

Brother's Best Friends Are My Mates

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Lia

I needed someone to teach my magic, that much I was sure of. The Rosewater Coven was going to continue to be a thorn in our side so I wanted to protect myself.

What better than to use the magic they were trying to use against us and turn it around on them?

A few times this week I tried casting a spell, but nothing happened. It made me wonder if I truly had magic within me.

Then Rain offered me words of wisdom put in the simplest way possible.

"Maybe it's within you but has to be awakened?" Rain suggested, shoving a huge bite of pancakes in his mouth. "I didn't know I had vampire blood until I was cursed."

Colby wrinkled his nose in disgust.

"He's gross, but what he's saying is right, Lia. Maybe it sleeps within you."

"But if that's the case how do I wake it up?" I asked desperately.

Jesse blinked. "None of us are magic experts, Lia. You should speak with someone who knows magic-like that woman you spoke to the other day."

"Yeah, that's a good idea, Lia," Matt exclaimed. "That woman we spoke to in the bookstore seemed to know what she was talking about so why don't you speak with her?"

I sighed softly. "I suppose it can't hurt if I reach out to her and try to see if she could help me."

What did I have to lose?"

"One of us should go with you," Colby said, rolling his eyes when I glared at him. "Hey everyone else was thinking it. I'm the only one who had the guts to say it out loud."

Jesse sipped at his coffee. "I was just going to go but I suppose your method works too."

“No neither of you are going with me,” I said, looking at each and every one of my mates at the table. “None of you are, actually.”

“You can’t go alone!” Rain cried. “At least take me with you. I’m a vampire-werewolf!”

Matt rolled his eyes. “Can you even control any of your powers yet?”

“I can retract my fangs see?”

“Don’t show us that,” Colby snapped, a shudder of disgust running through him. “Rain, you’ve also lost the plot. We are trying to convince Lia that she should take one of us with her and I think this is doing the opposite.”

I shook my head. “I’m taking Simone.”

There were a few pouts and glares from across the breakfast table but I ignored them. I was going to take Simone with me because I didn’t want to deal with their overprotectiveness while I was out and about.

It made for a less of a headache for everyone involved.

The bell above the door jingled as I entered the bookstore.

“Lia?” the woman behind the counter called out, looking up. “Back again so soon?”

“I missed this place,” I admitted, approaching the counter. “But... I’m not just here to visit. I need help.”

“Help?” She raised an eyebrow, setting down the book in her hands. “What kind of help?”

“I want to learn magic,” I said, my voice steadier than I felt.

She blinked, then let out a soft laugh. “Magic, huh? That’s no small request, you know.”

“I know,” I said quickly. “But I’m serious. I want to learn.”

She leaned against the counter, studying me. “And why do you want to learn magic, Lia? Don’t give me the polite answer. The truth.”

I hesitated. “Because I don’t want to feel powerless anymore. I need to understand the things I’ve seen. The things I’ve felt.”

Her expression softened. “Good reasons. But magic isn’t just about wanting it. You’ll need commitment. Patience. Sacrifice.” “I’ll do whatever it takes,” I said, gripping the counter.

“That’s what they all say at first,” she said with a faint smirk. “But you’re different, aren’t you?”

“I’m ready,” I said firmly.

She tilted her head as if considering. “You don’t have the air of a novice. You’ve brushed against magic before, haven’t you?”

I nodded. “Once. But I didn’t understand it. I want to.”

She drummed her fingers on the counter. “All right, Lia. I know someone. A witch. She’s... selective about her students.” “Can you introduce me?”

“I’ll put in a good word,” she said. “If she’s interested, she’ll contact you. But I can’t make any promises.”

“Thank you,” I said, relief washing over me.

She held up a hand. “Don’t thank me yet. If she agrees, your life will change in ways you can’t imagine. You sure you’re ready for that?”

“Yes,” I said without hesitation.

“Then take this.” She reached under the counter and pulled out a worn book. “This will give you something to chew on while you wait.”

I took the book and glanced at the faded title. “Foundations of the Craft?”

“Basics,” she said. “But it’ll test how serious you are. Start there.”

“I’ll do it,” I said, clutching the book.

She smiled faintly. “Good luck, Lia. You’re going to need it.”

“Wait, how am I supposed to wake up magic within me?”

“Oh, I can solve that with a little fairy dust. It’ll awaken up the magic inside you.”

Before I could process what was happening, she pulled out a small pouch and threw it onto me. I coughed, this sparkly dust showering me and getting everywhere.

“Next time you could warn me...’

She shrugged. “No need. Your magic is completely awakened now so there won’t be another time.”

I left the bookstore, feeling a little dazed. Simone was gazing curiously at me, but I said nothing even as I slipped into the car and attempted to buckle my seatbelt.

“Lia, what’s going on?”

Simone waved a hand in front of my face, barely getting my attention. I blinked slowly, looking at her with a dazed smile.

“Okay, your freaking me out now. What’s going on?”

“I… think I’m going to be getting magic.”

She grinned. “Girl, that’s great! But how are they supposed to awaken it in you?”

“Simone, do you not see sparkly dust covering my body?”

“I do, but I feel like it was rude to mention it.”

I sighed. “It’s faerie dust.”

“What are we in Peter Pan or something?” Simone asked, rolling her eyes.

“It helps awaken magic… or so she said.”

I wanted to believe her, but I wasn’t going to know for sure unless I was able to try to cast a spell. With shaking hands, I decided to cast the spell I had been trying to cast for days now; levitating an object.

Simone cried out, “What the hell?!”

“I just levitated your phone!” I said, my excitement bubbling over.

“You did that?!” she shouted, pointing at the floating phone as if it had offended her.

“I did! Can you believe it?”

“No, I can’t believe it!” she snapped, snatching her phone out of the air. “A little warning would’ve been nice!”

“Where’s the fun in that?” I teased, grinning.

“Fun?” she echoed, glaring at me. “Lia, I thought my phone was haunted! Do you know how much this thing cost? What if I’d dropped it?”

“You’re being dramatic.”

“Dramatic?” she repeated, her voice rising. “Oh, I’m sorry. Next time my phone starts floating on its own, I’ll just calmly assume it’s you playing around with magic!”

“Well, yeah, that would make sense.”

She groaned. “I seriously thought a ghost was messing with me! And for the record, ghosts are not fun.”

“Ghosts?” I said, laughing. “Why is that your first thought? Of all the supernatural things, you jump straight to ghosts?”

“Yes, ghosts!” she shot back, crossing her arms. “We live in a world where vampires, werewolves, and witches are real, Lia! Ghosts aren’t that far-fetched!”

“Okay, okay, fair point,” I conceded, holding up my hands.

“And don’t even pretend they’re not real,” she added quickly. “I’ve heard too many stories to believe otherwise.” “Stories, huh?” I smirked. “Let me guess, you heard about some haunted house from a ‘friend of a friend’?” For more chapters visit [find\[N\]ovel.net](http://find[N]ovel.net)

“Oh, shut up,” she muttered, rolling her eyes. “You’re deflecting. The point is, warn me next time! My heart can’t handle surprises like that.”

“Fine, I’ll warn you next time.”

“Thank you,” she said with an exasperated sigh. “But seriously, you just casually levitated my phone like it was no big deal. What else can you do?”

I shrugged. “Honestly? I have no idea. But I want to find out.”

“Well, maybe don’t practice on my stuff, okay? Try... I don’t know, a book or something less expensive.”

“Books don’t scream,” I pointed out with a grin.

“You’re impossible,” she muttered, though I caught the hint of a smile. “Just promise me you won’t start testing spells on me next. I’d rather not float, thank you very much.”

“Noted,” I said, laughing. “But don’t tempt me.”

“Lia!” she exclaimed, clutching her phone tighter.

“Relax! I’m joking!”

“Barely,” she grumbled. “I need a drink. Or chocolate. Maybe both.”

“Don’t be so dramatic. You’ll get used to it,” I teased.

“Oh, will I?” she said, raising an eyebrow. “Let’s see how calm you are when your stuff starts flying around unannounced.”

“That’s fair,” I admitted. “But you’ve got to admit-it’s kind of cool, right?”

She sighed, finally relenting. “Fine. It’s kind of cool. Just... warn me next time, okay?”

“Deal,” I said with a grin.

“Good,” she muttered. “Now, if you’re done practicing your magic on me, can we leave the haunted phone behind and get back to normal?”

“Normal?” I said, laughing. “What’s that?”

Simone rolled her eyes, shoving her phone back into her pocket. “You’re lucky I like you.”

“And you’re lucky I didn’t accidentally set it on fire,” I teased.

She froze, staring at me. “Wait. You can do that?”

I hesitated, then grinned. “Guess we’ll find out.”

Simone groaned. “Nope, I’m out. I’m officially out.”

