

Lita's Love for the Alpha

Legacies

"Shall I take your silence as a yes, then?" Maxim smiled with malice, "My son and I have had our differences of course but this is his legacy. *My* legacy. And I'll not have him turn his back on it for anyone. Least of all, a mixed blood mutt." Lita could tell from the way he pinched all his teeth at her, he'd intended those words to be a grave insult. But she was too distracted with fear to be offended. And in truth, she didn't really care what he was saying as long as it wasn't an order to have her killed. She gulped loudly, sure her head was pounding loud enough for him to hear it at least half as much as she felt it.

What struck her as odd, was the way he said *mutt*. She couldn't tell if he was implying she was lesser because of her mixed race or if he somehow knew she was a wolf. Did he know what happened to Erica?

Leaning back, until she could rest her throbbing shoulders against the chair, Lita said, "From what he's told me, Cole turned his back on this place long before he even met me. And I can see why..." She sounded far more confident than she felt. He eyed her bad posture like it was an affliction. She supposed he'd probably expected more of from a child raised in the lap of luxury and even though she'd always felt like an odd ball because she couldn't fit in with those elitist pricks, now it made her happy. Lita didn't want to resemble anything of the man in front of her.

"A simple misunderstanding. Erica was sorting it out, she was getting him ready to return home. Shame I had to send her mother flowers and lay her memory to rest in an empty casket. No small feat mind you, to gut and devour one of the strongest bloodlines we have... She was the key to getting Cole to return to his real pack, not that band of misfit fighters and humans he's claiming these days. God it's as if he learned nothing in all his years of training here." The last bit he muttered to himself, grinding his knuckles white against his glass.

"If I didn't know better, I'd say that was a backhanded complement," Lita smirked then dropped it quickly as the pressure in her head increased, "Erica was a piece of work and believe me when I say, her and Cole were never going to work, no matter how bad you wanted that blond hair and perky tits to be enough. Outside of looks, she didn't have much to offer. I'd hardly say I'm surprised you're proud of her, with the way your basement cells look. It says a lot about you, Maxim." His jaw ticked hard.

Maxim leaned up to refill his glass of alcohol, "I suppose I only have myself to blame for that. I thought they were better suited than they were. But he would have had a good enough life with her. Maybe some happiness too but they'd have had perfect, Alpha pups with all the right genes...But for the dishonor of *you* as his fucking mate? That I'll not take credit for. That's entirely *your* fault. No idea how you fucking waltzed right into his life and turned it upside down..."

Lita almost laughed. He had no idea how long they'd fought the connection. Had no idea how much he despised her early on. He had no idea that trying to attack her, had only driven Cole further into his love for her. Maxim seemed to know a lot, but when it came to his son, he knew very precious little.

"No bother," he shrugged and even his dismissal was menacing in its delivery, "I'll simply have to work harder once he's back to show him exactly why you're not for him. Or perhaps I'll just bury you where no one will ever find your body?" His gaze didn't even flicker. What kind of horrible man did he have to be to live this kind of life, kidnap and threaten, all without even a shadow of a conscience.

"But that's off topic for now," he smiled, "Your death would do more harm than good right now. I've got to become a bit more creative where you're concerned and Cole isn't the reason we're having a meal, girl, you are."

Maxim motioned for her to eat, but Lita couldn't calm the roaring in her head. Any minute it was going to explode and send chunks of her brain everywhere. At least then the pain would be gone. At least then she wouldn't be at Maxim's will or Brian's for that matter. She wished things hadn't ended on such a shitty note with Cole. She wished she'd told him she loved him more. She wished so many things that might never again come true.

She leaned up to scoot her chair forward, rocking with the sudden motion, nearly falling into her food. Her hand automatically found the fork and speared a bit of the side salad into her mouth. Its flavor was bile and blood and nothing she wanted to taste but she managed to swallow anyway. Lita risked a glance down at her bowl to find the salad pristine and looking almost delicious. She swallowed again, the taste was her mouth. Her gnarled, bleeding mouth... what the fuck had she thrown up if it burned her on its way up?

Lita took a steadying breath, then tried a sip of water. It stung so bad some dribbled leaked out onto her chin.

"God above," Maxim cursed with disgust, "You are positively uncivilized, girl, I've half a mind to make you eat on the floor." She slumped back into her seat, letting the glass rattle on its way back onto the table. He tilted his head to the side and cursed, inhaling sharply, "You were supposed to be healed. You're bleeding on my goddamn furniture."

