

# Brother's Best Friends Are My Mates

Lia

The thought had been on my mind for a while. After seeing what happened to Michael and Gabi, I realized that life was short. At any moment I could be kidnapped by a coven obsessed with this blood oath they wanted fulfilled.

Yes, the chances of it happening again were slim to none but it didn't change the fact that anything could happen. I could blink and something could happen to one of us. It proved life was short. Before the five of us went through with our mating ceremony something could kill one of us.

It was something I didn't want to happen. The best way to prevent it was to have the full mating ceremony now.

I had thought about it on my own for a while. For days, I went through and weighed the pos and cons, trying to figure out what I should do. If I said the word all my mates would agree to have the full mating ceremony in a heartbeat.

But was I ready to take that step?

That was the big question.

When I first found out I had four mates, I thought my life was over. But fast forward and now I realized that my life wasn't over at all. It was the beginning.

The four of them were who I wanted to spend my life with. College would come and go-I had money from my parents estate to take care of us all until I figured out what I wanted to do.

Now I knew what I wanted to do. I was going to have the full mating ceremony-provided all my future mates were good with that. We were going to have it sooner rather than later.

As soon as Gabi was found, that is.

I couldn't have a ceremony without my brother's mate and future pup in attendance. It would be a mockery if she wasn't involved.

One day, when we were gathered all around the table, I decided it was time to drop the bomb or the news so to speak.

I took a deep breath, glancing around at the four men before me. "I want to have the full mating ceremony. Now. As soon as possible."

Colby let out a low whistle. "Damn, Lia. Straight to the point, huh?"

Matt crossed his arms. “Are you sure? This isn’t something you have to rush.”

“Do we have time to wait?” I shot back. “After everything we’ve been through—the threats, the fights, almost losing each other—I don’t want to wait. I want this. I want us.”

Rain smirked. “I love it when you get all bossies.”

I tried to stifle a laugh and not smile, but it was hard when Rain was looking at me with that goofy smirk of his. He made it so easy to smile and laugh, which was why I loved him so much. Well, one of the reasons I did.

Jesse rolled his eyes. “You think everything Lia does is hot.”

“Not everything,” Rain said with a grin. “Just most things.”

Colby leaned forward, his smirk fading. “You’re sure about this? No second thoughts?”

I met his gaze without hesitation. “No doubts. I love you all, and I don’t see the point in waiting.”

Matt exhaled, rubbing a hand over his jaw. “Well, when you put it like that…”

Jesse nodded. “We’ve been waiting for you to be ready. We’re in, Lia.”

Rain grinned. “Yeah, let’s do this.”

Colby stepped closer, his green eyes searching mine. “Then it’s settled. We’ll have the full mating ceremony. No holding back.

Warmth spread through me as they all agreed, my heart swelling with relief and excitement. This was happening. This was real.

“All right,” I said, my voice steady despite the butterflies in my stomach. “We need to start planning. A ceremony like this requires the proper setting.”

“The pack’s sacred clearing,” Matt suggested. “It’s traditional.”

Colby nodded. “We’ll need an elder to officiate. Michael’s got connections.”

Rain grinned. “And a party after, right? No way we’re doing this without celebrating.”

Jesse, still watching me carefully, finally spoke. “This means everything changes, Lia. Are you ready for that?”

I stepped forward, placing my hand on his. “I know. And I’m ready. I want all of you, fully and completely. I don’t want to live in fear anymore.”

Matt sighed, shaking his head with a small smile. “Guess there’s no talking you out of this. Not that I’d want to.”

“Damn right,” I said, smirking. “So, we do this together.”

Rain whooped. “All right then! Let’s get mated!”

Colby groaned. “Please don’t ever say that again.”

We all laughed, but the weight of the moment settled over us. This was the next step in our journey, and I was more than ready to take it.

“We should let the pack know,” I continued. “They’ll need to prepare. This won’t just be for us—it’s a bonding ceremony for everyone.”

“I’ll handle that,” Colby said. “We’ll need to get the word out fast.”

Matt nodded. “I’ll talk to the elders and make sure we have their blessing. No surprises.”

Jesse looked thoughtful. “We should also consider protection. We know threats are still out there. We can’t let our guard down, even for this.”

Rain groaned. “Always the practical one. But yeah, you’re right. We’ll have extra patrols that night. Just in case.”

I smiled at them, my heart full. “Then it’s happening.”

Colby ran a hand through his hair, exhaling sharply. “Yeah, it is. And Lia?”

“Yeah?”

He leaned down, brushing his lips against mine. “I can’t wait.”

Rain grinned. “Same here. Let’s make this official.”

Matt smirked. “I’ll admit, I’m looking forward to it.”

Jesse nodded, a rare smile gracing his lips. “It’s about time.”

I felt a rush of emotions as I looked at them, the men who had been through so much with me, who I trusted with everything I was. “Then let’s do it. Together.”

There it was settled. We were going to the ceremony in a few weeks or months. It depends on how long it took to find Gabi.

She was never far from my mind. Even knowing I would be taking the next step with my future mates, I couldn't forget that she was in the bony fingers of the Rosewater Coven.

The stereotypical thoughts about the witch coven came to mind before I could stop myself. I shouldn't think so badly about witches in general because I was one! I'd been learning magic for some time now and not to mention my teacher was a witch.

There were good witches out there just like there were bad werewolves out there. It depended on the supernatural creature in question.

But we would get her back.

It was only a matter of time.

\*\*\*

Matt

The four of us sat there, staring at each other after Lia walked off. I looked at each one of them before staring at the wall. "Guys, did that happen?" I asked in disbelief. "I think I need to be pinched to accept what just happened-damn it, Rain I see your hand reaching towards me! Pinch me and I'll break your finger."

Rain pouted, pulling his hand back right away. "Why do you have to be so mean about it, Matt? I was just giving you what you asked for."

"It's called sarcasm Rain," Colby pointed out, barely holding back his laughter.

Meanwhile, Jesse was watching this scene play out with an impassive look on his face.

I glanced at Jesse, lifting a brow.

"Are you just going to sit there in silence or say something?"

Jesse blinked. "About what; Lia or Rain attempting to hilariously pinch you in his even more hilarious interpretation of your words?"

"Lia, Jesse."

"I knew it was going to happen," he said confidently. "It was only a matter of time before Lia started to realize we were all in this for the long haul and had no intention of hurting her. We just had to be patient." Find the newest release on [Find\[N\]ovel.net](http://Find[N]ovel.net)

Sometimes Jesse's cockiness got to me. How could he possibly think that it was going to all work out when none of us had evidence it was going to?

I huffed. “Okay, well, you could’ve shared that with us, Rain. Do you have any idea how freaked out we were during all of this, trying to figure out if Lia was ever going to want to go through with the mating ceremony?”

Rain coughed. “I wasn’t worried. My problem was I didn’t know how long it was going to take.”

“And what about you Colby?” I demanded. “Were you convinced of it too?”

He shrugged. “I was more in the middle. Unlike you Matt.”

Unlike my friends, I hadn’t been convinced. My past negative feelings were coming into play, making me think that something was going to eliminate all the progress we had made over the past few months.

But it was nothing more than my own struggles.

I should’ve expected that Lia would come around. It was just a matter of time.

“All of you need to shut the fuck up,” I grumbled, glaring at each of them.

Rain squirmed in his seat, the thought of having to shut up unbearable to him. I rolled my eyes, but didn’t say anything because I wasn’t in the mood to listen to any more of my friends chatter.

No matter how I thought about it, the fact was Lia had decided that it was time to push forward with the full-mating ceremony. I couldn’t be happier that we’d be fully mated, and registered with the state and werewolf association.

My only fear was that I would do something to fuck it up, but once again those were my personal feelings I had to work through and not Lia.

## **Brother’s Best Friends Are My Mates**

Lia

“So, are you gonna tell me what’s got you all glowing like a full moon, or do I have to guess?”

“I told the guys I wanted to have the full mating ceremony. Soon. Like, ASAP.”

“OMG, WHAT? NO WAY! You’re finally doing it?! You’re going through with it?! I can’t believe it!”

“Yeah, it’s time. I don’t want to wait anymore. I’ve been thinking about it for a while, and I just feel ready. I want to do it, and I don’t want to keep putting it off.”

“This is HUGE. Like, seriously, this calls for a pre-mating party. No arguments. It’s tradition, right? We need to celebrate this!”

“Simone... you’re already planning something, aren’t you?”

“Nope! No backing out now. This is a massive step in your life. You’re about to be mated for real, and that deserves a proper send-off. We need a night to celebrate before the big day! A full-on pre-mating bash!”

“You just want an excuse to throw a party, don’t you?”