I looked down at the book in my bag, trying to contain the smile on my face. It was going to be a long road for me to even begin to make any headway in my magical skill. The only way I was going to get anywhere was to practice.

Brother’s Best Friends Are My Mates

Rain

Adjusting to being a vampire was easier than I thought it would be. Since I was half werewolf, I didn’t have to deal with all the trouble vampires experienced, but I still had bloodlust. Everyone had been asking me about it, wanting to know how I was fairing.

Lia was no different. She sent me one of her usual texts, wanting to know how I was doing. It did make my heart flutter. The two of us had come so far since first finding out we were mates. I’d be forever grateful that we had managed to overcome the odds.

Hey, how’s the whole bloodlust thing going? Are you holding up okay?

– L

Eh, it's manageable. Cravings are still a thing, though. Like right now, I could really use a snack.

– R

Oh? What are you craving?

– L

Blood. What else would it be?

– R

Well, I mean... you can always bite me.

– L

Haha, funny. Good one, Lia.

– R

I'm not joking.

– L

Wait, what? Are you serious?

– R

Yeah. When we're both home, you can drink some of my blood.

– L

... Is this a trap? This feels like a trap.

– R

No trap, Rain. I'm serious.

– L

Seriously serious?

– R

Do I need to spell it out for you? Yes, you can bite me. Yes, you can drink my blood.

– L

... Hell. Yes.

– R

LOL, you sound way too excited about this.

– L

Oh, I am excited. Like, my fangs are tingling right now.

– R

That's a thing? Fangs tingling?

– L

100%. It's a craving thing. Right now, they're screaming, "Hurry up and get home!"

– R

Wow, dramatic much?

– L

Lia, you just offered me the equivalent of a gourmet meal. I think I'm allowed to be dramatic.

– R

Well, don't speed or anything. I don't need you getting into an accident because you couldn't wait to bite me.

– L

Too late. I might already be driving faster than normal.

– R

Rain! Slow down!

– L

Okay, okay. I'll slow down. But just know, the second I walk through that door, I'm going straight for you.

– R

Pounce and all?

– L

Oh, absolutely. I'm not even going to apologize for it.

– R

You're impossible.

– L

And you're amazing. Seriously, you don't know how much this means to me.

– R

It's not a big deal. I trust you, Rain.

– L For more chapters visit [FindN\(\)vel.net](http://FindN()vel.net)

It's a huge deal. And for the record, I'm counting down the minutes until I get to see you.

– R

You're sweet... in a slightly predatory way.

– L

Sweet and predatory, huh? I can live with that.

– R

I should probably be nervous about how excited you are.

– L

Nah, you know I'd never hurt you.

– R

I know. That's why I'm not nervous.

– L

Good. Because you're about to make me the happiest vampire-werewolf hybrid ever.

– R

I'm glad I can help.

– L

You do more than help, Lia. You make everything better.

– R

Flattery will get you everywhere.

– L

Good. See you soon.

– R

Can't wait.

– L

Fuck now all I could think about was having Lia at this very moment. I couldn't wait for practice to be over so I could taste her blood.

Bet it would taste good too.

Swallowing, I managed to get through most of the day without going too crazy. I stepped inside and was greeted by Lia. The guys cast us a few amused glances, but let us go on our way.

The second I kicked the door closed, I picked Lia up without much effort. She let out a squeak of surprise but quickly adjusted to the height I was holding her. With her back pressed against the wall, I kissed her deeply, my fangs nipping at her lower lip. "Ow!" she hissed, the taste of copper flooding into my mouth.

What was it that vampire clan guy talked to me about? Oh yeah, vampire saliva could be used as a way to induce rapid healing or help lower the pain so I sucked on her lower lip, enjoying the moan that escaped her.

It made me want more so I sucked harder on her lip, my growing erection trapped in my pants. What I would give to feel her inner walls fluttering around me, milking my-fuck, I had to stop thinking so much.

“How is my blood?” she whispered, her breath tickling my ear.

I grinned. “The usual copper taste but there’s also this sweetness to it”

Lia kissed me again, more of her blood coming into my mouth. I drank greedily, but didn’t want to her experience blood loss so I settled for nibbling on her neck, sucking hard on her pulse point. The two of us stumbled onto the bed, pawing at each other’s clothes.

When she was bared to me, I buried my face in her sex and tasted her like a man starving. The sounds Lia was making were ones she was trying to muffle, but this just made me want to get her to moan loud enough for the guys to hear.

Grinning, I took a moment nibbling on her right thigh. I sunk my fangs into the soft skin, making sure to smooth the bite with my tongue. While pain and pleasure could mix, I didn’t want to cause her so much pain that I overwhelmed it.

After a while, it became clear that neither of us could stand the teasing anymore so I pushed inside Lia, groaning at how tight she felt around me. She clung to me, burying her face in my neck. I didn’t move until she gave me the go-ahead because the last thing I would ever do was hurt her.

The pace was frantic, both of us wanting to reach climax. I came first with Lia following suit a little while later. With a groan, I pulled out of her and collapsed on the right side of the bed. She snuggled into my chest and started to doze.

“Are you going to sleep?” I asked, trying not to yawn.

“You are tired too so why don’t you sleep?” she countered back

I yawned louder. “No, I don’t need to sleep. I’m awake. Awake.”

There was nothing wrong with falling asleep in her bed. Each of us had found a way to spend time with Lia now without jealousy rearing its ugly head. Was there still sometimes pangs of jealousy that hit me randomly? Of course, there was. I couldn’t stop that, but it was nowhere near the level it was!

“How was giving into your blood lust?”

A chuckle escaped me. “Pretty fucking amazing. I think I should indulge in it more often. Don’t you think?”

“Hell yes.”

It was surprising to hear those words escape Lia. Once she realized what she said, her cheeks heated up.

“I’m going to go to sleep now. If you want to stay here and sleep feel free. I don’t mind.”

Thank god that Lia’s bed was pretty big. I don’t know if it would’ve been able to fit two people if it were any smaller.

Despite my attempts to not fall asleep, I did. I woke up several hours later to the room empty. Lia left me a note explaining she was downstairs and dinner should be ready by the time I woke up.

A small part of me was annoyed that Lia had left the bed without telling me, but she was under no obligation to wake me up. This was just my preference.

Sighing, I climbed out of bed and threw on my clothes. The guys shot me a few grins when I came downstairs with Lia avoiding my gaze, a deep blush staining her cheeks.

Today had been a good day.

After all this shit from the Rosewater Coven, we had to deal with, it was nice to finally have a break. I knew that they were still there and would be a threat until we were able to finally eliminate them from this world.

I... didn’t want to think it was going to come to that but it was likely to get to that point. They refused to let go of the blood oath, no matter how much people tried to convince them that this was the best thing to do.

Who was it going to benefit if they saw it through to the end?

No one that’s fucking who.

But I wasn’t going to think about that right now. I sat down with my pack, grinning around at them. It was a good day and I was hoping we were going to have a good night as well.

Brother’s Best Friends Are My Mates

Lia

They say no news is good news, but I refuse to believe this is the case. No news is bad because it means the other side is planning something.

Some may call me, Lia Brown, paranoid, but I had everyright ot be paranoid.

The Rosewater Coven spend decades trying to track down my family so they could fulfill some stupid blood oath. It made no sense why they would go to those levels. What they should’ve done just left it alone and then we could all get on with our life.

Yet, they wouldn't.

One of the few silver linings to this was that I was learning magic. While I was still waiting to hear back from that woman, I was doing quite a bit of learning on my own. It seemed I was a fast learner because I had been able to cast a few spells up to this point.

But regardless of how much magic I was learning, it still didn't change the fact that I was a novice. I could only do so much. "We haven't heard from the Rosewater Coven in weeks," I said, breaking the tense silence in the room.

"They're regrouping," Jesse said, leaning back in his chair, arms crossed. "That's what they do. Always a second plan."

Rain scoffed. "Second? They probably have ten plans lined up. They're like cockroaches-hard to kill and always hiding in the shadows."

"You think they're waiting for something?" I asked, glancing between them.

"Definitely," Matt muttered, rubbing the back of his neck. "Too quiet. It's not like them to stay down for long."

"

Colby nodded. "Agreed. It's making my skin crawl. They're plotting something. I'd bet money on it."

"I hate this," I admitted, folding my arms. "I'd almost rather they attack outright than leave us sitting here, waiting." "Don't say that," Rain said quickly. "The last thing we need is to deal with their chaos again."

"Rain's right," Jesse added. "Let them stay hidden. Gives us time to prepare."

"But prepare for what?" I asked. "We don't know what they're doing. For all we know, they're already three steps ahead."

Matt sighed. "It's not like we haven't dealt with them before. We'll handle whatever they throw at us."

"Except this time, they know our weaknesses," Colby said, his tone sharp.

