

# Lita's Love for the Alpha

## I Promise Not to Hold Back

"Don't look so relieved," Maxim snorted as he took a forkful of food, "Unless you're happy to get perhaps a glimpse of him before I put you out of \*my\* misery. Though I suppose I should thank you for playing your part."

"It's not relief," Lita glared, showing him every ounce of venom she possessed, "It's excitement. I'm going to get to watch you die soon... and I can't wait."

"Wishful thinking will get you nowhere, little pup. I know my son well enough to know how to offset his attack. Don't you think I've prepared for this eventuality? Hoped for it, even? I mean why else would I hold you here? Why else would I let you live this long?"

Lita ignored the sting of fear. She wouldn't doubt Cole's ability or Andre's planning. She wouldn't doubt Ace or Alex or Mark or Brody or Stace. Hell, the whole pack was probably here for her. They were probably outnumbered but she was sure they would have a plan. They would find a way.

"Interesting that you think you're prepared for whatever happens. Were you prepared for me to survive in the pits? Or for me to kill one of your top wolves without breaking a sweat? Don't hold back now, Maxie dear. Would you like an open casket funeral or closed? It's important to iron out these details while you can still speak." Her smile was a thing of lethal beauty and Maxim had the good sense to look disturbed for a moment.

"So much for pretending to be weak" Nyx huffed a high pitched sound that must have been a laugh.

\*He pissed me off.\*

\*Maxie... ha! Pure gold\*, Nyx shook her fur happily, \*His wolf wants to rip out your throat and eat it... if you were wondering.\*

\*I wasn't, but thanks.\*

"Oh my dear you are full of fight aren't you?" Carlisle grinned, eyes glittering as Maxim clenched his jaw tight enough to break teeth. Lita flashed a saccharine smile and took a sip of her wine, "Planning to find out just how much? I promise not to hold back." Her question startled Carlisle enough that he was quiet for a long while. And when Maxim seemed to decide not to kill her for the moment, merely taking a napkin to his lap and waving the auctioneer to continue, everyone went back to their casual conversation. Lita took a sip of water that burned her dry throat. Cole was here and there was no way in hell she could sit idle and wait for Maxim to do whatever he planned.

The sound of the door opening broke her train of thought momentarily as the man who won the first auction walked back into the room. His relaxed gait didn't distract from the blood. He was covered. Splattered. Drenched as he dried his hands on a towel and flung it behind him through the open door.

"I assume you found your purchase worth it Austin?" Maxim mused. Lita felt faint.

"Oh I do think she's starting to get an idea now." Carlisle laughed, pointing his fork at Lita's face, a bit of meat still dangling from the tines. Something cold and wet slid down her back, moistened the fabric gathered at her hips.

Carlisle raised his glass to the auctioneer. Thirty thousand. Another man met his bid. And another. But he continued to raise all while meeting Lita's frantic stare. They were paying for women... for pain or pleasure? Blood and relaxation? Her mind couldn't quite compute.

"Sold!" The auctioneer clapped twice and shoved the woman forward.

Carlisle stole a small eternity to whisper into Lita's still-stunned ears, "I bought her for you."

She was still reeling, still trying to accept what her mind was trying to tell her about these wolves, monsters, as Carlisle pushed away from the table with a scrape and rounded on the woman. He motioned for the auctioneer to hand him a tray covered in white linen. Lita didn't have time to register what was on the tray or the fact that he held her stare before he pulled the gun forward and shot the woman in her head.

Her body fell. The room vibrated with the reverberation. Air crushing and screaming in Lita's ears. Screaming, sobbing sounds.

"You know I don't like waste, Carlisle," Maxim growled over the noise, "Or staining on my floors."

"Apologies. There's something about the sound and weight of a gun, though. Something insanely stimulating don't you find?" Carlisle inclined his head a touch, with a terrible grin, "But I also wanted to see her reaction." He pointed a solitary finger at Lita and the whole table turned. All eyes on hers. Wicked. Wicked eyes. How Cole had survived a life here...? It would have broken a lesser man.

"She does make for an amusing night," Maxim huffed a laugh.

Lita's ears rang. Her heart stopped. Every thought she'd had in her head was scared away. She couldn't stop staring at the body on the floor. Or the man who wiped his hands on his napkin as he tucked himself back into the table beside her. Or the men who stepped forward to bring the next wailing woman up to the front and begin the bidding again. She couldn't even hear the hysteria over the roaring in her ears. In her blood. She looked to Ren who held a cold, careless expression on his face but his eyes said more. They said panic. And fear. And confusion. He hadn't expected that. He didn't know what they did with the women. And now he did. They both did.

Men paying to torture. To do unspeakable, unthinkable things.

Maxim touched her arm and Lita dragged her eyes away, tears falling haphazardly over her cheeks. She hadn't even felt them build. Maxim's mouth moved, that evil smirk still on his face. His miserable face. She couldn't hear a word. Lita watched his eyes pinch, saw the question in them as to why she wasn't hysterical. And she wasn't sure herself. She couldn't make sense of a thing. Thousands of dollars. To execute defenseless women... for fun. Lita wanted to cry and scream herself raw. It was sick. They were all sick. So, so sick.