“Okay, yes, maybe a tiny bit, but also, come on, you deserve this! You’ve waited long enough, and I’m sure you could use a night to let loose before everything changes. You’re going to be officially bonded with someone forever. That’s something worth celebrating!”

“Fine. But nothing over the top, okay? I just want something low-key.”

“No promises! You know I can’t do low-key when it comes to a celebration like this.”

“Simone, I mean it! Small, simple, and just a fun night with the pack. I don’t want it to get out of hand.”

“Sure, sure. A small, simple, totally reasonable party... that may or may not have music, drinks, a dance floor, and a ton of fun surprises. You know, just the essentials.”

“Simone! I said simple! No elaborate setups, no wild themes, nothing crazy.”

“Relax! It’ll be fun, trust me! You need this. One last wild night before you’re officially mated. Think of it as a send-off into bonded bliss. You’ll be glad you did it!”

“Ugh. Fine. But if I see a single karaoke machine, I’m walking out.”

“Oh, I was planning to do one with the theme: ‘Howl at the Moon,’ but now that you mention it... we might need to rethink that.”

“Simone! I’m serious!”

“Haha, okay, no karaoke, I promise. But also, matching outfits! We need to coordinate our looks for the night. Maybe something in deep blue? It’ll look stunning on you. You know it will!”

“And I’m thinking themed cocktails. ‘Wolf’s Bite,’ ‘Alpha’s Passion’-oh! And ‘Moonlit Love’ for you and the guys. A perfect way to set the mood, right?”

“You’ve thought way too much about this. I can already tell.”

“Well, can you blame me? This is a once-in-a-lifetime thing! You’re about to enter this new chapter, and I want to make sure everything is perfect. Think of it as a night to remember.”

“I can’t believe you’re making me do this, but... fine, I guess it could be fun. But it’s got to stay chill, okay? Just a good time with the pack.”

“Agreed! Small, simple, a little wild-but mostly just a celebration of you and your new life ahead. Let’s make it unforgettable!”

I hung up the phone and shook my head in disbelief. Perhaps I should’ve waited to tell Simone. She sometimes could be so overly excited that she let it get the best of everything.

But I was glad to focus on something positive for once.

Gabi was still missing and while my brother was in a better headspace, he was stills struggling with the fact that his mate and child were not here. It left me unsure of what I should do, but even without speaking to Michael, I knew he wouldn’t want me to stop being happy on his behalf.

If anything, this would make him angrier!

The full mating ceremony was going to be a process to plan, but I had the backing of my pack. My mind started to drift to the night of the ceremony, a flush taking over my face. All four of them were going to be there at once and unlike last time, I wouldn’t be facing a heat.

I would be fully alert, taking in every single moment with them. It made the pleasure coil in my lower belly and start to grow.

A whimper nearly escaped me but I bit down on it.

No, now is not the time.

A rapt knocking on my door made me jump.

“Yes?” I croaked out.

Colby cleared his throat. “It’s Colby, Lia. I was wondering if you wanted to go out to dinner tonight. The guys are fine with it. We even got Michael to agree.”

I yanked open the door hard enough to almost pull it off its hinges.

“How did you manage that?!”

He chuckled. “I have my ways of convincing Michael to do what is best for him.”

“Colby, you have to share with me your ways otherwise I’ll be in the dark about how to get him out of his room!”

“Perhaps one day I’ll share my wisdom, but until then... let’s get going. I’m starving.’

“}

I rolled my eyes. “Colby, if you think this conversation is over then you are surely mistaken.”

\*\*\*

Colby

The conversation with Michael had been a difficult one. I told him how it was straight to the point and said that he had to stop feeling sorry for himself. Gabi would hate to see him this way and would want him to get off his duff!

Michael bristled at my comments, but he knew I was right. It flashed in his eyes, the stubbornness on his face fading just ab it. I was getting through and needed to push a bit harder.

It had taken all of us to break through to Michael. Each one of his had worn him down in our way, leading to my good friend finally seeing the light.

But, there was no doubt that if we hadn’t found the location of Gabi and the vampires weren’t agreeing to help that this would be a very different story. He would be even more despondent, refusing to get out of bed.

“Let’s go. I am starving,” Lia muttered, pushing past me.

When she walked past me I caught a whiff of her arousal. I growled, the sound causing Lia to stop in her tracks. She looked at me, a deep blush on her face and eyes lit with flickers of desire.

“Is that all you’re hungry for?”

Before I could stop myself, I leaned down and pulled Lia flush against my body. I kissed her hard, my fangs nipping playfully at her bottom lip. She obliged, parting her lips and allowing my tongue to sweep inside her mouth.

Lia let out the sweetest moan, the sound going straight to my half hard cock.

“Hey, uh, guys I appreciate you want to consummate your desire for one another but we’re hungry so can you do it once we get home?” Rain shouted from downstairs, sounded desperately hungry and a little turned on by the sounds coming from Lia. Reluctantly, I broke the kiss. Original content can be found at Find★Novel.net

“Rain can never stay quiet for long can he?” I was teased,.

Lia let out a soft giggle. “No, he can’t. I will never say we were saved by Rain’s voice.”

“Then we’ll continue this later?” I asked hopefully.

“Let’s see if you play your cards right.”

She sauntered past me, purposely wiggling her ass back and forth. I stifled a groan, tempted to tell the guys to go on ahead without us to dinner. Suddenly, there was another hunger I wanted to satiate.

But I finally got Michael to agree to go with us and I didn’t want to fuck that up so it was going to have to wait.

Rain gave the two of us a once over, snickering at the look in my eyes.

“Looks like the two of you are hungering for something else—now!”

Out of nowhere, Matt appeared, smacking Rain in the back of the head. It was loud enough that the smack echoed throughout the main hall, making him whimper.

“Rain, I told you to grab them and not make pointless jokes,” Matt muttered.

He was acting like the smell of Lia’s arousal wasn’t bothering him but I knew it was. Jesse would be acting even cooler about it, never letting it bother him one bit.

I pushed past my two friends, Lia following close behind me.

“Guys, give it a rest. We need to hurry up and get to the restaurant before all the good seats are taken. Do you want to be stuck sitting in the kids section?”

My eyes flickered over towards Rain who balked at me.

“Hey, I might have a childish charm about me but I’m not a child!”

Matt grabbed his arm, yanking him out the door. “Complain as we walk, Rain. I’m fucking starving at this point.”

I chuckled, Lia and I sharing a look of amusement.

At times like this I found myself hoping that things would never change.

## **Brother’s Best Friends Are My Mates**

Lia

The next morning Michael knocked on my door. He was walking back and forth, looking like he had something to say. But wasn't sure what or how to say it.

I've been there and done that.

"Michael?"

"Hey, can we talk?"

"I think you've already decided you want to talk. It's more what do you want to talk about?"

He grinned, scratching the back of his head nervously. The action reminded me of rain. I forgot that the five of them had spent almost their whole lives together. It was likely that they were going to rub off on one another at some point.

Hell, I think the guys were starting to rub off on me to be honest. Sometimes I would stop and find myself doing small little actions that weren't my usual go to type of action. They were rubbing off on me. But I liked to think I was rubbing off on them too.

The only thing I hadn't managed to do was teach Rain how to properly cook but that was never going to happen.

"I'm going to leave the rugby team," he said, plopping himself down next to me on the bed.

"And yeah I know it's surprising but with Gabi being gone I just can't concentrate. Plus with the pup, I don't think my heart is in it anymore. I want to go for a teaching position anyway. It'll be a better way for me to give back.

"Michael, are you sure?"

He nodded, guilt flashing across his face. "I've never been more sure to be honest."

That was all I needed to hear. My brother had made a decision and while it might not be the decision his friends were going to like or agree with, I knew it was the right one for him. He was doing what he had to do for his mental health as well as Gabi.

I glanced at Michael, watching the way his fingers tapped restlessly against his knee. "Hey, have you told the guys yet?"

He let out a slow breath, shaking his head. "No, not yet. I wanted to talk to you first. I don't know how they'll take it. They've been my team for so long-it's going to feel weird telling them I'm done."

I nodded, understanding the weight of his words. "Yeah, I get that. They're like family. But they'll understand, Michael. They care about you."

“I hope so.” His voice was quiet, almost uncertain. He ran a hand through his hair, staring at the floor. “I just don’t want them to think I’m abandoning them.”

I reached out, squeezing his hand. “You’re not abandoning anyone. You’re making the best choice for yourself, and real friends will support that.”

He didn’t answer right away, but after a moment, he squeezed my hand back. I hoped he believed me.

“Thanks for the talk, Lia. I really appreciate you talking with me.”

I smiled. “You’re my brother, Michael. Yes, you may be the big brother but I can still offer wise sisterly advice.”

“Hey if you keep this up I’ll be out of a job,” he joked.