I felt my stomach drop. "Weaknesses?"

"You," Jesse said bluntly. "You're their target, Lia."

"I know that," I said quietly. "I just... I thought after the last fight, they'd back off. It felt final."

“Final for now,” Rain said, his voice softer. “But people like them don’t quit, especially when they think they’ve been slighted.”

“They see you as a threat to their power,” Matt added. “You’re not just some omega anymore, Lia. You’re a wildcard they can’t control.”

“Great,” I muttered. “So, what do we do? Just keep waiting for them to make the first move?”

“No,” Jesse said firmly. “We’ll be ready. We’ll train harder, and strengthen our defenses. And when they show their faces again, we’ll crush them.”

“That’s optimistic,” Colby said with a bitter laugh. “But sure, let’s act like we’ve got this under control.”

“We do have it under control,” Jesse snapped.

“For now,” Rain said, stepping in before they could argue further. “We all know how this works. They’ll come back, but when they do, we’ll be stronger than before.”

I sighed, feeling the weight of their words settle on me. “I hate being the reason you’re all on edge.”

“You’re not the reason,” Matt said quickly. “They are. Don’t put this on yourself.”

“You’re worth it,” Jesse added, his tone softening just slightly. “We’ll protect you, no matter what.”

“Damn right,” Colby said, smirking. “Rosewater’s not taking you from us, Lia. Not now, not ever.”

Rain grinned. “Besides, we’ve got plenty of tricks they haven’t seen yet.”

I tried to smile, but the tension in the room was suffocating. “I just hope it’s enough.”

“It will be,” Jesse said, his voice low but steady. “It has to be.”

I tried to go back to my regular life, not worrying about the silence from the group. One reason that I was so easily able to deal with it was the simple fact that I had magic. Learning magic was amazing, a bit terrifying, but still pretty amazing.

A couple of times one of my future mates walked in on me casting a spell. They gave me a strange look, taking a step back in shock. I think it surprised them to see my casting magic so easily, but once they saw that I was a bit hurt by them inching away they stopped doing it.

As long as they supported me in this then I was confident I’d be able to learn at an even faster rate.

*** Updates are released by FindNovel.net

Matt

Today was another quiet day. I was at home with Jesse while the others were out grabbing dinner. But I felt like something strange was going on.

Jesse must've sensed it too because he looked at me, nodding toward the back door.

“Do you sense something strange out there, Matt?”

I nodded. “Yeah, I do. Should we go out and check or wait in here?”

Before I could even say another word, Jesse stood up and walked out the door. I rolled my eyes, following and making sure to give him several dirty looks along the way.

“Aren't you the one who is always saying that we should never act rashly?”

He shrugged. “Yes, but I decided I wanted to go the other way this time. Are you going to back me up or not?”

“I'm following you out here aren't I?”

Jesse turned around, flashing a smirk in my direction. “Good to know you have my back.”

The two of us went out, tense and looking around. I heard something in the distance. It was the faintest crunching of a leaf but I know I heard it. Jesse nodded, motioning for me to follow him.

Something out of the corner of my eye moved towards me. Both Jesse and I moved, grabbing the person and slamming them to the ground. But Jesse went one step further. He clamped his hand over their mouth, glaring down.

“Don't tempt me with ripping your tongue out witch,” he hissed, causing me to balk.

“Dude-“

“Matt, this witch here was trying to kill us and do you think she'd hesitate in casting a spell?”

I winced. “No.”

The two of us stared down at her. She looked determined to cast a spell on us, making me wonder if we should reach out to Lia.

“Hold her here. Lia might know a spell to keep her from cursing us or something.”

Quickly I grabbed my phone and typed a response to Lia.

Hey, we've got a situation. Caught a witch sneaking around. Jesse thinks she's about to curse us. Do you know a spell that can stop her? -M

Wait, what?! Did you catch a witch? How? Are you both okay? -L

We're fine... for now. But she's mumbling something under her breath, and it feels like she's trying to curse us. What do I do? -

M

Don't panic. If she can't speak clearly, she can't finish a spell. Cover her mouth if you have to. I have a silencing spell, but it's temporary. -L

Temporary? Define "temporary" because she's trying to break free here. How long do we have? -M

Long enough for me to get there and fix this properly. I'm grabbing my supplies now. Just don't break eye contact with her. It weakens her focus. -L

Not gonna lie, Lia, she's thrashing hard. I had to pin her arms back, and she just hissed at me. Is... hissing normal? -M

Yeah, it's intimidation. She's trying to scare you into letting go. Stay strong. I'm leaving with the guys now. We'll be there in five minutes. -L

Five minutes? She's still trying to chant. If I get turned into a frog, I'm haunting you. -M

You won't. Keep her mouth covered. I'm serious. If she finishes even half a spell, it could still work. -L

Pretty sure she just tried to bite me. This is way above my pay grade, Lia. -M

Matt, focus. She can't cast anything if you keep her silent. Trust me. We're almost there. -L

She stopped thrashing, but now her eyes are glowing. And not in the fun, 'I'm magical' way. -M

That means she's building magic inside but can't release it. You're doing great. I'm seconds away. Just stay calm. -L

Calm?! The witch's eyes are glowing and Jesse's pacing like he's ready to rip her throat out. How calm do you expect me to be?! -M

Hold on a little longer. I'm walking through the door now. -L

THANK THE MOON. Get in here and deal with this before she hexes my entire bloodline! -M

Lia showed up soon and essentially saved the day. The threat was averted, but what were we going to do overall?

Brother's Best Friends Are My Mates

Lia

The silence from the Rosewater Clan is starting to get to me. I don't know what the hell I am going to do about this. Because something is going on, even though the guys are trying to tell me it doesn't mean anything.

Gabi being pregnant gives them a huge opportunity. It enables them to possibly take her baby, finding a way to solve the blood oath. But I can't imagine them taking my niece or nephew. Michael would fight tooth and nail, never allowing them to take his child.

All of us would do the same.

What if... they take Gabi? If they took Gabi then they could hold her hostage until she gives birth? I wouldn't even be shocked if they didn't kill her afterward because they wouldn't have any need for her. Updates are released by findnovel.net

Quickly I grab my phone, wanting to talk with Simone and see if she can offer me her perspective.

I've been thinking... the Rosewater Coven hasn't done anything to us in a while, but what if they're just waiting for the right moment? What if they're planning to take Gabi's baby? I can't shake this feeling that something's coming. -L

Hey, I know you're worried, but you can't let your mind run wild like that. They haven't made any moves, and if they wanted to do something like that, they would've already tried, right? Maybe they've just backed off for now. -S

I don't know, Simone. It just feels like they're being too quiet-like they're biding their time or waiting for something. And I don't trust them to stay quiet for long. Gabi's baby is too important, and I just... I can't help but feel like they'll try something

soon. -L

I get it, Lia. You're scared because you care, but sometimes silence is just silence. It doesn't always mean they're planning something big. Look, I don't think they'd risk going after the baby unless they had a really good reason. And even then, they'd know it's dangerous for them. They've got to realize we'd fight back with everything we've got. -S

I wish I could believe that. But every time they've gone quiet before, it's been followed by something worse. Remember the fire at the sanctuary? Or what they tried to pull at the Solstice Gathering? What if this time is different? What if they're planning something that we can't see coming? -L

You're right; they've done some terrible things before. I won't deny that. But jumping to conclusions without any real signs won't help us, either. I've been keeping an eye out, too, and I swear, if they were planning something, we'd catch on. We've always been one step ahead of them when it matters most. Don't let fear cloud your thinking, Lia. We've got this. -S

I hope you're right... I really do. I just can't shake this feeling that something bad is coming. It's like a storm brewing on the horizon, and no one else can see it. What if they're already closer than we think? What if we're too late by the time we notice? –

L

You're not alone in this, Lia. I promise you, we'll stay alert. I'll double-check the wards myself tonight, just in case. But you've got to trust me when I say this: stressing over what might happen will only drain you. When they make their move-if they make their move-we'll be ready. We always are. You don't have to carry this fear alone. We'll handle whatever comes, together. -S

I thought about talking about it with Michael, but I didn't want to worry him. He's been under enough stress with the pregnancy and wanting to make sure everything goes okay.

The guys know and now Simone does so all I can do is keep practicing magic, hoping that someone will reach out to me at some point. But we all keep an eye out after that witch showed up.

We let her go and she took off, giving us what I could only describe as the evil eye. I wondered what the reason for her visit was. Did she want to hurt one of us or was it to spy on us?

If Matt hadn't heard her she might have remained hidden, watching us for god knows how long.

I needed to take steps to protect the household. This started with protection wards, essentially giving us a buffer zone from anyone who might try to hurt us again.

The first attempt to create a protection ward went badly. I nearly blew myself up. During the second attempt, the ward was thrown forward, seconds from hitting Colby in the head.

