

Lita's Love for the Alpha

Rise and Shine

Cole gave her one week. A week to sulk and vomit and cry. A week to grieve and worry and hate herself. A week to process and avoid everything and hit rock bottom. And on the final day of that week, two hours before sunset, he burst through the door to the bedroom, composed but urgent and commanded, "Get dressed, we're going out!"

"I-I can't," Lita shook her head, feeling like death warmed over. She crawled deeper into the covers.

"You can and you will. Get up," he strode to the bed, tossing back the sheets and hauling Lita out, throwing her over his shoulder. She'd become despondent and moody. Her anger was unavoidable and unchecked. She was desperately trying to push everyone away.

Lita wanted to hate everyone, that much was clear. And how much she actually hated herself, shocked him. All that hate, all that rage, was only deflected onto him for a moment or two. The real object of her cruelty was herself.

"Put me down you goddamned caveman!" She squirmed hard but he wouldn't release her.

"That's no way to address your Alpha or your mate."

"I'll show you how I address my fucking Alpha!" Lita kicked her knee towards his face but he dodged it, dropping her hard on the seat of her ass. She screamed, tugging at her hair, "You asshole!!"

Cole pushed the button on the shower and turned back to the stubborn ass of a woman. Half shifted and angry, Lita was ready to rip out his throat. Her claws elongated.

"Enough!" His tone was even, stern but loving and it gave her pause. What the hell was she doing? She was ready to fight Cole? He watched the emotions pass over her. His face softened. She was broken but it was nothing he couldn't help put back together.

Lita didn't think she would ever pull herself out of the funk. She couldn't eat. She could barely sleep unless she siphoned Cole's emotions. She hated everything and everyone, even him sometimes. And she was angry. Fucking pissed at the world, at herself, and at her wolf. She hated her parents and Brian and in all honesty she hated everyone who'd ever been born.

She couldn't find a way to remedy her two selves. The person she believed herself to be and the person she actually was. The reality was this: her brother's death hadn't been her fault but Erica's had been. She couldn't undo it. And she couldn't *un*eat the body. That was a thought that would never sit right.

Cole was a calm comfort, not pushing her to talk or do more than she was ready to do. He just quietly went about his day, including her where he could but leaving her to her own head over the last week.

The dreams were almost unbearable for the first few days but by midweek they had softened and lessened in length. Her wolf was quiet for the most part, no more than the occasional nudge to assert she was still there. Lita wouldn't call what her wolf was doing sulking. That would imply her wolf felt bad about anything that she did to Erica, which she didn't. But it was a subtle acknowledgment that she'd probably stepped over the line a bit during her first shift.

Returning to her human state, Lita looked away from his heavy stare, embarrassed. She didn't want Cole to see her like this or anyone, for that matter. That's why she couldn't seem to pull herself together. Every time she tried to move forward, she'd remember that everyone knew what she did. Everyone knew she was struggling and messed up in the head. That was so embarrassing she almost couldn't breathe.

"I'm not going,"

"You are," Cole pulled his shirt over his back and snapped at the buttons on his jeans. Lita watched him strip down to nothing before he started on her. She watched him as he stripped her down too. Cole's body twitched, as if feeling her heated stare.

"Even looking at me like that, isn't going to stop us from leaving this room, Lita," he growled softly, the faintest hint of humor as he shot his eyes over to the shower, "Now am I going to have to be a caveman, or are you going to walk yourself?" His smile danced in his eyes and she knew that both options were fine with him.

Huffing, Lita pushed herself up to the balls of her feet and stood, "I can fucking walk..."

"Good."

Twenty minutes later they were in the closet, pulling on athletic clothes. Cole wouldn't tell Lita where they were going or what they were doing except to say she needed to work out her aggression.

Lita got dressed and sat on the edge of the bed, unsure how to move forward but knowing wholeheartedly she couldn't stay locked in the room forever. Lita had found her luggage a few days ago, thanks to Cole, and she'd charged her phone. Pulling it off the cord, she waited for the little device to turn on. There were 200 messages waiting to be read. How many were from Brian, she wondered? She swiped the notification away and opened her music app instead.

"I call dibs on the aux," she called over her shoulder.

"Like hell you do, I hate all that fantastical shit you listen to," Cole grumbled under his breath.

"It's the least you can do for kidnapping me to some unknown location! And I hate all the 00s alternative *you* listen to," she scoffed, "At least my shit is from this decade." She heard a chuckle.

"Don't disrespect Linkin Park," he growled, "Alright let's go, DJ."

They waved to the pack as they rounded the building towards the cars. The ones parked by gym were the everyday cars but apparently Cole and the others had toys tucked away because Cole led Lita to a brand new Camaro. He slid into the driver's seat.

"Where the hell are we going that we need to arrive in this? But also need to wear spandex?" Lita laughed as she buckled her seat belt.

"That's for me to know and you to enjoy the ride love," he smiled.

A few minutes into the drive, Cole turned down the volume on the radio, "So, I want to run an idea past you..."

"Oh come the fuck on, I know you're just talking so you can turn my music down! That was the best part," Lita sulked into the chair.

"Okay...yes," Cole snuck a humorous glance at her, "But I also do want to talk to you about something." Lita huffed, rolling her hand in a *well, spit it out then* motion.

"We need to move out of the pack house, Lita, and I was wondering if you wanted to design our new place? We usually just remodel the concrete buildings that came with the industrial park, like we did with the pack house and dorms, hell, even the gym. But if you don't like that, we could build new. We could do whatever you want," Cole turned to her to make sure she was listening, then back to the road.

"Why are we moving?"

"Um, well, the pack house is for community gatherings and single males...which I was before you. The dorms are for single women. It's communal living at its finest but couples should have their own space. Stace and James had a place near the forested park of the park. Don't you want to be just you and me?"

Did she? Cole was amazing and she loved him. But if there was no one else around, could she be enough for him? Without the hustle and bustle of the pack house, would he find that their home was nothing but silence? Especially when she was like this? How could she explain what it was like for her to fall into depression? Well, he'd seen it first hand hadn't he? And he hadn't run. He'd pulled her out of bed and driven her to...wherever they were headed. Did she want to try and make a home for herself, even if it could end in disaster? Lita did.

If they lived on their own, she wouldn't have to be embarrassed about having loud sex or walking around in her underwear. And she could design it to be whatever she wanted. She could fill it with memories that no one could take. Maybe she could find some things of James' and have them framed. But that would require her to go back home and face her parents, something she wasn't ready to do.

But this idea of starting fresh, lifted her spirits. She could have a place that was a real home. With someone who loved her completely, like Cole. She didn't have to prove her worth or hide her flaws. She could just exist and he loved her for it. Lita realized, by the way Cole kept snapping his head back and forth, that she hadn't ever answered his question.

"Yea, let's do it," Lita lifted the hand Cole had resting on the gearshift, stroking it with her thumb before pressing a soft kiss, "Thank you. I love you." Lita leaned into his shoulder, threading the fingers on his hand with her own.