He stood up, reaching over to hug me tightly. I melted into the embrace, glad I could offer my brother some comfort. The guy was truly going through it now. It broke my heart to know he was just doing all he could to keep it together.

But to think he told me this first before telling the guys was insane. They were his best friends and teammates! I hope they wouldn’t be too angry that he talked to me first rather than talking to them.

What he needed was practical advice from someone who wasn’t going to have a straight up emotional reaction.

However, now that he was gone I let my emotions get the best of me. I was shocked that he hadn’t told the guys yet. But Michael probably felt like he couldn’t tell them when they had been on the same rugby team since middle school.

To think Michael was going to give up his rugby dreams was something I couldn’t even imagine. He had been into Rugby for years. It was his chosen career and all Michael ever talked about was going pro.

But then he got injured by the coven and Gabi was kidnapped. I suppose when things like this happen, it makes it difficult for someone to continue to work towards the goal they imagined for themselves. The source of this content is [Find-Novel.net](http://Find-Novel.net)

I knew he would be a good coach, but how were the guys going to take this information? Rain would cry, Jesse would accept it in his quiet way, and Colby would be hurt but accept it was how it was going to be.

Then there was Matt who was prone to having a short temper. He would find it difficult to deal with this news, but after some huffing and puffing, he would accept it without trouble.

I knew they would come around as they always did because when it came down to it, the guys were not only friends now but pack mates.

\*\*\*

Jesse

It was rare for me to get angry but when Michael sat us down in the living room, telling us all that he intended to leave the rugby team.

I stared at Michael across the table, my eyes narrowing.

“What do you mean you’re leaving the rugby team? The doctor said your injury isn’t going to stop you from continuing to go pro.”

He winced. “I know, but my heart isn’t in it anymore, Jesse. As much as I love the team... I love Gabi more. With her and my unborn pup out there, I can’t focus.”

“Focus afterward then,” I snapped. “You can take a leave of absence.”

Michael slowly shook his head. “It’ll be better for all of us if I just step back from the team. I won’t be able to focus and put the team first. At least with coaching, I can choose how much I give to the students.”

My hands slammed down onto the table, anger coursing through me.

“We’ve had these plans for over a decade and now you just want to fucking throw it out?”

Colby grabbed my arm, yanking me towards the door.

“Colby,” I warned my tone ice cold. “Let go of me or you’re going to lose the use of your arm.”

He snarled. “No, we need to talk right now before you say something else you are going to regret!”

My instinct was to lash out against the person standing up to me because no one ever dared to challenge me, but this was my pack leader. There was something deep inside that was calling me to listen and give Colby a chance.

I snarled back, yanking my arm away from him.

“Fine, lead the way.”

He sighed with relief, leading me outside so the others couldn’t hear our conversation. I stood, arms crossed over my chest and eyes narrowed into angry slits.

Let Colby have what he had to say and then I was going to get back to my conversation with Michael. He had to listen to reason, no matter what I had to do to get him to see it.

“Jesse, what the hell is with you?” Colby muttered eyebrows furrowed together with... concern?

Why was he concerned? I was fine. If anything he should be angry at me for how I was lashing out at him.

“I’m fine,” I stated flatly. “I don’t know why you’re making such a big deal about this right now. What we should be doing is talking to Michael to try to talk some sense into him. Do you realize the kind of bullshit he is saying right now?”

Colby pinched the bridge of his nose. “I realize that, but Jesse there is something more going on. This isn’t like you to lose your cool. If anyone was going to react to this I would’ve expected it was going to be Matt. He’s the one who has a temper.”

“It’s the fact that he is choosing to give up on the dream he dedicated himself to,” I said flatly, trying to keep the emotion from creeping into my voice. “We all know he’s going through something none of us could ever understand, but it doesn’t mean he needs to give up on rugby.”

Rugby was the one thing that kept us together for so long. How could he let go of it so easily?

Fuck.

That’s what this was about and I felt like a fool for taking this long to realize it.

“By him letting go of rugby my mind took it as him giving up on our friendship.”

Colby patted my shoulder. “See it just took you a little bit of talking through this fight to see what was going on.”

“Yeah, well it was interesting to see you brave your fear of me and call me out,” I said, smirking at him.

“I’m the pack leader,” Colby said, shrugging. “I couldn’t very well let you sit there and make an ass of yourself.” I decided to let that one go. For now, Colby was safe from my rage.

## **Brother’s Best Friends Are My Mates**

Lia

I was sick of sitting on our ass and waiting for the vampire clan to come up with a plan. Yes, I knew they were going to help us but we had to do something—to send a message to the Rosewater Coven that they couldn't just kidnap someone and threaten to take their child once it was born.

My goal was to track down one of the witches and make a statement. I didn't mention it to my mates, knowing they were going to be angry with me. So, I confided in Simone because I knew she was going to have my back.

“Are you sure you can handle a full-fledged witch?” Simone whispered to me as she drove an hour and a half away to this little quiet town that had only one grocery store for all its residents.

I nodded. “Yes, I am. I've been able to track down one of their witches and this one I'll be able to handle.”

Her name was Harriet Cho. She had been with the Rosewater Coven for a few years but was someone whose magical skills, according to the public records, were average. Given my growing ability in magic, I was convinced I could handle her without much trouble.

Harriet owned this little farm outside of the town. It was fairly easy to track down and, more importantly remote. “Lia, can I ask what brought this on in the first place?” Simone asked as we drove down the long stretch of road. “My brother dropped out of rugby and it caused a bit of a fight with the guys,” I muttered, glancing out at the window. There were trees and grass as far as the eye could see. It seemed to go on forever, making me wonder if we'd ever get there. Simone gasped softly. “What did this happen?”

“A few days ago,” I admitted.

“And you didn't tell me?!” Simone cried, sounding a little offended.

I sighed. “Simone, why do you sound offended? I didn't tell you because I was busy trying to think of a way to get back at these witches.”

“Fair point,” Simone said, smiling sheepishly. “Sorry, I wasn't trying to make this about me, but I can't believe he is quitting rugby.”

“I know it's trivial compared to some of the things that could happen, but I think it's the straw that broke the camel's back, Simone. My brother has everything going for him in rugby yet he is going to give it all up. This never would've happened if not for those witches.”

Simone smirked. “Then let's teach them a lesson.”

The farm was exactly where the GPS said it was. Simone pulled up and she barely parked before I jumped out of the car and walked up to the woman I saw working near the garden on the side of the house.

“Harriet Cho,” I shouted, causing her to whirl around and flinch.

The woman stared at me, looking at the swirl of magic hovering in my right hand to the narrowing of my eyes. “Who are you?”

“My name is Lia Brown of the Moonveil Pack and I’m here to give your coven a warning.”

Harriet paled, backing up towards the house. “I only joined a few years ago! The blood oath has nothing to do with me!”

“But you’re a licensed midwife, right?” I asked, tilting my head to the side.

“How did you-“

I smiled. “I found your license online so clearly you are valuable to the coven and if you cared so much, why are you still with them?”

“They were there for me when I needed them.”

“Well, you’re going to regret not turning your back on them when you had a chance.”

The words of the curse I had memorized came to mind as I prepared to cast it on Harriet. From here on out, there would be no going back. THIS CHAPTER IS UPDATE BY find[N]ovel.net

\*\*\*

The curse wasn’t life-threatening, but it would send a message to the Rosewater Coven that they shouldn’t mess with us. I received a phone call after Simone and I returned home. The number wasn’t one I recognized but I answered anyway. “Lia, you’ve made a grave mistake.”

I huffed. “Have I now? You made a grave mistake when you took a member of my pack!

“You have tested our patience long enough. Your constant interference, your reckless searching, and your desperate attempts to retrieve what no longer belongs to you have worn thin. Our tolerance has reached its breaking point. Do not mistake our restraint for weakness. This is your final warning—stand down, or you will face the consequences.

Anger surged through me. “Gabi and the pup belongs with us! Not you!”

“Gabi remains under our protection and will stay with us until she has fulfilled her purpose. Do not mistake this arrangement for mercy. She is alive because we allow her to be. She is valuable to us, and we keep her for our reasons-not because we fear your feeble attempts at resistance. We have no intention of returning her until the time is right, and when that time comes- and only when we decide-she will be returned to you, alive and unharmed, so long as you do not force our hand.”

The woman cackled, leaning in heavily to the witch stereotype. “You will back off. No more searching. No more threats. No more foolish, misguided attempts to take back what is out of

your reach. Your desperation will be your undoing. You are clinging to false hope, blind to the reality before you. There is no version of this where you win, no future where your reckless defiance is rewarded. Every move you make, we see. Every whisper of rebellion, we hear. Your plans are futile, your courage misplaced.”