“Lia, what the hell?!”

I jumped to my feet, trying to retrieve the ward. “I am so sorry, Colby. I'm trying to create some protection wrads to put around the house. You know, in case someone tries to hurt us again.”

It would be a good idea to give some protection wards to Simone and Michael as well, but this was assuming I could even create one!

“Well, maybe you should warn us next time so we can avoid the living room,” he suggested, giving me a logical suggestion I should’ve thought of on my own.

“Yes, I’ll warn you guys next time.”

He grinned, kissing the top of my head.

“I’ll let you get right back to it. Good luck!”

I needed luck. For a moment I thought of creating a luck charm to see if it would give me a bit of a boost. But it didn’t do anything.

Magic was something you had to work at. I had learned a lot in a short amount of time, but I needed to keep reminding myself I was a novice and this wasn’t going to change.

But after a week of trying, I realized that I had finally created a successful protection ward.

“Guys!” I shouted.

My four mates came rushing down, their eyes wide. They looked panicked, eyes darting around the living room.

“What happened? What did you see?” Matt spat, growling loudly.

I blinked. “Guys, nothing is wrong. I just wanted to tell you I was able to successfully create some protection wards...”

“We thought you were being attacked!” Rain exclaimed, looking like he was almost driven to tears.

“Everything is all right,” I assured them.

The entire Moonveil pack was a nervous wreck, on edge and waiting to see if the Rosewater Coven was going to make a move. I don’t think it was something I could ever get used to.

Jesse

I wasn’t angry at Lia for scaring us. Matt seemed pretty pissed, Rain was near tears, and Colby brushed it off quickly. It was an honest mistake.

But I was worried about something else; how would the protection wards make them react?

Maybe worried wasn't the right word. It was dread of what they would resort to doing. Our homes would be protected but we couldn't stay at home twenty four/seven. The only thing we could do was limit our time outside.

Witches, I had come to realize, were too quick to hold a grudge. They liked to say werewolves were prone to fits of anger with a short fuse, but witches were ones that held onto their anger, letting it fester for years and years.

How else could one explain them trying to make sure Lia and Michael paid for a blood oath? It was their grandmother that committed the sin and she wasn't even one who committed something terrible.

Her mistake was falling in love with a wolf... so scandalous.

I shrugged, making my way out of the room.

"At least it's something," I said to them.

The rest of the day it seemed like everyone felt more relaxed and comfortable... to an extent. I know all of us had a lot on our minds. How could we not?

"We should travel in groups of two," Colby announced out of the blue as we were digging into our dinner.

I blinked. "I don't know if that's completely possible, Colby. How are we supposed to do that when sometimes we have no choice but to go places alone?"

"I'm just trying to come up with suggestions here. If you have an idea then please go ahead and tell me your suggestions. I'm willing to listen."

Lia coughed. "Guys, don't fight. It's important that all of stay united on this, okay?"

"She has a point," Rain pointed out with a mouth full of food.

"Rain," Matt growled, giving him a look. "Can't you swallow before talking?"

"That's what she said," Rain added, bursting out laughing at his childish and pop culture-esque joke.

I did let out a chuckle though. As silly as it was, it did do enough to make me laugh. I was about to take a bite of my food when I realized that everyone was staring at me.

"What?"

"You just laughed at my dumb joke," Rain whispered, tears of happiness coming to his eyes. "I never thought I would see the day you laugh at one of my jokes but here we are."

I shrugged. “It was bound to happen sooner or later. If you guys want sit and stare at me then fine, but I’d rather focus on eating this delicious food that we cooked.”

Eventually, their gaze did turn back onto foods, as did their attention.

Good. I was getting sick of them staring and was willing to smile if it meant stopping them in their tracks.

Brother’s Best Friends Are My Mates

Lia

Even with the protection wards, I was desperate. There was only so much I could think to do and one option was reaching out to the magical community. I wrote up an email to every one of their associations I could think of, but all I heard were typical generic responses.

It probably wasn’t even a person saying this but one of these automatic response that got sent out! I was angry, wishing they would help me with something. How could they not help a fellow species?

The guys noticed one morning I was a little down. Rain nudged me and I smiled faintly at him.

“You okay, Lia?”

I shook my head. “I’ve been trying to get the magical community to help, but no one is responding. I sent messages to everyone I knew, and nothing. It’s like they’ve all turned their backs on us.” Read full story at findnovel.net

“Have you tried reaching out to everyone you can think of? Maybe it’s just a matter of timing or people being too busy.”

“No, I’ve done everything I can. No one’s even bothering to acknowledge me. It’s like I don’t exist to them anymore. I’m so frustrated, Simone. We need help, and they’re just... ignoring us.”

“That’s rough. I’m sorry they’re not coming through for you. But maybe... maybe it’s because they don’t trust you. I mean, I hate to say it, but there’s a lot of prejudice against werewolves in the magical community. They might see you as a risk, or they just don’t want to get involved because of what you are.”

“I don’t want to believe that, but... it makes sense. They’ve always treated us differently like we’re some kind of threat. Maybe they think that if they help, it’ll come back to bite them.”

“Yeah, it’s not fair, but there’s a history of that kind of prejudice. Werewolves have never exactly been on the ‘good side’ of magical society. People are quick to judge and slow to trust. It’s frustrating because it’s not like you’re asking for something unreasonable. You’re just trying to protect Gabi and the baby.”

“It just feels so unfair. We’re asking for help, and instead of getting support, we’re getting pushed away. All we’re trying to do is protect the baby, protect everyone. Why does it have to be like this? Why does it always feel like we’re being treated like the enemy?”

“Because they don’t see the full picture. They don’t see you, Gabi, or the baby as part of the magical community. They see you as different, something to be cautious about. And let’s be real, the werewolf reputation isn’t exactly helping matters.”

“I know, but it’s so tiring. Every time we reach out, every time we ask for help, we get ignored or pushed aside. It’s like we’re invisible to them. How are we supposed to protect everyone when no one is willing to stand with us?”

“I know, it sucks. But you can’t let it get to you. Maybe not all of them are like that, maybe some out there will still help, but we just haven’t reached the right ones yet. Keep trying, even if it feels hopeless. I know it’s hard, but sometimes it takes time to find the right people who are willing to fight for what’s right.”

“I don’t know how much longer I can keep fighting this alone. We need the support of the magical community, especially with what’s coming. But if they won’t help, what do we do then?”

“We keep going. We find another way. Don’t let their prejudice stop you. You’ve got us, and we’ll fight together, even if we have to go outside their little circles. Maybe we don’t need the whole magical community. Maybe we just need the right people, the ones who truly understand what’s at stake.”

“I just feel like every step forward is met with two steps back. We can’t do this without help. We need allies.”

“I know it feels that way, but you’re not alone. We’ll keep fighting, even if we have to do it on our own. Maybe we’ll find others who feel the same way we do. And if we can’t find them, we’ll make our path. We’re not giving up, no matter what.”

I felt useless, unable to think of any way I could do something to turn the tides in this situation, but there wasn’t anything I could do. Except make sure I was careful, never letting my guard down.

“It’ll be all right,” Colby said after a bit, shooting me a warm smile.

“Since when are you Mr. Positive?” I asked teasingly.

He shrugged. "It's just the best way to handle this situation right now. The last thing we want to do is freak out and make any mistakes."

Colby did have a point.

Colby

I had other worries on my mind besides the Rosewater Clan trying to steal my mate or one of my best friends. It should've been on everyone else's minds but no one had brought it up.

The Moonveil Pack needed a pack leader. We had never thought of someone who could be the leader or rather it was never discussed. I had tried to bring it up but then the situation happened with the attack.

It was a fucking miracle Rain was all right. All of us laughed about it now, but the fact was if he hadn't been half vampire then he wouldn't have survived.

A pack leader was necessary for all packs and would help when we had discussions. But who was going to be the pack leader? My first thought was Michael, but after I brought it up to him, he immediately told me that he wasn't the right person for the job. I asked him why and Michael just brushed me off.

"I'm just not the right fit."

"But why, Michael? You've always been the most level-headed one among us."

He huffed. "And you just as level-headed so don't play that card, Colby. I'll do the same."

"Fine, fine," I muttered, wondering if I should just drop it. "We do need to figure out who is going to lead the pack sometime soon."

"I think you should."

I laughed. "Michael, are you crazy?"

"No, I'm serious."

"What?!" I asked in disbelief. "Why would I be a good option?"

"You are more level-headed than me and not to mention a good listener, always willing to think logically. Who else would make a great choice?"

The pack leader had to be an alpha. Simone's mates, as nice as they were, weren't the brightest crayons in the box. Rain... well, he was great but he tended to crack under pressure so he'd be an even worse choice.

