

Lita's Love for the Alpha

Worth Dying for...

Thanks to Lita giving him the wrong turn, they arrived at the restaurant a little late for the reservation Brian made. And when the hostess quoted a fifteen-minute wait, Lita knew her night was spiraling fast. Instead of pointing out that he should have used his car's GPS instead of her phone or mentioning that he shouldn't make a reservation for the exact time he was showing up to pick her up, Lita looked at his jaw clicking in irritation and slipped into familiar shoes.

"You look so handsome," she cooed, grabbing his hands and stroking them gently. She stared at his profile as if it was fascinating, as if she were as in love with him as she had been two years earlier. "How'd I get so lucky, hmm?"

"And you're the most beautiful girl I've ever seen," he whispered, kissing the spot where her neck and jaw met. He stiffened again for a second and then pulled away. She suppressed a shiver at him constantly calling her girl, even as she was of age. Hadn't her age been a huge point early on? So why did he refuse to call her a woman now?

Pushing past any of her feelings, Brian asked, "How's therapy been going?"

Lita started running through the options in her mind. Was he really asking, or was he just being polite? Sometimes, if he was just being polite, a genuine answer would make him angry. And the reverse would damn her too. She studied his earnest eyes.

"She's pleased with my progress and thinks the gym is great for me," Lita admitted carefully, instinctually rubbing her arms. She stepped back, flashing him a reassuring smile.

"Yea, I mean, you spend more time at the gym than at home sometimes," he clicked his jaw slightly, a mild sign of his temper, before he wicked it into a blank mask. "Sometimes I try to wait for you at your apartment, but you must not come back until late..." His throat cleared sharply. "Really late."

Lita shifted her weight to another foot. That wasn't true. She worked out on school nights, so she was never home later than ten o'clock. She understood this was an interrogation, though, and he was fishing for information. "Yea, they're very accommodating with my school schedule. I usually go in the evenings. But I always manage to get home at a reasonable hour." How long could she get away with keeping her schedule details to herself?

Brian nodded absently, "Oh that's nice, maybe I'll get a membership. Where is it?"

He pulled her hand into his own, gripping it a little tighter than necessary, but not tight enough to hurt. Lita gulped; under no circumstances could she tell him the truth.

"Uh, it's on the other side of town. Really tough to get into, so my mom had to pull a few strings. I don't think they're accepting any more members at the moment." Lita forced the fakest smile she could manage, pretending to be clueless. Every part of her prayed he wouldn't ask her parents about it.

"Oh really? That's weird. Your mom didn't mention helping you get in when I talked to her," he looked down into her eyes as if searching for the lie. *Shit*. Lita didn't break her composure, blinking innocently as if nothing was wrong.

"That's weird. Maybe I misunderstood. Perhaps it was my dad." If Brian and her mother talked, they would know she lied. She hoped that by putting it on her father, she'd buy herself the benefit of the doubt. Cold sweat beaded across her shoulders when Brian smiled, the grin just slightly off, "Yea, probably."

After dinner and the movie, Brian was still in a great mood. He walked Lita to her door with his arm around her shoulder, stroking at the skin to warm the chill away.

"Cold?" he asked, pulling her closer to his warmth. She merely smiled and rested her head on his shoulder. It was almost over. She'd successfully gone the whole date without pissing him off too much. But it took too much energy to be so perfect all the time and she was exhausted.

When was the last time they went a whole night without a fight? She couldn't even remember, and that fact had nothing to do with their relationship break. Before James died, Brian had gone through a long phase of hating every single thing about her. She couldn't do anything right, even if she did them perfectly, exactly as he requested. His temper hadn't just been short, it had been nonexistent. Some nights he'd talk about the stress of being the sole heir to his father's line and the stress that came with. About how much he hated his *natural instincts*. He'd claimed she would understand what he meant one day, but he hadn't explained it.

Even if she wanted to forget everything he'd done and pretend that he had really changed over the last few months, her mental scars wouldn't let her. She straightened as they reached her apartment door, fully prepared to end the night as pleasantly as she could. But he didn't wait for her to pull out her key, opening the door himself and standing back for her to step inside. Lita started getting anxious the second he stepped into the apartment behind her and closed the door. It was midnight, and the night was over. Whatever else he wanted from her, it wasn't good. She went straight to the other side of the kitchen island, trying to put something between them.