“What are you trying to give me a super villain speech?” I taunted, knowing it wasn’t a good idea to push them but I was angry; angry that they would dare take Gabi.

“So you know we are aware of your plans. We know you are scheming, gathering your forces, whispering about rescue missions, and making reckless threats of war. Let us make one thing clear: you will not win. We are stronger. We are prepared. We are relentless. We are more than willing to destroy anyone who dares to stand in our way. If you test our resolve, you will find it unbreakable. If you seek war, we will give you annihilation.”

I stiffened. “What it seems like you are doing is posturing to make yourself seem more threatening than you really are.”

“You think yourselves clever, think your desperation makes you dangerous—but desperation leads to mistakes. Mistakes that will cost you everything. We will not hesitate to turn your blunders into your undoing. You will not have time to regret your missteps. There will be no second chances, no way to reverse what has been set into motion,” the person sneered. “You are all truly nothing more than beasts and fools.”

“And you are nothing more than hags. The woman was silent for awhile before she continued. I wondered if my words had gotten to her.

“If you so much as step too close to our borders, understand this: We will retaliate. We will not hesitate. We will not show mercy. Your loss will be swift and final. Your lands will be soaked in the blood of your fallen. Your pack will be nothing but a fading memory, a cautionary tale of what happens to those who challenge us,” she hissed. “If you force our hand, you will not get Gabi back at all. We will obliterate any hope of your reunion. There will be no time for grieving. You will not have the luxury of regret. All that will remain is the ruins of your shattered pack.”

My eyes narrowed. “All you are is full of threats.”

“Let me repeat this to you beasts. We do not offer second chances. We do not repeat ourselves. This is not a negotiation. This is not a request. This is a promise. Obey, and she will live. Disobey, and you all will suffer.”

I sneered. “You are mad if you think we are just going to roll over and accept what you’ve done.”

“But you are all beasts. Isn’t rolling over what you do?”

My jaw tensed. “You-“

The phone call went dead before I could say anything else. When I turned, I saw that Michael was there watching the whole thing unfold. He looked like he wanted to scream and hit me at the same time, something I had never seen before in my brother. I'd be lying if I didn't admit that it scared me.

"Michael," Colby warned. "This is your sister."

He growled and turned around, punching the wall across from me. Michael's fist went through the plaster, making all of us flinch.

"Lia, don't you ever do something like that again," Michael warned, giving me a look. "What if they decided that this was it and they would kill Gabi after she gave birth? That's what your actions could've led to!"

I winced. "I'm sorry, Michael. I—I just wanted to get back to them. To feel a moment of satisfaction for what they have done to our pack."

"Yes, and it could've damned us all so think about that next time you decide to act irrationally."

## Brother's Best Friends Are My Mates

Rain

"You hear anything yet?" Jesse leaned against the doorframe, arms crossed, looking entirely too relaxed for someone who knew I was about to lose my mind.

"They said they'll get back to me by the end of the week," I muttered, my legs refusing to stay still. I paced back and forth across the room, every step making my nerves worse.

"So... no."

I whipped around to glare at him. "Not no. Just... not yes."

Jesse let out an exaggerated sigh. "Rain, that's just a fancy way of saying no answer."

"Yeah, thanks, genius. I figured that out on my own."

He shrugged. "Just making sure."

I dragged a hand through my hair. "I should've pushed harder. Asked more questions. What does 'by the end of the week' even mean? Thursday? Friday? Midnight on Saturday? If they already know whether they're in or not, why not just say it?" "Because maybe they need time to finalize things?"

I scoffed. “Please. They’re vampires. They’ve had centuries to perfect the art of making decisions. They should’ve had a plan ready by now.”

Jesse raised an eyebrow. “Right, because organizing an attack against a dangerous clan is the same as picking out what blood type pairs best with dinner.”

I stopped pacing long enough to glare at him. “This isn’t funny.”

“It kind of is.”

“Jesse.”

“Rain.”

I let out a long, slow breath and collapsed onto the couch, throwing my head back. “They’re probably going to back out.” “They’re not going to back out.”

“You don’t know that.”

“And you do?”

I clenched my jaw. “I just... I hate waiting. It’s the worst part. My head starts spinning, and I think of every way this could go wrong, and suddenly it’s all just-“

“A giant waste of your energy,” Jesse cut in.

I turned my head to scowl at him. “You like finishing my sentences, huh?”

“Only when you’re being dramatic,” he shot back.

I let out a frustrated groan and rubbed my hands down my face. “I should be doing something. We should be planning, training, getting ready—”

“We are getting ready,” Jesse said. “But if you keep pacing like that, I’m tying you to this couch.”

I huffed. “Like you could tie me down.”

“Want to bet?”

I shot him a side-eye, but he only smirked.

“Look,” Jesse continued, “you know what’s going to happen? You’re going to stress yourself sick over this, they’re going to call you on Friday, and it’s all going to work out. Then you’re going to feel stupid for spiraling all week.”

I scoffed. “That’s a real confident take.”

“It’s called common sense. You should try it sometime.”

I glared at him. “I swear—“ This update is available on find—novel.net

“Yeah, yeah, you swear a lot. But none of it changes the fact that you can’t do anything about this right now. You need to chill.

||

“Chill?” I sat up. “Jesse, in case you forgot, we are this close to going into an actual battle. Not a sparring match, not a

training session—an actual fight where people could die. And I’m supposed to chill?”

“Yes,” Jesse said simply. “Because if you don’t, you’re going to burn yourself out before we even get to the fight.”

I opened my mouth, then shut it. He had a point, and I hated that he had a point.

“Come on,” Jesse said, nudging my shoulder. “Let’s find something to do before you start climbing the walls. Play a game, go for a run, anything to keep you from spiraling.”

I sighed. “Fine. But if I don’t hear from them by Friday night, I’m breaking something.”

“Deal,” Jesse said. “Just not anything I own.”

Waiting to hear back from the vampire clan I had previously been inducted into was difficult. They said that they needed to think about how best to approach this so no one got hurt.

The fact that they were willing to risk everything and help me was something I still had trouble wrapping my head around. They barely knew me. As far as I was concerned, I was nothing more than a stranger to them.

But because I was of their blood and had passed the test, they listened to my request. To think, that at least someone was willing to help us.

I know everyone was angry that the werewolf association wasn’t willing to so much as lift a claw to help one of their own. Hard to say they didn’t want to help, but we were always going to remember this.

Friday inched closer and closer, but come Thursday I heard back from one of the council members, Tegan. She was the one I had the most contact with. If I was hearing from her then she had to have good news.

Or bad news, but I didn't want to consider the fact that there could be bad news!

"Hello Tegan," I greeted, trying my best to be polite.

The vampires were big on respecting your elders. I tried my best to be as polite as possibly, even if it didn't come as easily to me as it did say the other members of my pack. They had more charisma than me.

"Hello, Rain," she greeted back, laughing. "I see you've been working on your greeting. Have you been practicing in front of a mirror?"

I flushed. "No."

"That's a lie, but let's move onto the reason I called; your request to help your fellow pack member who was kidnapped by the Rosewater Coven."

"I... I thought you guys agreed to help us?"

She laughed again. "We are going to help you but I wanted to let you know we've been discussing the best way to attack the clan and get Gabi back safely. The plan has been decided upon, but we're going to need you and your pack's approval."

My eyes widened. "Are you fucking serious right now? That's amazing!"

The words tumbled out of my mouth before I could stop myself. Tegan seemed to find amusement in my words so she laughed.

"Yes, but we need to talk with all of the Moonveil pack. Do you you'll be able to come to the headquarters to discuss this with us further?"

"Absolutely!" I shouted. "When is the earliest we can be there?"

"In three days," she said simply. "I realize that this seems like a long time, but we have prior engagements we can't ignore. There is an entire clan of vampires we need to help out Rain so I hope you can understand that."

I swallowed the nervous lump in my throat. "Of course I can understand that Tegan so don't worry. There are no hard feelings."

"Excellent! Then we will see you then!"

\*\*\*

The moment the phone call was over, I ran out of my room. I nearly tripped on my way the stairs and had to grab the banister to steady myself.

But the banister was weaker than I considered. It snapped off the wall, sending me flying backwards.

“Rain!” Lia cried, shouting some foreign words.

Suddenly, I was floating in midair. I gaped, looking over my shoulder at Lia.

“Holy shit, Lia I’m floating!”

“No, I cast a levitation spell so you wouldn’t fall down the stairs and break your neck!” she shouted, carefully setting me down on my feet.

With my feet now safely on the ground, I got my nerves back. I rushed over to Lia, underestimating my muscles. They were wobbly, making me wonder if they were a side effect of the magic.

“Lia, does casting a spell on someone usually make them feel weak in the knees?”