Jesse was too scary and Matt was too impulsive when he got angry. By process of elimination, it did leave me but I shook my head, refusing to go along with it.

"No, I won't accept that."

"Fine, but I think it's going to end up being you in the end. Don't you think you should accept it now rather than live in denial? That way you won't be shocked when they pick you."

I growled. "Michael, I called you not so you could try to pressure me into being the pack leader."

"Well, I've given you my thoughts so it's up to you whether or not you want to take my advice."

After we got off the phone, I realized calling Michael had been a mistake. It was making my anxiety worse and didn't help me figure out what direction we could go in.

Groaning, I threw myself onto my bed. I wasn't going to bring it up again and push off the discussion for as long as I could.

Brother's Best Friends Are My Mates

Lia

I always liked to check in with my brother and Zimone. They didn't live at the house with us so it was the best way to communicate with them.

With everything that was going on, I especially wanted to make sure everyone was safe and alive.

Hey, Michael. Just checking in-I've been thinking about you and Gabi a lot lately. How are you both holding up? How's she been feeling these days? I know things can get overwhelming, so I just wanted to see if there's anything you need or if I can help in any way. -L

Hey, Lia. Thanks for reaching out and thinking of us—it means a lot. Honestly, we're doing fine. Gabi's been feeling a little more tired than usual, but the doctor reassured us everything is going just the way it should. You don't have to worry so much, I promise. We've got it under control over here. -M

Of course, I worry! That's what sisters do, right? Especially with such an exciting, life-changing event like this. I just want to make sure you're both okay. I know you're handling things, but it's

hard not to feel protective-there's a baby on the way! I'm just so excited for you both and want to be there however I can. -L

I know you mean well, Lia, and I appreciate it more than I can say. But trust me, we have things handled. Gabi's been amazing, and I'm making sure she takes it easy and doesn't overdo anything. You don't need to carry any stress for us-we're in a good place right now. -M

You're so stubborn, Michael. I'm not trying to carry stress for you I care, and you're my brother. That's what family is for. Besides, you're balancing a lot too. Who's making sure you're taking care of yourself? You need to be strong for both of them, you know. -L

Ha, nice try. I'm doing fine, Lia. Honestly. My main focus has just been on making sure Gabi's comfortable and we're as ready as possible for when the baby comes. I'm not neglecting myself, I promise. -M

You better not be burning yourself out, Michael. Gabi needs you healthy and well-rested. Both of you do. Don't make me come over unannounced just to make sure you're taking care of yourself-I'm serious. -L

I wouldn't put it past you! But really, I'm managing just fine. Gabi's napping right now-she's been extra tired lately, but the doctor assured us that's normal at this stage. We're being careful, I promise. -M

That makes sense, but it's still hard not to overthink everything. You know how my mind works-I've been reading up on all the things that can happen during pregnancy, and it's made me even more protective. I just want everything to go smoothly for both of you. -L

And now you're worrying yourself unnecessarily. Lia, Gabi is in great hands, I promise. If there's ever anything even slightly concerning, you'll be the first person I call. Seriously, you're the best support system we could ask for, but you don't have to stress yourself out. We've got this. -M Original content can be found at findnovel.net

You better call me! I want to be there for both of you, whether it's running errands, helping with baby prep, or even just keeping Gabi company when you need a break. Please let me be part of this—I mean it. I want to help. -L

I know, and it does mean a lot to both of us. Honestly, we're in a pretty good spot right now. Gabi's been nesting like crazy- organizing everything in the house. If anything, I'm just trying to keep up with her energy some days. -M

That sounds exactly like her! She's going to be such an amazing mom, Michael. And you-you're going to be an incredible dad. I'm so proud of you both. You're going to be such a great team together. -L

Thanks, Lia. That means a lot coming from you. We're just doing our best to prepare for this big change, but knowing you're in our corner and always ready to help gives me a lot of peace of mind. It makes a difference. -M

Always, Michael. You're my brother, and that baby is already so loved by all of us. Don't forget you can lean on me if you ever need anything, okay? That's what family is for. -L

I promise. Love you, Lia. And thank you for being so amazing. -M

Love you too, Michael. Give Gabi a big hug from me when she wakes up, okay? -L

Will do. Talk soon! -M

I smiled to myself, satisfied with the response from my brother. He was still adjusting to the fact that he was going to be a father, something I thought he didn't need to worry about. Michael was going to be a good father.

But, hearing that Gabi was pregnant got me thinking.

What would it be like if I had a pup?

At some point, I'd like to have a pup by each of the guys. It was silly to have a pup now. I was still young and trying to get my education while the guys were just beginning their careers as professional rugby players.

The main thing I could think of was that my hormones were getting the best of me. I had long since recovered from my last heat, but the memories remained. One day I would spend a full heat with all my mates. Just... not anytime soon.

I shook my head as if I could expel the thoughts from my mind, but they stubbornly remained. With an exasperated sigh, I looked up at my ceiling as if all the answers were there.

But I didn't have any answers. All I had was more questions and frustration.

I wondered what my other mates thought about the situation. Did they want pups anytime soon?

It wasn't a possibility, but knowing that they wanted to fill me—

No, I didn't need to think about that right now.

A knock at my door had me jumping to my feet. I smelled Matt, remembering that the two of us were set to go on a date. Could he... smell my desire?

The last time Matt and I spent together we barely made it to the bedroom he shared with Jess. Hopefully this time we could keep our hands off one another.

Matt

I could smell her desire the moment we stepped into the car. It was difficult to keep my hands to myself, but I did. Though, towards the end of the date I couldn't take it anymore.

After parking the car in a secluded spot in the park, I locked the doors and pulled her onto my lap. Lia didn't protest, having worked to unbuckle her seatbelt when she realized my intentions.

Groaning, I ground against her, enjoying the feel of her clothed sex rubbing against my erection still trapped in my pants. With every sound she made and squirming of her body, I felt myself losing more and more of my patience.

"Lift your skirt," I muttered, grinning when she blushed. "Also, how attached to this underwear are you?"

"Not very, why?"

Without warning I ripped them off her body, causing her to let out a cry of surprise. Her wet sex was exposed to the cold air, making her whimper. I released my length, helping her position herself over me.

Slowly but surely Lia lowered herself onto me. She took her time and I wasn't sure if she was trying to tease me or if she genuinely needed to take her time. Either way, it was driving me insane but I wasn't about to rush or hurt her.

Lia meant the world to me. The two of us had gotten to the point where there was trust. It took her a while to get to this point and I wasn't going to do anything to ruin what we had.

Finally, I was completely inside Lia. I glanced down at her, grinning when she nodded.

I didn't waste any time in thrusting into her wetness, Lia moaning loudly. She buried her face in my shoulder, trying her best to muffle her cries. No one was around, but if someone did happen to drive or walk by they would hear her sexy cries of passion.

It was no wonder I didn't last much longer. Lia came first, her inner walls fluttering around me. This pushed me to my orgasm, and a loud growl escaped me.

For a moment the two of us sat there, my seed leaking out of her. She collapsed against my chest, nuzzling my neck and not wanting to move.

"Lia?" I asked, smirking when she muttered something under her breath. "As much as I would love to stay here, it's best if we move."

After some convincing, I was able to get Lia to listen. She started to doze on the way back home, but I didn't care. Lia deserved to have some sleep.

I can't believe the two of us had sex in the car where anyone could've walked by and seen us.

But if I was being honest, that was what made it so much hotter. Lia might not admit to it, but I bet she would agree with that fact.

Brother's Best Friends Are My Mates

Lia

I wasn't prepared when I got this text from Michael. It made all my worries hit me at once.

Had I been right all along? Were my previous worries I thought, actually coming to fruition?

Michael had a right to know I feared his mate had been kidnapped. It was something I should've told him a long time ago, but I wanted to think the Rosewater Coven wouldn't go to those levels.

To think... they might go so far as to kidnap an innocent pregnant woman just to fulfill some stupid blood oath they refused to let go of! It was something I'd never been able to wrap my mind around.

