

Lita's Love for the Alpha

The Cabin

"That wasn't so bad was it?" He called over his shoulder as the door swung wide behind him. She shamelessly watched his bare bottom walk into the living room. This would be an adjustment indeed, shifting naked, near her mate who made her hungry for things that weren't easily sated. She blinked away the image. No, Lita supposed, it hadn't been bad to shift. No one died this time at least, so that was a marked improvement.

So dramatic, her wolf hissed, *I'll never apologize for killing that...*

Lita gasped, stumbling into the cabin, *she was a person, Nyx. You killed someone. Maybe not completely good but not completely bad either.*

No, the beats of silence that followed that word made Lita's skin itch. What did that mean, no? No she hadn't had family? No she hadn't had a life and dreams and hopes that would now never come true? No, she wouldn't have an opportunity to undo any of the damage she'd done? She'd never get to apologize or repent. Lita had done that. Nyx had done that, taken something they could never give back. Cole had turned to study her expression. "Glad to see I finally opened communication between you two. It's important, you know." But Lita wasn't paying attention to him because this was a crucial moment.

I killed someone consumed with hate and rage. Someone who wanted us dead, shredded to ribbons beneath her feet. Who hated us because we were beneath her. And as a testament to how sweet and innocent you think she was, I'll tell you this...her meat was bitter, rotten, nearly inedible. But I did it anyway, because it's what she deserved, to be consumed by the very thing she hated.

How could you know that? I didn't even really know her, neither did you!

Wolves have senses you don't have, human. I don't owe you an explanation but I'm telling you this anyway. SO YOU CAN STOP BEATING YOURSELF UP! Over someone like that, no. Not someone who would have never shown you an ounce of the mercy you wish I'd shown her. Her wolf was an open book. One you're not capable of reading, but I am. And I stand by what I said. She wasn't worth the burial dirt on her grave and I'm not going to let you mourn her.

You're not rabid at all are you? Lita whispered in her head, scared of the answer, knowing that her wolf was far more capable and aware than she'd ever expected.

No. Though it's nice of you to think so highly of me.

Then what?

I'm not rabid... I just swore that if I ever got out, if I ever got free, it would stop. Even if I had to rip out every single throat. Shred every single person. Eat them and break them. Even our parents.

What would stop?

Your pain. Then Nyx dropped the line of communication between them. Lita's mind went silent, no sign of her wolf anywhere.

That had been terrible. So much so that Lita couldn't even process it, couldn't make sense of that strange beast inside of her. Instead, she finally closed the door and shook off the sensation her wolf left behind, like residue under her skin. Lita focused herself back on what was in front of her: Cole, the cabin, heating her bones.

The inside of the cabin was warm already. And thank god for that, Lita thought, rushing to stand beside the electric fireplace with fake blue flames curling over glass pebbles. Heat was a welcome sensation on her frigid skin.

More important than how nice everything inside looked, as if it had been styled in a magazine. Or how expensive the furniture seemed, like something that would never be inside of a cabin. More important than the silence that covered every inch of the small place, though the inside was much larger than the outside let on. More important than the pleasant woody smell that surrounded her and made her feel comfortable. More important than Cole naked and dripping in front of her, was the fact that it was warm and she was freezing.

Running naked had seemed fun and flirty until it wasn't. Was that what they would endure every time they had to shift? No matter the weather?

"W-wh-what do you all do about clothes-s wh-when you s-shift?" Lita bit, trying and failing to keep her shivers at bay as she shimmied and hopped to warm herself. She worked her hands against her arms to create friction but that relief was nowhere to be found. Her chill bumps seemed to only harden further.

"We usually try to make sure there are clothes wherever we're going. Sometimes we carry them in our mouths but they get really nasty really quickly..." he grimaced, "When you don't have another choice though, they work."

Cole crossed the room to pull a plush blanket from the living room closet then returned to offer it to her. His eyes made no illusions about staring at her in that heated, agonizing way she'd grown to crave. It made her feel seen like he wanted her more than anything in the world.

"Are you going to only look or are you going to do something?" Lita cast a sidelong glance up his body, meeting his eyes.

"Patience..." he smirked though she could tell he'd stopped to actually consider if he was going to do something after all. But he shook the thought off and resumed his taunting, "Patience isn't a virtue for no reason."

"Tease..." she rolled her eyes, thrilled at this tentative new game they were playing. Though their glances were heated, Lita thought her teeth would start chattering soon if she didn't snatch at the fuzzy blanket Cole offered. She took another fleeting glance between his legs then bundled herself, kneeling to a spot beside the fireplace as she continued to watch Cole.

"How often do you come here?" she studied the furniture, not new but not worn. The black suede couches angled around a large television and the fireplace. The open floorplan carried her eyes back through a small dining room with a square black table and into the empty kitchen of stainless steel appliances. She could see stairs leading to an upper floor and a lower one as well. The place was larger than it had first appeared but still cozy.

"Enough," he shrugged, leaning against a dining room chair, "I came out here a lot when I first saw you." The surprise must have shown on Lita's face because he only laughed tensely and continued, "A human mate and one that looked like death himself had spat her out... I knew you were trouble from that first day..."

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"I'd hardly call that romantic talk, Cole," Lita grumbled, "Way to make a girl feel special..."

His face tensed a little, "Alright then...I mean to say I knew from that first day that you were going to cause me trouble for how much I wanted you. I knew that you were going to effect my life in more ways that I was ready for. All those feelings... I didn't want them. I didn't want that, what you were unconsciously offering with those sad brown eyes in those oversized clothes. Anyone could have seen you were damaged. And I didn't like how much I wanted to help you. It was a dangerous thing to want that...with someone who wasn't from our world. But I did. I wanted the girl who was desperate to join a gym when she looked like she could barely stand. I knew you were going to be trouble for me."

He smiled distantly, "I kept looking for flaws you know, trying to convince my wolf to agree to reject you, all to save myself some pain, save the parts of myself you would undoubtedly claim the second I let you in. Hell, I even hoped the training alone would make you run the other way. Maybe quit the gym so I wouldn't have to be the one to push you away. But no, you didn't. You showed up every day and fucking worked. Hard. And I had to respect that. I do respect that."

Cole shook his head, jaw tensed, and Lita knew what was coming next, "And then I saw you in your bathroom, looking like you'd almost died, apartment covered in broken shit and blood. I'd almost lost you and I'd never even had the chance to have you, to really know you. I realized I wanted that. You. All of it. But I'd already dug myself such a shitty, deep hole. I knew I'd already given you so many mixed signals. But you let me kiss you. And you kissed me back and all those possibilities became real. It scared the shit out of me all over again. I'm not ashamed to say I was a coward when it came to you. I was."

"I wouldn't change any of it," Lita met his eyes, "It all worked out in the end."

"I would. I would've acted sooner. Done more. Loved you hard as soon as I saw you because you needed it. You needed someone in your corner and I wasn't there. I never said I'm sorry but I am, Lita. I really am. I was--"

"It's not your fault, Cole," she stood, walking until she was just under his chin, "And it's not my fault either. Even though it feels like it sometimes." Lita leaned her head against his chest as he pulled her closer, that scent filling her with warmth and love.

"I'm never letting you go," his voice muffled through her hair, the sound of the rain pelting the windows. Silence filling in all the things they didn't say.