"Ren!" he called with the deepest kind of rage in his voice. The man before her was a wolf. Obviously a strong one, though she took some small joy in knowing he'd been beaten by his son. *I can't wait until he guts you*, she thought. Maxim's eyes flickered to hers for a moment, as if he heard and approved of her silent thought, "I am very proud of my son, girl. It is the way of the world that sons surpass their fathers." Lita cringed at the thought of Cole here, taking over whatever kind of dark empire this was. She needed to try and remember what he'd said of father's dealings. Maybe when her brain wasn't liquifying she could.

Girl. He kept calling her girl, outside of his first introduction when he'd said her name. Was he dehumanizing her? Was he trying to provoke her?

Ren popped his head in the room with a curt bow, "Sir?"

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"Have the doctor brought here and have *that* chair replaced when we're done here." Maxim's finger shot towards her seat with unwavering focus. Another bow from Ren and then the door snicked closed. Talk about anal when it came to his home. Sure, it was clearly expensive in but so was her mother's house. This was different though. This was as if Maxim saw himself as some kind of royalty. A king in his castle. And kings didn't keep their soiled furniture obviously.

Again, Lita watched Maxim. He took his napkin, smoothing it down over his lap. The man was violence personified. Everything he did, down to the way he held his knife against the steak on his plate, made her tremble. He drew silent cuts across the meat, meeting her eyes as he forked a bite.

All that training and she was nothing more than a feeble fucking girl again. A girl whose wolf was gone? Or suppressed again? Fuck, she needed Nyx if she was going to stand a chance going toe to toe with his guards, let alone him. When she looked at Maxim, Lita felt the need to submit in every one of her bones. It was like a screaming instinct. Show her throat. Bow. It was so similar to her mother's Alpha tone and yet he hadn't needed to say a word. What kind of raw power did he exude to make another Alpha want to submit?

God, how had Cole escaped this place? Her heart thundered in her ears. If he found out where she was, he come for her. He'd come right back home. And she wasn't so sure he'd ever leave again. That was the point though wasn't it? That's all Maxim wanted.

"So, as I was saying," he patted his napkin against his clean shaven face. His dark, menacing eyes tracking every motion she made, "I hear you've got a wolf but I confess, the report disturbs me. How long have you known you were an Alpha wolf?"

Lie or truth? The words repeated in her mind until it became incoherent.

"I'm not," Lita opted for the lie, "That's my mot-

She didn't even get the words out before Maxim moved. Like a lightning strike. Like a snake bite. Like a blur of movement and precision and power he backhanded her clean out of her seat. Lita's head smacked into the stone facing of the fireplace before she'd even seen him move. Pain barked across her blooming black eye. She tasted blood and bile all over again.

"Let's agree not to lie to one another alright?" He asked calmly, retrieving his napkin from the floor and slipping it back into his lap. His jaw clenched and released as he downed the rest of his drink. He didn't bother waiting for a reply as he continued his dinner. Something like shock began to sink in. This was a violence she was so familiar with, only less predictable. It was Brian only worse, because Maxim didn't seem to be driven by anything emotional at all. His motives were clear and his mind seemed to move like a machine, grinding away anything that didn't get him to his goal.

Lita could feel the hot flush of blood everywhere. She felt feverish, hands shaking, legs curling under her as she slumped to the floor. She was pretty sure she had peed on herself, far too devastated and hurt to feel embarrassment.

Things were so different without Nyx. It's like all her strength, all her anger had receded too far to reach. She was half of herself. She was miserably outmatched and outnumbered. Jesus, against Maxim she was pretty sure she wouldn't even be able to put up a fight against him when he tried to kill her.

"How long have you known? I don't enjoy repeating myself girl." Lita tried to move her mouth but her body wouldn't listen. It felt like she had no teeth. No jaw. No bones anywhere in her face. All she had was pulpy, bleeding flesh that definitely didn't resemble a face anymore.

Thankfully, a knock sounded and the door pushed open to reveal a young woman. Lita couldn't see much of her from the floor, but she watched the woman's careful, hurried steps from beneath her swelling eyebrows. From the floor, everything in the room, including Maxim and the woman seemed impossibly imposing and wrong. Everything was wrong. She was supposed to be having make up sex with the man she loved. She was supposed to be warm and happy and cared for. She wasn't supposed to be bleeding out on an expensive Persian rug, utterly alone and freezing.

"Heal her as quickly as possible. I have much to discuss with her, Nola," Maxim bit, filling his glass and leaning back with a dark smile as he shifted his attention back to Lita.

"This..." Nola crouched to Lita's face, touching her so featherlight it didn't feel like a touch at all, "This is going to take a few days at least." Her voice wavered, cracked. She didn't look back, didn't stop her assessing but her eyes were wide with fear. Nola was waiting, Lita realized, for Maxim to punish her. But he only grunted and stood, "Two days. No more."

And he stormed briskly from the room.