Hey, have you seen Gabi? She never came home after her appointment earlier today, and I'm starting to get worried. She said she was coming straight back, but it's been hours. I thought maybe she stopped by your place or texted you instead, just to hang out for a bit or something. Have you heard from her at all? — M

No, I haven't seen her or heard from her today. That's weird. Did she mention anything about having plans afterward or meeting up with someone else? Maybe she just got caught up and lost track of time? — L

I don't think so. She was pretty clear that she was coming right home after her appointment. You know how she is—she always checks in, even if she's running a little late. That's what's freaking me out. It's been hours now, and this isn't like her at all. — M

Yeah... you're right. That's not like Gabi. But still, maybe there's a logical explanation. Her phone could've died, or maybe she ran into someone she knew and got caught talking. Or what if her appointment just ran way longer than expected? Could she have mentioned something like that? — L

I don't think so, Lia. She would've found a way to let me know. Even if her phone died, she could've borrowed someone else's. That's just how she is. I don't know, something feels off

about all this. I can't shake this bad feeling I've had ever since I realized how late it was. It's been bugging me for hours now. – M

M... I didn't want to say this earlier, but... what if something bad happened? Like, not just her being late or losing her phone. What if it's serious? – L

What do you mean? Serious how? – M

I don't know, okay? I know it sounds crazy, but... what if she was taken or something? Like kidnapped? I keep trying to push the thought out of my head, but it just won't go away. I've been thinking about it for a while now, and I didn't know how to say it. L

What?! Kidnapped? Are you serious? Why the hell would you even say something like that? That's a huge thing to suggest, Lia! If you thought something like that, why didn't you tell me sooner? — M

Because I didn't want to scare you, okay? I thought I was just overreacting and being paranoid. I kept hoping I was wrong and that she'd show up any second. But now... I don't know. I still hope I'm wrong, but it's been too long, and I can't stop thinking the worst. L

You should've told me the moment you felt like that! God, you can't keep something like that bottled up, especially when it's this serious. What if—what if something did happen, and we're just sitting here doing nothing? — M

I know, I know. I'm so sorry. I just didn't want to make you panic over what's probably nothing. But you're right... it's been too long. It's starting to feel wrong. — L

No, I'm the one overreacting. I'm probably just working myself up over nothing. She's probably fine. Maybe she just forgot to text or got caught up with something harmless. She'll probably walk through the door any minute now, and we'll both feel ridiculous for worrying this much. – M

I hope you're right. I do. But... if she doesn't, maybe we should consider calling someone. Just to be safe? – L

Who do we even call? The police? Her doctor's office? I don't even know where to start, and every second we wait feels like it's making things worse. – M

Start with the police, just to report her as missing. They might not act right away, but at least it gets things started. Maybe check with her doctor, too, in case she left anything behind at the appointment or mentioned something to them? – L

Okay, yeah. I'll start there. I just... I feel so useless sitting here. Every time I hear a car outside, I think it's her. And every time it's not, it feels worse. – M

I get it. I do. Waiting like this is the worst. But you're not useless, M. You're doing everything you can, and I'll help however you need me to. We're not in this alone. L

Thanks, Lia. I'll give it another hour, and if she's not back by then, I'll make the calls. Just... stay by your phone in case she shows up or we need to figure out what to do next. — M

Of course. I'm here for you. No matter what, we'll figure this out. — L

I took a deep breath, trying to steady my voice. "Guys, I need to tell you something-something serious."

Rain's face tightened with concern. "Lia, what is it? You look pale-what's going on?"

I swallowed hard. "I think... I think Gabi's been taken."

Rain's eyes widened, his voice rising. "What?! Taken? As in-kidnapped? Lia, what the hell? Why didn't you say something sooner?!"

Matt crossed his arms, his expression hardening. "Lia, are you sure? This is serious. Do you have proof or are we jumping to conclusions?"

"Michael texted. She never came home after her appointment. It's been hours. This isn't like her. And... I've had this horrible feeling all day."

Rain started pacing, voice frantic. "We need to do something. Now. Call Michael. Call someone. What if they're hurting her? What if—"

Colby stepped forward, grabbing Rain's shoulder. "Rain, calm down. Panicking won't help Gabi. We need to think clearly." Read full story at [Find\[N\]ovel.net](http://Find[N]ovel.net)

Rain spun to face him, fists clenched. "CALM DOWN? Do you want me to calm down when someone could have taken Gabi? She's pregnant, Colby! She's vulnerable—"

Jesse's voice cut through the tension, low and steady. "We don't even know who 'they' are yet. We need facts, not guesses. Lia, has anyone threatened her recently? The Coven?"

I nodded, voice cracking. "Yes. I mean, no direct threats, but it's been too quiet. And you know how they operate—waiting until we're vulnerable."

Rain gritted his teeth. "I swear if they've hurt her, I'll—"

Matt interrupted firmly. "We all will, Rain. But first, we find her. Lia, message Michael. Tell him we're on our way."

I felt my breath catch as I whispered, "I'm scared, guys."

Rain's fury softened, though his voice still trembled. "Me too. But we're not losing Gabi. Not on our watch."

Later that day it was confirmed by the Rosewater Coven that they had indeed taken Gabi. They left a note that made me want to scream.

We have Gabi. She is safe, for now. We will hold her until she gives birth. The child belongs to us, a fulfillment of the blood oath your family swore long ago. Once the baby is born, we will return Gabi unharmed. Consider the blood oath fulfilled.

It sent chills down my spine. How the hell did they think it was all right for them to kidnap a woman who was pregnant and keep her?

The magical community wasn't going to help us. I tried appealing to them saying that Gabi might be kidnapped, but nothing happened. They either weren't reading my messages or truly didn't care what their witches did.

"How is Michael doing?" Rain whispered, causing me to shake my head.

"He's a fucking wreck. Didn't you see him when he came in?"

My brother was here back under our roof. One of my mates was sitting with him, doing their best to calm him down. However, there wasn't any way he was going to calm down with his mate and unborn baby out there.

I was powerless to do anything for my brother... my big brother who had always done his best to protect me for the most part. "Colby says I'm just going to make him more nervous and that I have to stay out of the room," Rain said sadly.

As much as I didn't want to banish Rain from the room, he did tend to overreact. Michael was already going through a lot and this was just going to push him further and further over the edge.

"He's right, Rain. If you think you can calm down then go ahead and try to offer him some comfort, but right now he needs calmness and not chaos."

Rain sunk beside me on the couch, pouting a bit. "I guess you're right."

"I am right, but you can keep me company and try to help me come up with something," I offered.

He grinned. "Yes. Surely there is something we can do!"

I certainly hoped there was.

Brother's Best Friends Are My Mates

Lia

My phone buzzed on the table, the number unfamiliar. For a moment, I hesitated. I didn't recognize it, but something told me I needed to answer.

"Hello?" I said, trying to sound more confident than I felt.

"Lia?" The voice on the other end was sharp and steady, with an edge of authority that made me sit up straighter. "This is Veronica Ruiz. The woman from the bookstore reached out to me about your... inquiry."

"Oh!" My heart thudded in my chest. "Yes, thank you for calling. I—"

"Let's skip the pleasantries," she interrupted. "You want to learn magic, don't you?"

"Yes," I said quickly.

"Then let me be clear. This won't be easy. Magic isn't a game or a hobby. It's a discipline, a way of life, and it demands everything from you. Most people start when they're children, not... adults."

I winced. "I know I'm older, but I'll work hard. I'll do whatever it takes."

"Words are easy. Actions aren't. I don't coddle my students, Lia, and I have no patience for laziness or excuses. If you want me to teach you, you'll have to prove yourself."

"I'm ready," I said, gripping the phone tightly. "I'm not afraid of hard work."

"Good. Tomorrow morning, 6 a.m. sharp. I'll send you the address. Don't be late."

"Six a.m.?" I repeated, caught off guard.

"Is that going to be a problem?" she asked, her voice daring me to say yes.

"No," I said quickly. "No problem. I'll be there."

"Bring nothing but your focus, an open mind, and a willingness to be challenged. You won't need anything else."

I swallowed hard. "What should I expect?"

"You don't need to know that yet," she said firmly. "Just be prepared for the unexpected. The first step in learning magic is often the hardest."

“I understand,” I said, trying to sound braver than I felt. “I’ll be ready.”

“We’ll see,” she replied, her tone skeptical. “One last thing: don’t lie to me, don’t hold back, and don’t come with excuses. I won’t tolerate it.”

“I won’t,” I promised.

“Good,” she said simply. “Then I’ll see you tomorrow. And Lia?”

“Yes?”

“If you’re not serious, don’t waste my time-or yours.”

“I’m serious,” I said, my voice firm. “I promise.”

“We’ll see,” she said again, and then the line went dead.

I stared at my phone, her words echoing in my mind. Tomorrow at 6 a.m. sharp. My stomach twisted with nerves. If Veronica Ruiz was anything like she sounded, this wasn’t going to be easy. But if this was what it took to learn magic, I’d be there. I had to be.

Still, I was excited. I was going to have a chance to finally be able to learn magic. It was something I wanted to do since I discovered that we were descended from witches on my mother’s side.

But... what if I screwed up? She wasn’t going to make it easy. I don’t think Veronica Ruiz would even be shocked if I decided to drop her lessons after the first one.

No, that wasn’t going to happen!

I was going to learn magic and try to wield it no matter what.

This was especially true with my brother’s mate missing.

He was a fucking wreck with his mate missing.

If Veronica Ruiz could help me learn magic and get us one step closer to finding out where Gabi was then so be it. I was willing to do anything.