A loud boom tore through the complex and the chandeliers rattled.

She felt her claws before she saw them, shredding the skin of her fingers without remorse. Tearing, searing, sharp. Lita saw the flash of understanding on Maxim's face before her claws slashed. He'd shifted just in time that she only landed a glancing blow but blood and gashes stretched over the expanse of his face. One eye lulled and leaked as the gash trailed from his forehead to his split lips. She whirled on Carlisle before he had the chance to move away. She slashed again, this time with more precision. His throat opened and bobbed as he clutched the severed flesh, desperate to hold it together.

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The warm spray on her face sent Nyx to the surface and they erupted into vengeance. Like fire and wrath and an utter lack of self preservation in the face of the half a dozen other shifted wolves now staring back at her.

"I thought I'd at least make it through dinner first. I'll have to have a bottle of champagne sent to their homes in apology," Maxim's carefully place mask of indifference had cracked. He was leaking all over his suit, heaving caged breaths as he saw her, perhaps really saw her, for the first time.

"Your son, sir?" Ren asked as he rounded the table, not on Maxim's side, but on Lita's. If Maxim saw it for what it was, he showed no signs. Perhaps he thought they'd work together to trap Nyx.

"Yes, Cole, you remember my son don't you?" Maxim casually tossed the name across the room and Nyx's paws flinched, "That's his mate. I know, a disgrace. You don't have to tell me. But the mutt got my wayward son home, I suppose it was worth the sacrifice." Maxim had backed away from the table toward the wall.

"But... won't he... I mean, won't he be upset, sir?" There was something in Ren's voice. Something Lita couldn't quite make out but it was hard and cold like metal. Mate. She realized. Maxim intended to kill his son's mate and that struck an even deeper chord in Ren.

"Probably but I've prepared for it. And there's an old saying I always subscribed to: Hunger leads the wolf to the village. I find it particularly true in this sense," Maxim continued as if they were alone in the room. As if no one had died, "Because what wolf can resist the hunger for his mate?"

Something was flashing overhead. Sound filtered back down into her ears a second later. \*Alarms\*. Alarms were blaring. The men at the table were up, hackles rising as they shifted. Some turned tail and ran, racing through the open doors. The auctioneer was one of them and Nyx dug her claws in, roaring at their cowering bodies. They needed to pay. All. Maxim hadn't shifted yet, grappling for the cold metal of a gun.

She launched herself, barreling into him like a freight train as they slammed into the wall. there was a small victory in destroying his home, his kingdom. Teeth dug into his leg as blood spurted up from his muscle. Then he was no longer a man. Black fur and white fury rolled off his body in great waves replacing the man in the smart suit. The calm, callous, cruel king revealed his real face at last. The evil, bloodthirsty beast beneath the surface.

Nyx grinned, each tooth glinting in the low light as they exploded out, looking for blood.

"Maxim's son is better than I thought," The guard barked a cold laugh, leaning against the concrete tunnel for support. His whole left side had been gouged open with claws as Cole panted before him. He'd only bothered with a half-shift as he blew through his father's men. Nothing but cold hate and rage lived in his veins. He could smell her. Lita was close.

"Go, I'll finish here!" Ace yelled shoving Cole past the half-dead guard. Ace growled at the two men dying at his feet, "Never thought I'd be back here... buried in this blood again." His eyes tracked back up to Cole who hadn't moved, "GO! The others are right behind us. Rafi's men have the outside covered."

Cole nodded once and ran, continuing up the tunnel. Up and up and up toward the sound of fighting and howling, the bitter scent of blood in the air. Lita's scent grew with each step and his heart was in his throat. Then he heard the keening, the sound Midnight knew better than his own. And Cole gave in when his wolf shoved him out. They shifted and clawed through the ground with the force of their leaps.

Midnight reduced the door to shards as he slid into the room. It was chaos and blood and wolf parts and fur. There was too much to differentiate.

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His eyes did find his father's wolf though, standing off to the side as the battle raged in front of him. His back legs were bleeding, his muzzle and snout covered in long, deep gashes as well. Midnight almost lunged but the look of satisfaction gave Cole pause.

He looked at the battle again, seeing with better clarity now that he wasn't running. Five wolves closed in on two. His heart slowed. One was Nyx. He leapt before he could even think. Her legs were bloodied, her stance slipping as she forced more weight on her injuries. Her eyes raged red as he nuzzled her in relief then turned.

\*Mate. Mate. Mate\*, Midnight chanted through the connection.

\*I'm here. I'm okay.\*

\*You're not. Who did it? He will die first.\*

\*He is already dead, Alpha. I am fine. Ren helped.\*

He didn't know who the other wolf was as if just noticing him at Nyx's side. But if they were fighting the others, they were in a temporary truce.

Still, as relieved as he felt to have her in one piece beside him, they were outnumbered. Especially as Maxim advanced on them too. Stalking, rumbling with barely-restrained rage.

Then came the howls. The signaling calls of Cole's pack as they skidded through door, all teeth and fur and fury.

Midnight nudged Nyx back on her haunches, \*Stay out of it.\*

\*Not a chance in hell.\*

\*Please, mate.\*

He breathed her scent for a moment more and roared. And the whole room was reduced to chaos.