Colby cleared his throat. “In any other context I would think you were talking about Lia but I can see that isn’t the case now.” “Rain came barreling out of his room for some reason and nearly sent himself flying head first down the stairs!” Lia shouted. “If I hadn’t come out here and used a levitation spell to catch him in midair he could’ve cracked his skull open.”

“Rain, seriously?” Colby asked, shaking his head in disbelief.

I growled in frustration. “Guys, you are completely missing the point! I just spoke with the clan and they said they are finally ready to discuss the plan with us!”

Lia gasped softly. “They did?”

“Yes, I just got off the phone with them!” I exclaimed. “In my excitement, I almost fell down the stairs but it could happen to anyone.”

Okay, it probably couldn’t happen to anyone. I was the only one here who got super excited and was likely to tumble down the stairs in excitement.

It wasn’t the worst way to go but it certainly wasn’t the most glamorous. It was pretty embarrassing when you thought about

it.

“So what did they say?” Colby asked, clearing his throat.

I grinned. “They want to meet with us in three days.”

“Three days?” Lia asked softly. “That seems so long from now.”

“I know, but remember Lia they never had to agree to help us in the first place” I reminded her. “They could’ve just turned away our request but instead they are agreeing to go through with it. We need to remember that.”

She smiled faintly. “You’re right, Rain. Thank you for reminding me of that.”

I sighed softly to myself. Just three more days and we would be step closer to getting Gabi back with us, safe and sound, where she belonged.

It was something all of us, especially Michael, wanted more than anything.

## Brother’s Best Friends Are My Mates

Lia

With Gabi’s rescue on the horizon, my thoughts drifted to our upcoming mating ceremony. I found myself in the living room with my four mates. Michael was out and the five of us were discussing things of a sensitive nature.

“I can’t believe it’s almost here,” I murmured, my fingers idly tracing patterns on Matt’s arm.

“You nervous?” Colby asked, his voice low and teasing.

I shook my head. “No. Excited.”

Rain scoffed. “Excited? You should be. After the ceremony, you’ll officially be ours.”

I smirked. “I’m already yours.”

Matt’s hand slid up my thigh, his touch slow and deliberate. “Yeah, but this makes it permanent. No take-backs.”

“As if I’d ever want to take it back,” I said, tilting my head to meet his gaze.

Rain leaned in, his lips brushing against my neck. “She says that now, but after we’

“NOPE. NOPE. STOP RIGHT THERE.”

We all jolted at the voice, snapping our heads toward the door. Michael stood there, arms crossed, looking like he’d rather be anywhere else.

“...Michael?” I blinked, stunned.

“Oh god, why am I still standing here?” he groaned, rubbing his temples. “My ears are bleeding. Change the subject. Immediately.”

I bit my lip to keep from laughing. “What are you doing here?”

“I was coming to tell you the pack meeting got moved up, but clearly, I walked straight into hell.” His face twisted in disgust. “What even was that? You know what? Don’t answer. I don’t want to know.”

“You’re overreacting,” Colby said, smirking.

Michael’s eyes practically bugged out of his head. “No, I’m reacting exactly as any sane brother would when hearing his sister’s-” He made a vague, horrified gesture at all of us. “—whatever this is.”

Rain chuckled. “What’s wrong, Mike? Feeling left out?”

Michael gagged. “That’s it. I’m leaving. I’m erasing this entire moment from my memory. You’re all disgusting.” Matt grinned. “Dramatic much?”

Michael pointed a finger at him. “Dramatic? I am traumatized.”

“Bye, Michael,” I said, waving.

He was already halfway out the door. “Never speaking of this again.”

We waited until he was completely gone before Colby let out a low chuckle.

“...Do you think he’s gone?” I asked.

Matt shrugged. “Probably pacing outside, trying to unhear everything.”

“Poor guy,” I said, not feeling all that sorry.

Rain leaned closer again, lips brushing my ear. “So... where were we?”

But before we could go any further, the doorbell rang.

“Guys, it’s Simone! Let me in!”

I winced. “I forgot that I invited Simone over.”

All of them glared at me, causing me to smile sheepishly.

It was an accident!

\*\*\*

Rain

Almost bedding Lia got my blood boiling. Until Simone came back and ruined the moment.

I spent most of the day hot and bothered, my blood lust also growing. It got to the point where I came to Lia's room and decided to ask her something straight up. She invited me in, sensing something was up.

"Lia... I need to ask you something."

She glanced up from her book, immediately narrowing her eyes. "That's never a good start. What did you do?"

I sighed. "Nothing."

"Yet."

I rolled my eyes. "Can you be serious for like, two seconds?"

She snorted. "You? Telling me to be serious? That's rich."

I frowned. "What's that supposed to mean?"

"It means you're never serious, Rain. You joke about everything-but now, suddenly, you want me to be serious? Hypocrite."

I crossed my arms. "That's not true. I can be serious."

She gave me a flat look. "You once told a teacher your dog ate your homework, and when she pointed out you don't have a dog, you said you were grieving its tragic, imaginary loss."

"Okay, that was a good excuse," I muttered.

"And what about the time you convinced half the school that you were part dragon?"

I smirked. "To be fair, I am half-vampire. It's not that far off."

"Right. Because vampires are so known for breathing fire," she deadpanned. Fresh chapters posted on find-novel-net

I groaned. "Fine. Whatever. Can we just focus for a second?"

She leaned forward, resting her chin on her hand. "All right, Mr. Serious. What's up?"

I hesitated. “The cravings are getting worse, and I... I need blood.”

Lia blinked at me, unimpressed. “That’s it? Rain, you’ve done this before.”

I frowned. “That was different! I was half-delirious, and you offered.”

She rolled her eyes. “And I’m offering again. Just take it.” She held out her wrist like it was no big deal.

I stared at it, then at her. “You make this way too easy.”

“How dare I be nice to you,” she said, gasping dramatically. “The audacity!”

I huffed a laugh. “You’re impossible.”

“And yet, here you are, asking me for a favor,” she shot back. “So are you going to keep sulking, or are you going to do it before I start charging?”

“Charging?”

“Yeah. Like a sass tax. You’ll owe me... I don’t know, three coffees and a muffin.”

I smirked. “Sounds like robbery.”

“Sounds like you’re still stalling.”

I hesitated, my fingers ghosting over her wrist. The scent of her blood was already messing with my head, and she was just... sitting there like it was nothing.

“You’re sure?” I asked, giving her one last out.

She tilted her head. “Rain, if I wasn’t sure, would I be sitting here waving my wrist at you like some kind of all-you-can-eat buffet?”

I snorted. “That’s a weird way to put it.”

“Well, so is asking your best friend for a drink.”

I hesitated for only a second longer before gently taking her wrist in my hands. “If it hurts, tell me to stop.”

“You always say that.”

“And I always mean it.”

She smiled a little. “I know.”

I exhaled, pressing my lips to her wrist in a silent thank-you before sinking my teeth in.

Lia tensed for only a moment before exhaling slowly. “See?” she murmured. “No drama needed.”

I chuckled against her skin. “Shut up, Lia.”

She laughed, light and easy. “Never, vampire boy.”

My fangs grazed where my neck met my shoulder. I kissed the skin, the fount of her lovely blood pumping just below the surface almost more than I could stand. She whimpered, tilting her head to the side to give me more access to her slender and beautiful neck.

Slowly I pierced the soft skin, enjoying the moan that escaped Lia’s lips. I ran my tongue over the wounds, knowing my saliva would help stop her from feeling any pain. She wrapped her arms around my neck, pressing her body flush against my mind.

Feeling her body, covered by nothing more than a thin pair of shorts and a tank top, pressed against mine was it for me. I sunk my fangs completely into her neck, greedily drinking the blood. Little gasp whimpers and breaths escaped Lia. She could do nothing more but cling to me as I drank my fill from her body.

The more I drank the more I wanted to keep going, but I knew I had to stop. With a groan of frustration, I yanked my fangs from her skin. They didn’t retract right away, my blood still racing and desires demanding I bite her again.

Lia started to sway but I wrapped a strong arm around the top of her shoulders. A glance at the wound told me that it was already half-healing thanks to my saliva. I ran my tongue over twin bites, the skin closing up a few seconds later.

“That was... amazing,” Lia slurred out.

I chuckled. “I think I drank too much. How woozy do you feel?”

She gave a small shrug. “No woozier than normal. I think you drank a normal amount.”

Without warning, I lifted her into my arms and walked the short distance to her bed. I laid her down on the soft mattress, ignoring her protests of wanting me to join her.

“Lia if I join you it’s not going to end well. I might end up taking more blood,” I warned her.

Sometimes the bloodlust got bad. If I had been a full or half vampire, it would’ve been ten times worse! It was a good thing I was only a fourth vampire.

“Fine, if you insist,” she muttered, giving me a half-hearted glare.