It had been only a few days since she went missing and the werewolf association was taking this seriously. They were doing their best, trying to reach out to the witch association but nothing was happening to them.

I was thinking that they wouldn’t get involved because the blood oath fell outside of that law. Because it wasn’t grandfathered in, it was technically legal. For this reason alone, they weren’t going to do shit.

It made me angry. I couldn't believe they were willing to throw my brother's mate, my sister-in-law, a fellow pack member, and the mother of my niece or nephew under the bus like that.

Gabi had to be so scared. But I also knew she was giving them a hard time. She was a tough one, never letting anyone walk over her. I knew she would push them just enough to get on their nerves but never enough to put her or the baby at risk.

How could this ever happen? Well, I knew how but it was difficult to accept. The only thing I could think to focus on was learning as much magic as I could.

Magic was full of possibilities. This was what I had come to learn.

But there was only so much I could learn on my own.

Teaching myself had been fruitful but what I couldn't teach myself, Veronica Ruiz was going to teach me herself. Just talking to her on the phone made me realize how tough she sounded. She was going to mean business, refusing to let me off the hook.

I chewed nervously on my lower lip, trying to calm my nerves.

There was no need to talk myself out of doing this. It was something I had to do! I'd come this far, hadn't I?

During dinner I must've seemed a bit out of sorts because Rain cleared his throat, waving his hand in front of my face. "Hey Lia you okay?"

I smiled at Rain, but the smile didn't reach my eyes. "I'm fine."

"Liar," Jesse said, never missing a beat. Original content can be found at [Find★Novel.net](http://FindNovel.net)

"Thanks, Jesse," I muttered, glaring at him. "Can't you just let me get away with something for once?"

He shook his head. "No, I can't and if you think I ever would then you don't know me very well."

But he was right. Jesse was never the type of person to do that so why did I think he would start now?

Rain

I heard someone let out a frustrated and tired cry while I was in the kitchen. Sure I wasn't allowed to cook but that didn't mean I couldn't come in to warm up some leftovers.

“Uh, Lia? That sounds like you but you sound like you’re in pain. Are you okay?”

Another groan followed, making my eyebrows raise.

“Lia, can you use your words? I don’t know how to respond to that.”

She appeared in the doorway to the dining room, heavy and dark circles under her eyes. I balked, unsure of what to do.

“Okay, who do I have to punch in the face to avenge you?”

“Unless you want to punch out a witch who is graciously teaching me magic then I suggest you leave it alone.”

I paled. “That Veronica Ruiz is that bad?”

“Yes.”

It was the only word she said before shuffling into the living room and throwing herself dramatically onto the couch. “Uh, so what makes her such a hard ass?”

Lia sighed heavily. “She says I have a lot to make up for so she is pushing me twice as hard as she would any of her other students. I think she is pushing me four times as hard if I bet any money on it.”

“Maybe you should give it up?”

As soon as the words came out of my mouth I knew I said the wrong thing. Lia sat up. Whipping her head around and glaring at me.

“You want me to give up when it might be the only way to get Gabi back? Are you crazy, Rain?!”

I winced. “Hey, Michael is asleep in his room upstairs. You might want to keep it down.”

Her eyes immediately softened. “Has he come out at all?”

“No.”

It was tough to see my best friend struggling so much. Michael had always been someone you could lean on in times of difficulty. But now he was a shell of his former self.

This wasn’t to say he wasn’t trying to find his pregnant mate. He was trying damn near anything, but we couldn’t find out where the Rosewater Coven was. It was beyond frustrating to get bogged down at every step.

“Well, tell me about this magic you’re learning,” I said, grinning from ear to ear.

I was genuinely interested to learn more about her magical skills. From what I could see, she was a fast learner. But this was no surprise. Lia was very smart. She would be able to do anything she set her mind to.

Lia stifled a yawn, but she went on to talk about her entire day. I listened intently, grinning when I noticed the twinkle in her eye and a small smile on her face.

She was excited. Lia might be exhausted right now but she was happy. I was glad that there was a small inkling of happiness in this huge shitstorm we were currently dealing with.

It was hard to forget that Michael was up there, trying to figure out what he was going to do. I was doing my best to be there for everyone.

“I think I’m going to go up and get some rest,” Lia murmured after a while.

I nodded. “All right. I’ll see you later then. Probably when we’re eating dinner.”

“Rain what are you implying?”

“Uh nothing,” I said, grinning sheepishly.

Some things were better left unsaid.

Brother’s Best Friends Are My Mates

Colby

There was even more reason for us to find a leader now that one of our own was missing.

It was still hard to believe they had taken Gabi. I thought about her the first thing when I woke up and before I went to bed.

I was going to bring it up when we all gathered around to eat breakfast. Michael refused to come out of his room so it was just the five of us.

“We need to talk about the leader thing,” Lia said, arms crossed.

I don’t like the sound of that. When someone says they want to talk it’s a bad idea. Plus, we were talking about who was going to be the pack leader. This means Lia thinks we’ve come to a consensus.

How have we come to a consensus when I haven't even decided who should be the leader of the pack yet? Michael would be a good option.

He's excellent and I know he's been going through it lately but he's still perfect for the role.

Rain shrugged. "Yeah? What's there to talk about? It's Colby. Or we could flip a coin if you want it fair."

My head snapped up. "Wait, what?"

Matt nodded. "Rain's right."

"No. Not. Why me?"

Jesse leaned back against the wall, arms folded. "Because you're the natural choice."

Lia tilted her head. "You keep us together, Colby. You always have. Remember last summer when everything was falling apart? You were the one who held us together."

"I" My voice cracked. "I'm not—"

Rain grinned. "Yes, you are. Who steps in when things get heated?"

"Who keeps us from killing each other?" Matt added.

I shook my head. "Guys, seriously, I—"

"Who has the most experience leading a pack?" Jesse's voice was calm, sure. "You. And don't forget the hiking trip, Colby. We would've been lost without you."

Lia softened. "We trust you. And it's not just about leading. You care, Colby. That's what makes you different."

I felt the heat crawl up my neck. "I'm not... I can't lead. I'm not like Michael."

Rain smirked. "He is great, but come on, he still thinks socks and sandals are a fashion statement."

"You're better," Rain said quietly. "No offense to your Michael, but you're better with people. You make sure everyone feels heard."

Matt nodded. "You listen. Listen. That's what we need."

I ran a hand through my hair. "This is insane."

“It’s true,” Jesse insisted. “You’re already leading. This just makes it official. We’re all behind you.”

Lia took a step closer. “We choose you, Colby. Please. We need you.”

I looked around at them, their earnest faces, and felt my resistance waver. “Alright... but you all have to have my back. No exceptions.”

Rain grinned. “Deal.”

I wanted to listen to reason but... I was nervous. So fucking nervous.

A lot was riding on this. Our entire pack’s future was riding on this! Content originally comes from findnovel.net

Later, Jesse approached me and grabbed my shoulder.

“Let’s go for a walk.”

I balked. “What you want to go for a walk now?”

“Yes, why not?”

“I mean, we do have a coven-”

He shook his head. “No, we don’t. The coven has kidnapped Gabi so they aren’t even going to be bothering with us, are they?”

“No, you have a good point.”

“Of course I do. I always have a good point.”

Seeing no other option, I took a walk around the neighborhood with Jesse. He stared straight ahead, humming a soft tune under his breath.

It was a bit of an eerie tune, but everything about Jesse could be eerie when you thought about it.

“So what is the reason you wanted to go with me on this walk?”

Jesse cast a dour glance at me. “Why do you think?”

“Because I’m scared shitless about being named pack leader.” “Exactly.”

I sighed. “I don’t see what we have to talk about. It’s not like I’m going to refuse.”

“Yes, but if you are doing it to just please us then it’s pointless for you to accept the position as pack leader. A pack leader has to be confident, ready to make the difficult decisions.”

He made a point. A blunt and a bit of a harsh point, but he wasn’t wrong.

“I don’t want to let any of you guys down.”

Jesse smiled, causing me to take a step away.

“For fucks sake will you just pretend my smile doesn’t scare the shit out of you?”

I nodded, even though every cell in my body was telling me to run.

“Okay, what is it?”

“Everyone lets everyone down at some point but you’re the best choice. But if you truly don’t want it then go ahead and decline it.”

Jesse was right. I was being foolish. They wouldn’t have nominated me if they truly didn’t think I would be a good choice. Why shouldn’t I trust in my pack?”

Jesse’s smile widened. “Okay, you seem to be in a better mindset right now so my work here is done.”

“Could you do one more thing for me?”

“Let me guess you want me to stop smiling.”

I grinned. “Yes, I’d love it if you could stop creeping me out with your smile.”

The smile disappeared, replaced by the familiar smirk that I had come to know and love.

Yeah, I loved him but he was my best friend and packmate. What else did you expect?

