like he was about to tell her a secret, "Rejecting is pretty common shit, okay? Wham-Bam-thank-you-ma'am. Most of the time, wolves reject the person within the first few minutes of meeting them. Pretty by the book, actually. Especially if you have shit going on. But it's been what, a little over a month since he's known?"

Lita nodded, confused.

"Yea I'm not buying it. He could've rejected you when you first met, without you even knowing what the hell was going on. Could've just walked up and said it. Would have confused you. You probably would have thought he was crazy but it wouldn't have mattered. He probably doesn't know what to make of it, or maybe his wolf doesn't, but if he wanted to reject you, he would have. Just my two cents."

He shrugged and looked to the door where the manager had returned with the paperwork. That effectively ended the conversation for them both.

"Looks like everything is in order, Ms. Dillard. Here's your bank account information, your new card, and all of your copies of the paperwork," the manger said, sliding a large, open folder across the table. Brody's nosiness surprised Lita as he leaned up slightly in his chair, "Jesus Christ, you're even richer than Alp—I mean, Cole was."

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Brody eyed the manager wearily, as he stood and helped Lita gather her folder.

"Was?" Lita asked, taking her things to the door and waving goodbye to the manager.

"Yea, \*was\*, you think the industrial park was cheap? That many acres on the west coast? A cool couple of millions, if I heard correctly. Your brother helped put in for the land, but most of his money was used for renovations and he died before they were complete." Brody held the exterior door for her, then continued, "And since he and Stace weren't married, his money defaulted to you a few weeks after he died."

Lita stumbled over her next steps. "What?"

Brody whistled, "You didn't know?" He shook his head, "His purse money, his inheritance, everything he'd made was all wired to you as per his will. I mean, yea, some of that was your inheritance. James had close to a million and a half through inheritance, I think. But your account is way heftier than that. You never wondered why?"

Lita shivered, suddenly cold in the warm sunlight, "My mom handled my finances. I never saw the transfers."

Brody nodded. "Maybe that's part of what Brian wants."

"My money?" Lita balked, following behind Brody.

"Yea why else would an Alpha knowingly mate a human when it's unheard of? Names only get you so far in the elite. You've got to have the money to back it up."

The walk back to the car felt odd. It was like a giant weight had settled on Lita. Hadn't her mother always said a name was important but it was nothing without money? Lita wanted to vomit. A giant pit had been crushing her insides. Her mother was a liar. That part wasn't very hard to imagine. Her mother and father were wolves. That part was hard to imagine. That part made her mind want to pop out of her head and run off to someone that would use it with more sense. Lita couldn't help but feel lost amid such a large revelation.

But at least now, she was financially free. No need to ask for permission to spend money. No need to lie to make her abusive boyfriend happy. And god, no more needing to sleep with him whenever he wanted for fear of being hurt. No more being \*forced\* to do it. She hadn't ever really let herself deal with that part and she wasn't planning to start now, opening the car door and sliding into the front seat. One day she was going to have to toe that line in and see what came back, but for now, she was just content with not being afraid all the time. Her phone rang, lighting up with her mother's name across the screen. Lita felt emotion rising up in her, but she bit it back and swiped the call away, turning her phone on do not disturb.