She was so tired that Lia didn't put any anger in her words. I chuckled and pulled the blanket over her, my lips brushing over her forehead.

"Sleep well. We'll talk some more in the morning."

"And plan to get Gabi back," she reminded me, her words coming out a little slurred.

It was hard not to smile. But I didn't want to get cocky.

We had the concept of a plan and didn't even know what the plan was going to be! Plus, what if the plan didn't even work out? All these thoughts were running around in my mind but worrying about them would help nothing. I'd save my worries for when we finally talked to the clan in a few days.

## Brother's Best Friends Are My Mates

Lia

It killed me to start writing this letter, but I knew I had no choice. This was the only way to lull the Moonveil pack into a false sense of security. Without it they would continue to be on their guard, something I didn't want to happen.

To the Esteemed Leaders of the Rosewater Coven,

I hope this letter finds you well. After much deliberation, we have come to understand the weight of the blood oath and the deep-rooted traditions that bind it. Though this situation has been painful for us, we recognize that honor and loyalty to the old ways must come before personal grievances. The history between our people has been fraught with tension, and while this ordeal has tested our bonds, we choose to uphold the ancient agreements rather than succumb to further division.

We have decided that it is in everyone's best interest to allow the agreement to remain as it stands. We understand that the child Gabi carries is of great significance to your clan, and we do not wish to prolong hostilities or disrupt the balance that has been upheld for generations. We trust that she will be treated with the utmost care and respect as she fulfills her role in this sacred duty. It is not an easy path, but one we accept in the hopes of maintaining the peace our ancestors fought so hard to establish.

Please know that we hold no ill will toward you. We only wish to see this through with as little conflict as possible. When the time comes, we will be here to welcome Gabi back and ensure that the peace between our clans remains intact. Let this be a sign of trust, a promise that there is still a future where our people can coexist without unnecessary bloodshed.

However, let us be clear—this trust is not given lightly. Though we abide by the ancient customs, we expect the same respect and honor in return. Gabi's well-being is not just a courtesy; it is a necessity. Any harm that comes to her will not be overlooked or forgiven. We are placing faith in your word, believing that you will uphold your end of this arrangement with the same integrity we have shown.

Additionally, we wish to extend an apology for the curse placed upon one of your own. Emotions ran high, and actions were taken in the heat of the moment that we now recognize were not in the spirit of the peace we claim to seek. Though our grievances are not without merit, retaliation in such a manner was neither just nor wise. We regret this transgression and hope that it will not serve as a barrier to the understanding we are attempting to rebuild between our people. Follow current novels on [FindNovel.net](http://FindNovel.net)

Thank you for your patience and understanding. We hope this will be the first step toward a future of cooperation rather than war. May this arrangement serve as proof that tradition and respect can overcome even the deepest wounds. Let this decision be a foundation upon which we build something stronger—a future where old animosities no longer dictate our fate.

Warmest regards,

Lia

I read it back to myself what had to be at least six times, wanting to make sure I said everything that needed to be said. Once it was written to perfection, I sent it out. The Moonveil pack didn't have to wait long for a response.

All of us gathered around the dining room table as I opened the letter, reading it out loud so everyone could hear.

To the Moonveil Pack,

We commend your wisdom in accepting the truth of the blood oath. It is rare to find those who respect the old ways and understand the sacrifices necessary to maintain the strength of our kind. Your willingness to honor this agreement does not go unnoticed. Too often, wolves act with reckless emotion rather than reason, but your actions prove that you are capable of restraint and rationality, even in difficult circumstances.

Rest assured, Gabi is being well cared for. She is safe, her health is being carefully monitored, and she will remain in our protection until the child is born. She will not be mistreated, nor will she suffer any unnecessary hardship. We understand the concern and pain this may have caused your pack, but this is the way of things. As dictated by the ancient laws, the blood oath must be honored above all. We appreciate your willingness to set aside personal desires for the greater good.

We also accept your apology regarding the curse placed upon one of our coven members. While it was a direct violation of our traditions, we understand that emotions can sometimes cloud

judgment, and the anger that led to that action has been acknowledged. We value your sincerity in seeking reconciliation, and we trust that this moment will serve as a reminder of the importance of temperance in our dealings.

Once the child is born, she will be returned to you unharmed, as promised. The cycle must continue, and by choosing to abide by this sacred tradition, you have ensured stability between our clans. This decision marks a turning point between our people, one that may serve as the foundation for future understanding rather than endless war. Let this be a testament to what can be achieved when we set aside conflict and allow tradition to guide us.

May our species' bonds remain strong, and may the trust you have extended be the first step toward lasting peace.

The Rosewater Coven

I set the letter down, looking around the table.

“So what do you guys think?”

Rain huffed. “I can't wait to give them a taste of their own medicine!”

“Calm down, Rain. We don't meet with the vampires until tomorrow so don't get ahead of yourselves,” Jesse warned, giving him a look.”

I nodded. “Yes, Jesse is right, Rain. We can't get ahead of ourselves.”

Things were already tense thanks to my decision to go ahead and cast a curse on a member of the Rosewater Coven. The only reason they didn't act out was likely because they knew they were toeing the line. After all, they kidnapped Gabi and held her hostage until she gave birth to the baby they wanted to claim.

Tomorrow we will know exactly how the vampires wanted to proceed with these plans. I was excited and nervous to hear what they wanted to do, wondering if we could truly pull it off.

\*\*\*

Matt

The five of us piled into one car, driving to the clan's headquarters. Jesse was the one doing the driving, everyone else too wired to drive. I wasn't wired but frustrated, wondering how this meeting was going to turn out.

What if their plan wasn't something we could execute properly? I was fearful that we would just end up failing and never giving Michael a chance to be a father; at least to his firstborn.

For the rest of his and Gabi's life, they would be thinking about their unborn. It might lead to them being unable to handle it and breaking up. While they would be forever mated, they would no longer be living together as a couple.

But that wasn't going to happen because we were going to make sure we saved Gabi.

Or so I hoped.

When we arrived, Rain led us in. He was a member of the vampire clan so we were going to let him do the talking. This was... strange because Rain could be a bit flaky, but all of us had put our faith in him so far and it had worked out.

"Hello," one of the council members greeted, motioning for us to sit. "My name is Council Member Tegan and we are inviting you here so we can discuss the plan."

Rain grinned. "We're ready to hear what you guys have cooked up."

The plan, as it turned out, was simple. At least it seemed like it was on the surface. The vampires were going to employ the use of ancient vampire magic which trumped witch magic because of how old it was.

With this magic, we would be able to sneak into the coven undetected. It would be temporary and once the magic fell, the vampires and the Moonveil pack would attack, hopefully eliminating enough of them so we could get Gabi and the pup out safely.

It sounded simple, but it wasn't going to be simple at all to execute. I knew this all too well.

Everyone listened, Rain jumping up and pumping his fist into the air.

"I think it's a great plan. We can do it!"

Rain was so positive that we could do it. I chuckled softly, his excitement contagious. It was hard not to feel Rain's excitement and let it wash over you.

But the hard part was just beginning. We needed to do this perfectly and if we didn't then it was going to cost Gabi her life.

If we lost Gabi and the pup then Michael would never be the same. He would be a shell of his former self—if he even allowed himself to live long enough to grieve.

So we had to do it. There was no world where we couldn't succeed.

## **Brother's Best Friends Are My Mates**

Lia

Planning to infiltrate a coven is not as easy as it sounds. We spent hours with the vampire clan, perfecting the plan as best we could.

I wanted to have one last hurrah before we set out on this dangerous path. But Simone had other ideas, texting me with what she thought we should do.

The second I saw her text, I sighed. It was just like Simone to want to go a bit crazy and out there with her plans. She meant well. Simone just had a similar personality to Rain, wanting to go a bit crazy.

What we needed was something quieter and more subdued. The Moonveil pack had to break into a coven so we needed our rest, to make sure that we didn't overdo it partying the night before.

But I suppose I should try to indulge my friend.

No, indulge my best friend.

Simone would never steer me wrong no matter how crazy she got. I called her, grinning when her face appeared on video chat. "Okay, hear me out. Pre-attack party."

"...What?"

"A party. Before the attack. You know, to get everyone in the right mindset, boost morale, and also because we deserve one last good night before all hell breaks loose."

"I've never heard of that being a thing."

"That's because I just invented it. And now it is a thing."

"Simone, we are about to launch an attack on the Rosewater Clan. Our enemies. Who want to kill us. And you're thinking about throwing a party?"

"You say that like those two things are unrelated. If anything, this makes more sense. We go in relaxed, confident, ready to crush them."

"I don't think that's how war strategy works."

"Maybe not, but it's how my strategy works. And have I ever led you astray before?"

