

## Lita's Love for the Alpha

### Who Called it Psychobabble Bullsh\*t?

"So," Elise cleared her throat, placing down her mug of English Breakfast tea. Lita leaned back on the plushy living room couch. She was happy Cole agreed with her about comfortable furniture over trendy because she could happily die on this cushion. Sighing, Lita pushed her hair out of her face, tucking some strands behind her ears.

"So, nightmares are still there. I don't think they're getting worse but they're not getting better either."

Elise nodded.

"I still go for a run when I wake up. Though lately, I've been training at the gym with a few of the new members. We haven't spoken yet but it's a peaceful silence. Guess, that's something right."

"Well, it's only been a couple of weeks since everything happened, Lita. I'd say the fact that the nightmares are not getting worse is a marked improvement over last week when you could barely stand to sleep. And bonding with some new members, no matter how slowly, is a great start at becoming the Luna you want to be. That's wonderful news. Are you still taking the sleeping pills?"

Lita shook her head, "They make me groggy and it's harder to distinguish the dreams from reality when I take them. I don't like how I react to Cole when I wake up..."

"Do you want to talk about that?"

Lita shook her head. She really didn't. She didn't want to tell anyone that her nightmares usually started with sex. She didn't know what that meant and she didn't like the implication. It could have just been the lust she felt coursing through her veins. Trauma and her baser needs were constantly fighting. It wasn't Cole. She still loved him and every time he showered or stripped out of his dirty workout clothes, Lita was reminded exactly how much she desired him. But things were... complicated at the moment.

"And the intimacy issue... how has that been going?" And there it was... the elephant in the room between Lita and Cole. They were in a dry spell. The ridiculousness of it made her want to hide her face.

Lita groaned, "It's... I don't it's not like I don't want to... but he's been so busy with the new pack members and establishing a stronghold with the fighting circuit. He's hardly home and when he is, he seems tired. Plus, you know my emotions are all over the place. So... when he is home, we don't usually have much to say. To answer your question, our sex life is nonexistent, and trust me when I say, the tension is driving me a little more insane than I'd like to admit. Maybe he's just not that attracted to me anymore, I don't know. Maybe he regrets all the trouble I've caused."

"And that's how you feel? That you've brought trouble into his life?"

"I mean not necessarily but... okay yea, a little. I mean with Brian stalking me and the potential for a lot of fallout with my parent's pack. I mean, I've heard that he was disowned by his father after everything came to light with my mom but, it could've gotten ugly. I've heard things about Alpha Asher. I don't think he would have let it go if Rafi pushed for it. And then killing Erica..." Lita still cringed about that, "And add on all of this fucked up stuff with Maxim... I mean he killed his own father for fuck sake. And of course, there's Jaz... And whatever the hell that means where Ace is concerned."

"Right, right. And so which one of those was your fault?" Elise asked innocently but Lita knew what she was doing. She was pointing out that Lita hadn't been responsible for Brian's stalking. Or Erica trying to kill her. And Maxim had been a problem for Cole since birth. There was always going to be a conflict there. Jaz had been spying on him before Lita was even in the picture... so yea... none of it was actually her fault. She didn't know how to say that though, so Elise continued talking.

"Let's talk this through..." Elise said gently and Lita knew whatever it was, would be a tough pill to swallow. Insightful, but tough. That's just how Elise operated. "Cole has been Alpha of a pack for years now, right? And he built the pack all on his own?"

"Yea."

"They've been a part of the fighting circuit for about the same amount of time, right? Even James was once a member?"

"Mhmh."

"And all of his most trusted pack members are very familiar with how all that operates, correct?"

Lita nodded, unsure of where Elise was going with that.

"So, it stands to reason, that while there may be a lot of new members, the number of people that are actually ready for competition has to be much smaller. And while the infrastructure certainly needs his attention to accommodate the new pack size, Cole also has Maxim's seized assets to make the transition smoother, correct?"

She trudged on, "Let's say he also has trusted help via his Beta and Delta who are both familiar with how things work as well. It wouldn't take much to delegate that task to one of them and it would free him up to spend more time with you. I'm sure it's safe to say that up until this point, he has always found time for you within his day? Is that fair to say?" Lita didn't respond, frozen and panicked by the direction Elise was taking.

"Moreover, I can clearly see there is a lot of construction work going on around the backgrounds but it all appears to be work that doesn't directly need an Alpha to oversee it once it's set in motion. So... have you considered that Cole isn't working this hard because he needs to be but because he would like to give you the space that you have nonverbally told him you need?"

"But—no that's not... because... I mean he knows I find him attractive. He knows, you know, that I'm aroused. I'm pretty sure he can smell it as easily as I can. And Nyx swears Midnight is practically rattling his cage."

"Yes but have you explicitly told him you're ready to resume that aspect of your relationship? Wolves are not humans. Wolves operate on very primal, basic emotional receptors. They have a need to mate, so they do. Humans have complicated emotions that get in the way of those natural inclinations. I mean, if he just pounced because you were aroused it would be incredibly invasive don't you think? Imagine a man saying he had sex with a woman because her "body" said she wanted it. Have you given him any overt physical signals or cues showing him what you want, even if you're not explicitly saying the words?"

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Lita opened her mouth but found she had nothing to say. No, she hadn't. She had never really needed to before. She'd always operated on the premise that consent once was consent always. Brian had taught her that and perhaps that was the worst possible guide to use. It felt idiotic now that she thought about it. Of course, Cole wouldn't think like that.

