

Lita's Love for the Alpha

Shifting

The gate of her mind swung open but nothing happened. A moment passed then another. Lita had just begun to doubt if she'd done it correctly when she felt a surge through her body. Her wolf lunged through the gate.

A crack sounded through the clearing. It was her ribs. Another crack, then a pop, the sound of stretching then tearing. Her cries of pain. Panic. *It's okay. Breathe. You're almost done.* Cole whispered into her mind. White hot agony had tempered to sharp, shooting pains all over. She tried to hold herself together. Better than it had been, but awful all the same. Lita felt each of her bones break and reform. She felt, with painful clarity, fur pulling over her skin like a coat.

Her jaws opened and snapped closed in a snarl. That was no longer her mouth, but her wolf's toothy grin instead. It was an instinctual fight or flight reaction to being in the presence of another wolf. Lita could feel the uncertainty passing through them. *Another wolf. Attack. Fight. Survive*. She could scent Cole, could feel the bond between them but her wolf's mind was too clouded in panic.

Rabid. Rabid. Rabid. It repeated in Lita's head like a terrible chant. Her wolf had no idea what to do among others. She had no socialization. No manners. Had her wolf not been utterly exhausted after fighting *and eating* Erica, she might have tried her hand at attacking the others downstairs. Lita's friends. Her wolf snarled again, lunging for Cole who slid out of the way gracefully. She made a few more attempts, growling and snapping at his furry sides but Cole outmaneuvered each one. The last time she jumped for him, her claws found their mark, slicing at the taut flesh against his ribs.

His roar was clipped short by her body slamming into his. Then they rolled, kicking away from each other until they smacked against opposite trees. Cole's wolf was faster, more experienced in a fight. Before the bits of bark could fall and settle to the ground, he was up and towering over Lita's wolf. His paws pinned her hard, snout pushing against snout as Lita's wolf thrashed. He applied more pressure. Even with knowing Cole would never hurt her, or her wolf, worry bristled against the back of her mind. What if his wolf was pushed too far?

It's not possible, not with you. His eyes flicked up to meet hers, *I could never hurt you. Not even if you asked me to. Not even if you left me no choice. I would make a different one.*

Her wolf stilled, watching him as if she too could finally feel the love that sometimes made Lita's heart hurt. Not just Cole's, which shone in his wolf's eyes like jewels but also Lita's. Her wolf could feel the love from within and it gave her pause. Cole let off her side, backing away to a better distance. His head bowed for a second, allowing her wolf to see his intentions.

Her matching black wolf must have been a slightly unexpected sight to behold, Lita guessed, from the way Cole's wolf froze in a quiet awe once he could really take her in. He sniffed the air once, twice and her wolf did the same. *Mates.*

The next few moments began as a quiet study, her wolf and his, circling each other amidst the heavy sheets of rain. Lita could feel the pull and play of her wolf's mind. *Kill. Protect. Eat. Hunger. Desire. Fear*. All mixed and muddled together as she circled Cole.

Lita just kept thinking if her wolf had been face to face with anyone other than him, they would be in shreds. Her mind and instincts were so volatile, so minimal and animalistic. There was no room for considering the consequences or doubt. She just reacted.

His name is midnight. What's hers?

"I have no clue. Am I supposed to name her or do they... name themselves?"

Uh...that weird growl isn't going to cut it as a response I'm afraid. He laughed hard.

Shit. Lita realized she didn't have a mouth. When she thought she'd been saying words, it turned out, much to her own embarrassment, she was just making strange growls from her wolf. She mentally facepalmed and tried again to imagine the rope, tossing it out to Cole. This time she tried to visualize a hard, embedding hook in the walls of his mind. And the roped latched.

Hello?

About time, he snickered, *congrats. Now ask her. And before you ask how, remember she's part of you. Just talk to her like you'd talk to yourself.*

"Why can't you ask her?"

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I can't reach your wolf and you can't reach mine. Those primal parts of ourselves always remain separate. You don't need to be afraid of talking to another part of yourself, Lita.

What if I don't like what I find?

Just try.

So Lita did. Echoing the question against the walls of her mind. She'd never spoken to her wolf and vice versa. Perhaps it was because they'd never had practice at it. Or because neither of them knew what they were doing. Her wolf didn't answer. Perhaps it had been too many years apart to try and bond now. Perhaps her wolf didn't *want* to answer.

Lita couldn't ignore the inadequate feeling deep inside. Perhaps her wolf didn't want *her*. The weak human who had been used her whole life. The one who'd let them be drugged and beaten and forced to do things she didn't want to. What kind of disappointment did her wolf feel at knowing who Lita was? All the ugliest, shameful parts of herself. The ones she didn't like to look at herself.

Nyx, came the quiet reply. The voice was guttural, more growl than anything but it was appreciated nonetheless. *It's nice to finally meet you*, Lita said. Silence was all she got in return. *Why Nyx*? She tried again. Cole's words had effected her more than she thought. Her wolf had been isolated and alone for just as long as Lita had been. Perhaps feeling just as abused. That warranted trying again.

You read it in a book when you were younger. For at least two weeks straight you obsessively thought about that name and that character in the book: bold and strong, uncompromising. I wanted to be her. I wanted us to be her.

Lita didn't have words. At least not any that would have encompassed the scope of emotion she felt.

Her name is Nyx, Lita tossed over the connection.

Nyx, Cole tried out the name, *well it would seem my wolf finds Nyx to be just as beautiful as I find you.* He chuckled darkly. It was true, his wolf had been pressing his snout to her neck and sides, circling her with glittering eyes.

Time to go.

Midnight sprinted through the rain with Nyx trailing close behind. They ran hard, shaking and panting as they leapt over trees then playfully crossed over each other's paths. The two tumbled through mud and small streams, fighting to be in the lead, then gliding seamlessly over rocky areas and dips in the ground. Nyx nipped and snapped at his tail and ears, teasing and taunting in fun. Pure, undiluted joy ran through Nyx as she experienced what Lita had earlier: freedom. Cole's wolf didn't stop until they hit another large clearing, though this one had a small structure in the center.

Where are we? Lita asked. Nyx paused at the edge of the clearing, watching as Midnight walked further then rolled against the grass, tongue wagging as he sprawled out. Mists of rain hung over the roof and around the tops of the tree line, creating the illusion of seclusion, some perfect hidden world.

This is my cabin. The place I come when I want to clear my head...

In a flash, Midnight disappeared, leaving a soaked, naked Cole in his place, "I thought you could use a little space away from everyone else." He stepped forward, bringing his hand against the side of her maw, carefully surveying Nyx's wary eyes. But despite her reservations, she didn't nip at him or growl like she had at Midnight, sitting perfectly still as he rubbed and scratched at her head. "Hi sweet girl, aren't you beautiful?" Cole leaned his brows down to meet the flat part of her head, "Can you give me some time alone with my mate, please?"

Nyx's only reply was the snapping of bones one by one until in her place stood a naked Lita, shivering and soaked through the bone.

Author's Note: Hey guys! I'm super drained today so the next chapter is taking longer than I expected. It'll be up later tonight! Sorry =(
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