"Do you want me to answer that?"

"Rude. But whatever, you're still coming to the party. I already told everyone. It's happening."

"You already-? Of course, you did."

“Obviously. And guess what? Everyone loves the idea. I even got Colby on board.”

“Colby agreed to this?” For more chapters visit [findnovel.net](http://findnovel.net)

“Well, I phrased it as ‘mandatory team bonding’ and also bribed him with good whiskey, but yes.” “Unbelievable.”

“Just admit you love the idea.”

...Fine. But only because if we are doing this, I’d rather it be good than a complete disaster.”

“That’s the spirit! Now, what are you wearing?”

“Simone.”

“It matters, Lia. If we’re going into battle, we’re going in style.”

“I hate that I’m saying this, but... do you think I should wear black? Or is that too on the nose?”

“Oh, I love that you’re asking me this. Black is classic, but maybe add some silver or deep red? Subtle but deadly vibes.”

“Why do I feel like you’ve been planning this for weeks?”

“Because I have been. Obviously.”

“I don’t know if I should be impressed or concerned.”

“Why not both? Anyway, I’ll handle drinks and music. You make sure no one starts sparring before we even get to the fight.”

“That’s a big ask.”

“I believe in you. Now, are you sure you don’t want to wear something a little more dramatic? Maybe a cape?” “Simone.”

“Fine, fine. But just know, if I die in this battle, I’m haunting you for not wearing a cape.”

“If we die in this battle, I’m blaming you for throwing a party beforehand.”

“Oh, please. If we die, at least we’ll go out as legends.”

“You are unhinged.”

“Thank you. I try. But seriously, I’ve already set everything up. We’ve got drinks, music, a perfect playlist-oh, and I may or may not have convinced Rain to give a motivational speech.”

“Did you get Rain to agree to a speech?”

“Yep. He said no at first, but then I called him dramatic, and suddenly he had something to prove.”

“That... sounds right.”

“See? It’s all coming together. Now, should we incorporate weapons into our outfits, or is that too much?”

“Simone.”

“What? Aesthetics matter.”

“And battle practicality?”

“Fine. Functional aesthetics. A knife strapped to your thigh would be very in theme.”

“You are terrifying.”

“And yet, you love me. Now hurry up. We only have a few hours before the party starts, and I still need to make sure Rain doesn’t rewrite his speech into a five-act tragedy.”

“I can’t believe this is my life.”

“Oh, believe it, babe. And enjoy the chaos while it lasts.”

I sunk back into my soft mattress and sighed.

Was I doing the wrong thing? It felt like I might be going a bit overboard, but some of the pack might have wanted to go a bit crazy the night before we were supposed to get Gabi back. If the party got too crazy, I could kick them out.

This was always an option no matter what.

\*\*\*

We ended up having a simple get-together. Simone and her mates left late while Michael went upstairs to gather himself before the fight. It left me and my mates downstairs as the night crawled on.

“I can’t believe we’re doing this tomorrow,” I said out loud.

“Nervous?” Colby smirked, stretching his legs out. “You should be.”

“Not helping,” Rain muttered, tossing a small rock at Colby’s leg. “She’ll be fine. We all will.”

“Confidence is great and all, but let’s not pretend this isn’t dangerous,” Matt said, arms crossed. “We’re walking into a fight we might not walk out of.”

“Wow, you guys know how to lighten the mood.” I rolled my eyes, hugging my knees. “Maybe we should’ve done something fun tonight instead of sitting around talking about how we might die.”

Jesse, silent as ever, finally spoke. “What would you have wanted to do?”

I blinked. “I don’t know. Something normal. Maybe a stupid card game. Maybe drinking until we forget about tomorrow. Just... something that makes this night feel less like a countdown.”

“Cards, huh?” Colby grinned. “I think I still owe Rain a rematch from the last time he cheated.”

“I don’t cheat.” Rain looked offended. “You’re just bad at bluffing.”

Matt snorted. “He’s got you there.”

“Fine, fine. We’ll play.” Colby reached for his jacket pocket. “Jesse, you in?”

Jesse nodded, shuffling a deck he seemingly pulled out of nowhere. “Might as well give Lia the normal night she wants.”

I smiled, warmth settling in my chest. “Thanks, guys.”

“What are we betting?” Rain asked, leaning forward. “No point in playing if there aren’t some stakes.”

“Bragging rights?” I suggested. “Or maybe the loser has to do something embarrassing tomorrow.”

“Like what?” Matt raised an eyebrow. “Sing in the middle of battle?”

“No, something worse,” Colby grinned. “How about the loser carries everyone’s gear?”

“Oh, I like that one,” Rain chuckled. “Jesse, thoughts?”

Jesse shrugged. “Doesn’t matter. I don’t lose.”

“Bold words,” Matt said. “We’ll see if you can back them up.”

We played in near silence for a while, cards hitting the ground in rhythmic succession.

“Colby, you’re terrible at this,” I teased, grinning as I laid down a winning hand.

“You’re cheating.” Colby narrowed his eyes. “You and Rain are in cahoots.”

“Excuses, excuses,” Rain smirked. “Just admit you’re bad at bluffing.”

Jesse placed his last card down and leaned back. “Game over. I win.”

Colby groaned. “Unbelievable. How do you always win?”

“Skill,” Jesse said simply.

I laughed. “Looks like you’re carrying our gear tomorrow, Colby.”

“Great. Just what I needed before a battle,” Colby muttered. “But, hey, at least we made the night less grim.”

“Yeah.” I looked around at them. “Thanks for that.”

The card game was just what I needed. Us five sat downstairs, playing until it became clear that Jesse couldn’t be beaten. I headed up to my room, wanting to be alone for tonight to get lost in my thoughts.

As much as I loved my future mates, I needed to be alone to gather my thoughts. To lie in bed and think about everything that could go wrong or everything that could go right.

It didn’t need things were going to be bad simply because the odds were against us.

Tomorrow... was going to be a big day. We had been planning this for weeks, desperate to get Gabi back and now we finally had our chance.

It wasn’t going to be easy. I had been practicing magic day and night, wanting to make sure I was at the top of my game for when we had to attack. Things could go wrong at the dropping of a hat. My fear was hurting Gabi or the pup growing in her belly.

She had to be showing by now. I lost count of how far she was along in her pregnancy. How could I not when she wasn’t here with us at this very moment?

## **Brother’s Best Friends Are My Mates**

Lia

Gabi was a strong woman. Throughout all of this, I never doubted that she could handle this and was doing her best to keep it together for herself and the pup.

The werewolves association was still dodging our calls and messages, refusing to talk to us about the situation. I did not doubt that after we attacked they would be forced to respond. It could spark a species war, something all of us were more than aware of.

I shoved down my anger at them, not wanting to let it overcome me when I needed a clear mind tomorrow.

Once we got Gabi back then I would worry about everything else.

The sun hadn't even risen when we left the house. We were meeting the vampires at this nondescript field about halfway between both our towns. It was there I would cast a spell with the help of some of the vampires to create a portal.

This was where Michael came in. He had been the one to go to the coven once and see it with his own two eyes. With his involvement in the spell, we would be able to create a portal right to the coven's location.

But I was worried. Michael was healed, but I feared he would act first and ask questions later the second we arrived. He'd hear Gabi's cries and shouts. It would render him unable to think of anything else but protecting her and the pup.

They did have stereotypes about wolves. While they were unfair, there also was some truth to them. Instinct kicked in, making us unable to focus on anything else.

It was frustrating but sometimes we were a slave to our instincts. This was something I grappled with when I first discovered I was mated to my brother's four best friends. Yet, I worked through those emotions and instead of running from them, I embraced them.

"Lia, stop staring at me as if I'm going to blow," Michael muttered as we walked deeper into the field. "Everything is going to be fine."

I bit my bottom lip. "I just want to make sure you don't act rashly, Michael. We need to take a stealthy approach before we launch an attack. If not then we could be risking not only Gabi's lives but also our lives."

"I know. It's all I can think about," he muttered to me.

Suddenly he pulled me into a tight hug. When he released me, he smiled and it reached his eyes.

"Michael, if we play this smart then we have a good chance of getting Gabi back."

He swallowed. "I hope so because I've been going crazy without her and the pup. They are taking care of her but that doesn't offer me much comfort when you think about the reason why they are caring for her."

"I know, Michael. But it's almost over."

It was almost over, whether or not anyone wanted to admit to it.

Tegan spotted us first. She motioned for us to come over towards her, a soft smile playing on her lips.

“Morning everyone. I trust you slept well?”

I shared a look with my pack, forcing a smile.

“We slept as best we could.”

Her smile didn’t falter for a moment.

“Let me explain what we are going to do. We’ll cast a temporary spell over everyone here. It won’t last long so once you create the portal Lia we go in and attack. Don’t think—follow your instincts and we will be able to get your pack member back.”