"Come here," he rasped, exploring her body with his eyes, "Why are you all the way over there?"

"Bri... it's late... and I'm exhausted," she tried to look anywhere but at him, trying to overcome the sinking feeling in the pit of her stomach.

"It's been months, Lita," he growled lightly, his eyes turning down, but he quickly recovered, "Baby, don't push me away. If tonight is any measure, we're just as good as we always were. We don't need a break anymore. Don't you want to get back to your life? It's almost been a year, babe; people get over worse than this in less time. We could be married and moving on from all this sad shit in the blink of an eye. Wouldn't you like that? To make your parents proud of you force once?"

Lita's spine went rigid, her stomach dropping as acid burned up her throat. How dare he? She wanted to scream, shoving her fingers into the whites of his eyes. She *hated* him for saying that. For dismissing James and criticizing her pain. For reminding her how little she mattered to the people who raised her.

It was that fire that drove her to say no.

"I... really don't feel well..." Lita could feel the tears welling behind her eyes. There was no way this night was going to end well. No matter what happened, it would be bad. She sniffled, "I just still don't feel ready."

Brian's eyes turned hard as he hurried across the room to grab her arm, "You fucking someone else?" His voice made her skin freeze, a shiver traveling down her spine. "Because you aren't *ready* to be close to me, but yet I smell other wolves on you."

"What? No! No one..." Lita pleaded with him to understand her. She couldn't even make sense of him saying wolves or why he said he could *smell* them, but before she could try to get through to him, Brian hit her hard across the temple. The force of hitting the floor knocked the wind out of her as she tried to crawl away. "If you're not getting it from me, Lita, you're getting it from somewhere. Where?! Is that gym? You meet some wolf at the gym? He tells you a bunch of bullshit to get in your pants like I did?" She felt a hard kick to the butt as it exploded in pain, sending her flying headfirst into the floor once more. Her teeth sang, iron filling her mouth. She couldn't think up the words to refute him or ask him what the hell he meant. Lita just groaned, rolling her forehead over the floor.

"I just don't understand why you always want to bring the beast out of me, Lita..." *kick*. Her ribs barked against his dress show. "He already doesn't like you. But I ignore it. Doesn't that mean anything to you? I just want to love you." *smack*. What must have been his hand slammed into the back of her head as she continued to crawl. Her face hit the floor, making her teeth chatter. "And I want you to love me back. The beast just wants you to show some fucking backbone, but I can't say I'm holding my breath." *Shove*. Her teeth might have been about to fall out around her rattling gasp. Lita blinked, her brain shifting like a slow-motion horror movie. Why would he call himself a beast? None of it made any damn sense. "But it seems like no matter what I do, you only want to see this side of me. It's like you don't care what I've given up for you." Brian grabbed her by the hair, dragging her back up to her feet as she gasped for air. "Why do you want me to hurt you?" *kiss*. Everything throbbed, her lips trembling. "Do you like the pain?" *Kiss*. He slipped a hand under her dress, seeming not to feel the hot tears soaking their faces or the earthquake working through her limbs. He twisted her easily, making Lita stumble as he pressed them chest to chest. "Because I'll give you whatever you want. I love you as much as a rejected mate can. I'd much prefer if you wanted pleasure but if you want pain, I'll give you as much as you want." *kiss.*

Lita's head spun. None of this was making any sense. He'd said none of this to her before. Mates and wolves and beasts. She wanted to cry out in frustration, but his eyes were so hooded, so terrifying that she almost peed. All her aggression seemed to fade into the background of his voice. It rattled her, sank into her bones until she could only give in. God, she couldn't go through another night like this. Who would be there for her if this love killed her? It had already taken so much of her. When his fingers grazed her bone dry center and hissed, she cringed and bit down on his lip. He jumped back and wiped at the blood gushing from his split mouth. "You used to get so wet for me, baby. You trying to tell me something?" His eyes had gone flat, flashing red like warning lights. She tried to run for the door, only to be jerked back hard, and the sound of her back hitting the island made her feel sick. Something crunched. When she looked up to see his piercing red eyes, she knew she was in front of the devil. A monster had caged her, and she was going to die. Or at least, wish she was dead.