Lia

I needed to tell Simone. She had been nagging me about who we were considering making the pack leader and now we finally made a decision!

For a brief moment, I felt like Colby was going to turn us down, but the talk with Jesse seemed to help. He was ready to accept the position and seemed pretty damn excited about it.

Hey, Simone. We finally decided on the pack leader. It took longer than I expected, but we all agreed after a lot of debate. -L Oh? Who did you guys end up picking? I've been wondering how that was going to go. -S

We decided to nominate Colby. I think he's a really good choice, honestly. He's steady, level-headed, and listens to everyone before making decisions. -L

Colby? Wow. Yeah, that makes sense. He's always been the calm one when things get heated. Are you happy with the choice? -S Definitely. I love my two mates, but honestly... they're kinda lacking in the brains department sometimes. They're amazing in their ways, but Colby's just got the leadership thing down better. He thinks before he acts. -L

LOL, I get that. Colby has that whole wise and collected vibe. Your other two... not so much in the thinking before the acting department, huh? -S

Exactly! I mean, I adore them, but sometimes they're all muscle and heart, no strategy. Colby balances that out, which is what we need right now with everything going on. -L

Yeah, especially with all the tension lately. Stability is key. Sounds like you guys made the right call. How's the rest of the pack taking it? -s

So far, no drama, thank the moon. I think everyone's relieved to have some clarity. Plus, Colby's earned everyone's respect over time. He's always been a peacemaker. -L

That's awesome. I'm proud of you, Lia. You're handling all this way better than I would. -S

Thanks, Simone. Honestly, having you to vent to has kept me sane. I'm just hoping this settles things for good. -L

It will. And you know I'm always here for you, girl. Hang in there. You've got this. -S

Thanks, Simone. Seriously, I don't know what I'd do without you. -L

Always got your back, Lia. Talk soon, okay? -S

Definitely. Talk soon. -L

Brother's Best Friends Are My Mates

Colby

I typed up the email, allowing Lia to sit in the seat so she could look it over for me. I was chewing nervously on my lower lip, mindful that my fangs didn't pierce the soft skin.

Dear Werewolf Association,

I am writing to formally notify you that I have been named the leader of the Moonveil Pack, effective immediately. After careful consideration and with the unanimous support of my pack members, I have accepted the responsibility to lead and protect our community to the best of my ability. The decision was not made lightly, and I have taken the time to ensure that this leadership change reflects the needs and values of our pack.

As such, I am submitting my application for official recognition as the pack leader by the association's established guidelines. Attached are the required documents, including written verification from all pack members, a detailed summary of my leadership qualifications, and a statement outlining our pack's commitment to upholding the values and responsibilities expected within the werewolf community. These include our dedication to protecting our territory, fostering alliances with neighboring packs, and ensuring the safety and well-being of all members.

Throughout my time as a member of the Moonveil Pack, I have demonstrated a commitment to fairness, effective conflict resolution, and strategic decision-making. I have consistently prioritized the welfare of my packmates and worked to create a cohesive and supportive environment where every voice is heard and valued. My leadership approach is rooted in cooperation, accountability, and a deep respect for our traditions and shared history.

Should you require any additional information, or clarifications, or wish to schedule a formal review, please do not hesitate to contact me directly. I am committed to working closely with the association to maintain harmony, cooperation, and mutual support among all packs.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to your positive response and to serving the Moonveil Pack with honor and integrity.

Sincerely,

Colby McGrath Alpha of the Moonveil Pack

“That sounds great, Colby.”

I forced a smile. “Seriously? I tried to make it sound super official.”

It didn't sound like me at all, to be honest. This sounded so stuffy and polite, but I supposed this was necessary if I wanted to make sure they accepted me as leader.

Most, if not all times, the alphas were accepted without any questions, but I was never one to count out the impossible. “It sounds officially official,” Lia teased.

Chuckling, I brushed my lips over the top of her head, allowing my chin to rest there for a moment.

“I still think you guys have made a strange choice picking me as the pack leader, but I won’t let this opportunity pass me by, I said, trying to calm my nerves.”

When they first told me they wanted me to be the pack leader I thought they were insane. Surely they had to be insane to pick me over say, Michael or Jesse. Both of them would be great choices to help lead the pack.

But no it was me they thought should lead the pack.

Trying to wrap my mind around this is something I have been grappling with for a while now. Lia must sense how much I’m struggling because she turns her head and tugs me down for a passionate kiss.

I don’t hesitate in deepening the kiss, slipping my tongue into her mouth and tasting every inch of her. What I wouldn’t give to bend her over this desk, taking her right here and now. But we had things to do.

A growl of frustration escaped me. Lia giggled, patting my stubble covered cheek.

“Calm down, Colby. We’ll have a chance to indulge in our passion later.”

I lifted a brow. “Who are you and what have you done with Lia?”

She gave a nonchalant shrug. “I decided to stop letting my embarrassment and shyness get in the way of desire.”

Fuck, this makes me want her even more.

I stand stiffly, turning around and walking towards the door.

“Lia, I’m going to leave now otherwise we won’t be leaving this room anytime soon.”

The throbbing in my pants was distracting but bumping into Rain and nearly having him knock me down the stairs took my mind off the uncomfortable situation.

“Rain, what the fuck?!”

He grinned sheepishly. “Sorry about that, Colby. I wasn’t watching where I was going.”

“Clearly!” I muttered. “But that doesn’t explain to me why you’re running around like that.”

“I was thinking we could throw a celebration. You know, because we named you as the leader of the pack!”

I frowned. “Rain, do you think that’s remotely a good idea with everything that has been going on?”

He paled. “Uh, okay, when you say it like that no it doesn’t seem like a good idea.”

“Then let’s just save the celebration for when Gabi comes back.”

I said when and not if because she was going to come back. It was going to take planning for us to get her back, but it was going to happen. None of us were going to rest until we were able to bring her back to our pack.

“Yeah, that’s probably a better idea. Thanks for setting me straight, Colby.”

“Well, I’m supposed to be the pack leader so I need to get used to doing that.”

Rain snorted. “You’ve been doing this for years. We’re just making it official now!”

“You have a point there…”

“I know I do,” Rain said confidently, grinning from ear to ear.

It would be so much easier if I could have his confidence, Rain was sometimes confident to a fault, but it certainly would make my life a little easier.

Lia

I knocked on the door to Michael’s room, half expecting he wouldn’t give me a response. But then I heard his soft and broken voice from inside asking who was there.

“It’s me,” I called out. “You know, Lia your favorite little sister.”

Michael let out a weak laugh. “Lia, you’re my only little sister… and only sister in general.”

A grin split across my face. “So can I come in or what? You didn’t tell me if I could come in.”

“Yeah, you can come in.”

When I first entered, I had high hopes but then I saw the state of my brother’s room and my face fell. The room was messy, with clothes and garbage thrown everywhere.

However, the most shocking part was my brother. He had dark circles under his eyes and was paler than he had ever been. I swear he had lost several pounds, making my worries nearly overwhelm me.

Quickly I started to blink back tears, not wanting to upset my brother any more than he already was.

“Can I sit down?”

“If you’d like.”

I sat down on the edge of the bed, staring at the unmoving lump in the center that was my brother. This wasn’t the brother I remembered. The brother I remembered was strong and could do anything.

But he had been blindsided by the woman he loved and his unborn child being taken from him.

“Michael-“

“I know, I need to snap out of it and I’m going to but it’s only been a few days since she went missing, Lia. Once I’ve been able to wrap my mind around the situation I think I’ll be on my way to healing.”

“And to find her,” I said, but it wasn’t a question. It was a statement. Find the newest release on find~novel~net

“Of course.”

I sat with my brother for a while, talking about anything that came to mind. He seemed to appreciate my babbling and eventually, it lulled him to sleep. With a sad smile, I got up and slipped out of the room.

Matt happened to be standing right out there so I nearly let out a shriek of surprise.

“Matt!” I hissed, looking back into the room to see if my brother was still asleep. Thankfully, he was. “You scared the shit out of me.”

He gave me a sheepish smile. “Sorry about that. I was just waiting so I could ask you how he is doing?”

“The same but I did get him to smile and laugh.”

“Hey, that’s a start.”

I didn’t know what to do with myself while my brother was in his room, duffering and refusing to interact with us but he was in his right to do so. All I could do was try to busy myself with my homework.

This included homework from school and my magic teacher.

Both Veronica and school were keeping me more than busy. I was making so many gains with magic that I even had Veronica commenting that she was impressed.

“Let’s order out tonight,” I said to Matt as we made our way downstairs.

He nodded. “Sounds good. I’ll bring some up to Michael later and hopefully, he’ll eat something tonight.”

“I hope so too.”

If my brother continued at this rate, I don’t know how much longer he would last.