"Because from everything you've told me. You don't tell him how you're feeling. Which we've talked about before. You already know I think you need to have that conversation. He probably feels iced out and maybe he thinks you regret something. Especially since it was his father that abducted you. Perhaps he thinks you hold him responsible in some way. Maybe he thinks you can't stand the sight of him. Maybe he thinks something more happened to you in your time at Maxim's pack than what you admitted. It's impossible to know where his head is at if you don't ask. Furthermore, when you have nightmares, which you have regularly, you don't want his help or attention. You resist his touch. You don't talk to him about why you feel that way either..."

"Okay I can see—" Elise raised her finger to halt Lita's next words.

"And you spend most of your time in training with Ace, Alex, or Stace, yes? And you probably spend a grand total of three hours in bed with him each night? You told me yourself you were ready to 'jump his bones' in Maxim's office two weeks ago but by the time you made it back home to the compound, you were so tired you slept for two days. And after that, the nightmares started... That kind of sexual reaction can easily be written off as a side effect of heightened emotions. Maybe Cole doesn't know what to do with the mixed signals. I would say that you have given Cole plenty of reason to think you don't want that kind of attention right now. And he's trying to honor that."

"Well, fuck." Lita coughed. "That... I hadn't considered any of that. Jesus."

"That's why I have a job," Elise laughed, sipping her tea. "If I could offer some advice, I'd recommend a trust exercise. Perhaps you two could find an activity for just the two of you. Something physical because blood flow is ideal in this scenario." Elise's cheeks turned tomato red as she wagged her brows. She wasn't a prude and yet that innocent flush made Lita smile. There was only a few years difference in their age, so Elise felt like her sister. Her very wise, very insightful older sister.

"It's your choice, of course. But I think it would help you two reconnect. Maybe you should do something nice for him considering you've given him a pretty decent cold shoulder recently and he probably already feels guilty that you were abducted in the first place. Good relationships require a good balance between \*both\* sides. You both have to put in equal amounts of work. And if you feel like having sex, you should make that clear. Rip off the bandaid already and tell him what you want."

Lita groaned uncomfortably, throwing her hands up in defense, "Alright, Alright! I get it. Can we change the subject now?"

"Fair enough. That particular brand of exercise can't hurt in making sure you're getting some sleep either if I'm being honest. I'm sure I don't need to tell you that sleeping for three hours isn't ideal?" Her tone said that's exactly what she was doing but Lita smirked.

She liked Elise. Unlike the fake therapist her mother assigned, Elise was gentle and she was a great listener. Lita never felt manipulated. Her being a werewolf and being new to the area as well was an extra benefit. Rafi helped connect them and though she couldn't think of a lot to thank her father for, he had done a few things right. Lita didn't have to sugarcoat anything or lie to Elise and she needed that comfort, that safe space. And Elise made house calls so...

"Elise, can I ask you something?"

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Elise quirked her brow and raised her mug again as if to say \*of course.\*

"Would you take on a more full-time role here?" Lita looked at the floor. "It's just... I met some of the new women and I really think they need you as much as I do. Probably more. They haven't really talked to me yet but they don't run away from me. I'm just worried that they aren't adjusting well to the new environment. I've told you how Maxim's pack was structured and I'm worried that don't know what to do here. Like maybe they don't trust us."

Elise was quiet for long enough that Lita looked up, already blabbering in fear of what Elise might say, "I mean I know I'm young and technically I haven't even completed the Luna ceremony with Cole so I get why you might not be able to say yes to me specifically. Like if you need to run it past Cole fir—"

"Lita?" Elise cut in, holding her free hand up, "I'd love to help. Cole assured me you're the pack's Luna so that's all I need. I don't need a fancy ceremony, as lovely as I'm sure it'll be, to respect you as such and I'm sure most of the pack doesn't either. At the moment, I have no attachments and I've hardly unpacked at my new place. The ink on the lease isn't even fully dry so yes, to answer your question, I could become the pack therapist. In fact, I'm honored you wouldn't consider me."

"Really? That's—thank you! That's going to really help turn things around here. You have no idea."

"Honestly, I find this all so refreshing. You know in our species, emotions aren't handled well at all. They're just swept under the rug in favor of strength. And don't get me wrong, raw strength is ingrained in our DNA. It's important. But emotional strength is what keeps us in tune with our human sides. Our wolves are simple. Regular exercise and a good bond will keep them in tip-top shape. A quick rut in the woods doesn't hurt either. But our human halves require more."

Lita nodded feverishly. She'd always felt like she was supposed to make her pain go away. Her parents had raised her to stifle all the tears, all the sadness, all the hurt in favor of putting on a brave front.

"My profession is rarely taken up by our kind. Even in this modern era, it's still pretty taboo to deal with emotions. So to see an Alpha not only accept what you need, but give you full range to seek that help, is amazing. And on top of it, you're making sure your pack can get the same care? It's wonderful really. You make me very proud of werewolves, Lita."

It was stupid to cry at that right? Why would someone being proud of her, send Lita into a pile of mush? But she didn't stop herself from crying and she didn't stop herself from jumping across the couch to hug Elise.

"I can talk it over with Cole to get you a house of your own or would you rather stay in the dorms?"

"The dorms are fine for now. I should let the others get familiar with me for and I think seeing me often in more common instances will help. As I'm sure you can imagine, it can take werewolves a while to come around. If you just make sure the room is big enough for a couch, we should be fine," she laughed.

"Done! Thank you so much, Elise. I can't tell you what this means to me."

"I think it's going to be great. Now, let's get back to question of the hour, the one we've been avoiding for the better part of a week, Lita." Lita groaned. Elise let Lita get in her seat then asked, "So what are you going to do about Jaz?"