Michael cleared his throat. “You think they will back down?” For original chapters go to find—[novel.net](http://novel.net)

“It’s why I along with the council members will go after the leaders. With the leaders gone the coven will be in freefall. I imagine the rest will flee—something they might do after we take the life of just one of theirs. Witches are smart and tricky. They don’t like it when people turn the tides onto them.”

I frowned. “Hey, I am a witch so don’t badmouth them too much.”

“Apologies,” Tegan said, gesturing towards some vampires behind her. “Let us all get in a line. It is time to cast the spell.”

\*\*\*

My nerves were on edge as we stepped into the portal. The second we were transported inside the coven I was hit with a strong sense of magic. I didn’t let it overcome me, refusing to allow myself to be distracted.

There was something else. Gabi’s scent reached my nostrils and I tensed, my eyes flickering to Michael.

He was gritting his teeth, looking like he wanted to pounce. I desperately shook my head at him, wishing he would calm himself. This was exactly what I was afraid to happen.

Michael swallowed the lump in his throat, giving me a slight nod.

Crisis averted.

But another crisis was brewing. I could smell a powerful spell from the vampires that came with us being cast.

Then, without warning, a bright light spread throughout the room. When it cleared, I heard the screams of the witches and knew the fight was on. Simone and her mates had been tasked with finding Gabi. Once she was found, they would activate the protection wards I created and give them until we were ready to leave.

I smelled a witch coming towards me and turned, clawing at her. She clutched at her neck, gasping for air. My claws had sliced through her vocal cords, rendering her unable to speak her spells.

It was hard to think with all the magic and blood filling the room. Then there were the growls and screams, causing fear to shoot through me every time I wasn't able to immediately detect who was making the noise.

Inside my pocket, my phone buzzed. It was Simone.

She was to text me the second she and her mates had Gabi safe and sound. I breathed out a sigh of relief.

Now I could focus on making these fuckers pay for what they had tried to do to our clan.

## Brother's Best Friends Are My Mates

Rain

I was fussing over Lia, trying to see how badly she was injured and the more I fussed, the more I annoyed her.

"Lia are you-"

"Rain, I'm fine," she assured me.

Then she winced, making me panic.

"You winced!"

Lia glared at me. "How are you not wincing? You got shot in the shower with a bow and arrow?"

I shrugged. "I didn't go through and only pierced the skin. It just feels like a dull ache."

“If I slap it it’s not going to feel like a dull ache anymore,” Jesse pointed out, making me shrink away from him.

I grinned nervously at him. “Can you just not and say you did?”

“Guys, enough,” Colby snapped. “We’re all tired and injured so let’s just wait until we get back home, okay?”

The fight had been crazy. At times I was convinced we were going to lose until what remained of the witches turned tail and ran. Afterward, I learned the vampires had taken out one of their coven leaders and injured one, causing the rest to flee.

It gave us a chance to create another portal with what magical energy the vampires had left and flee. When the portal closed, I looked over everyone to survey the damage.

My first thought was that it could’ve been much worse. People’s lives could’ve been lost, not to mention the serious injuries. All of us had some kind of injury.

Except Gabi.

When I first saw her after all this time I felt tears spring to my eyes. She looked so good and visibly pregnant. Her belly was clear as day in the thin dress they had given her to wear. Most of all, Gabi looked healthy.

Since the moment we pulled her out of there, she had been crying and telling Michael she knew we would all come for her. It was just a matter of time.

I sniffed, unable to contain my emotions for much longer.

This was what I hoped would happen but was unsure if it actually would. How could we beat an entire witch’s coven?

Well, we couldn’t have done it without the help of the vampires. It was thanks to them that we were able to successfully get Gabi out of there with the pup still in her belly.

But I remembered what Tegan said to me privately the other day before we launched the attack.

“Rain before you leave I need to have a word with you about something.”

I paused. “Yes, Tegan?”

“It’s about what will happen once we launch this attack. You do understand that this is going to ignite a species war, correct?”

My stomach dropped. It was something I had thought about multiple times and heard, but it never failed to cause my blood to run cold.

“Yes, we’ve considered that Tegan,” I muttered. “Is this your way of saying you won’t help us?”

She laughed. “Of course not! We still have every intention of helping one of our own but you need to understand that if you go through with this, it will have large-reaching consequences on the supernatural community.”

“Humans have it so easy,” I lamented out loud.

“Not really. It’s just by the grace of the gods and goddesses out there that these humans didn’t have magic during all their multiple wars,” Tegan pointed out. “Anyway, we are getting off topic.”

I sighed. “Tegan I understand and so does my pack. We’ve gone over this before and there are no other options.”

“Then we will proceed.”

Sometimes, I wondered if there were other reasons for them helping us but I didn’t want to look a gift horse in the mouth. If they were doing it for other reasons, I wasn’t going to let myself get angry because they helped us in the end.

Things were fine right now but in the coming days things could get dicey as Tegan said might happen. I wasn’t going to think about it right now, focusing instead on the fact that Gabi and the pup were back with us.

It was about time we focused on something good rather than the bad.

\*\*\*

Colby

I sat there, body tense as I waited for the leaders of the werewolf association to come into the video call. It was difficult enough to get them to talk with me this way but finally after harassing them they agreed.

Once their faces appeared, I snarled at them. I wasn’t going to waste any time.

“I hope you’re proud of yourselves. I hope you can sit in your offices, hold your pointless meetings, and sleep soundly at night knowing that when it mattered—when one of your own was suffering—you did nothing.”

The members looked at each other, shocked.

“Excuse me, we were doing everything we could-“

I ignored them and continued. “For weeks, we pleaded for help. We followed protocol, we gave you every chance to do what you were supposed to do—to step in, take action, and put a stop to the Rosewater Clan’s crimes before things escalated. Instead, you hesitated. You stalled. You buried your heads in bureaucracy and excuses while Gabi was held captive, while we fought against time, knowing that every second she remained in their hands was a second closer to disaster.”

“We did what we could.”

“Oh, bullshit!” I shouted. “You hid behind technicalities and neutrality. You treated this situation like an inconvenience, like a minor dispute rather than what it was an act of war. And because of your failure, because of your complete lack of leadership, we had to do what you refused to.”

One of the members on the far right stared at me, looking more than uncomfortable. The link to the origin of this information rests in find(N)ovel.net

“We were following protocol.”

“Well, your protocol is bullshit. We got her back. Without you. We risked our lives, we went into enemy territory, and we faced the consequences of your cowardice head-on. We didn’t have the luxury of waiting. We didn’t have the privilege of sitting behind desks while someone we cared about was suffering.”

“And now a species war is on the horizon!” one of them howled.

I laughed. “If you had done your jobs, if you had taken action when it mattered, we wouldn’t be standing at the edge of a species-wide war. But you chose to stay out of it. You chose to let us fend for ourselves. You chose to let the Rosewater Clan believe they could act without consequence. If you had acted we wouldn’t be in this situation.”

With a scowl, I ended the call I got up from the laptop.

They had no idea I was making the call now. We discussed me making it but I didn’t tell them exactly when it was going to happen. It was easier if I did it myself. Besides, as pack leader it was my duty to go above and beyond in these situations.

Shaking my head, I went into the kitchen where everyone was trying to go about with their normal lives.

Gabi and Michael were upstairs in his room which they had spent most of the time in since we rescued her three days ago. She was nesting, trying to make herself feel comfortable and at ease.

I had no idea if they were going to go back to their old apartment which was about a ten-minute drive from the house. Honestly, I preferred to have them here. It kept them close and we felt complete.

Simone and her mates had also been over every day, even if it was just for a few minutes. They wanted to make sure everyone was healing after our fight.

As pack leader, I wanted everyone to be under the same roof. I think it was just my instinct kicking in, but in these modern days, it wasn't always possible for all of us to live together.

This was going to be a future discussion one day but for now, I was just going to relax and enjoy the small victory that we were relishing in.

"Hey, Colby want pancakes?" Rain asked me, causing me to jump.

I blinked, unaware I had gotten that lost in my thoughts.

"Yeah, as long as you're not making them," I teased, giving him a look.

He pouted. "Hey, I... can learn to make pancakes. If I can pass a vampire trial and join their clan then I can certainly cook and make some pancakes."

"Let's agree to disagree," I teased Rain.

A round of laughter filled the room.

I was grateful we were getting back to some normality.

Yes, there was still the fact that a species war was likely to happen but I wanted to enjoy this. Enjoy being with my pack and the fact that we were all back together.

Some wounds would take a while to heal. The mental scars were the worst ones in my experience, but together we'd be able to do it.

We'd need to lean on each other if we were going to weather the storms that were to come anyway.