

Chapter 10 - Unscutable

Piper POV

Piper sat with Brandon in their hotel suite, "Are you alright Brandon?" she finally got to ask him, too long after what had gone down out at the half pipe, thanks to that bloody Alpha, who'd not cared about the boy's mental state at all. Just about getting what he wanted, just like all Alpha's did.

Saw him nod his head. "Aspen apologised already."

"Aspen, is that your wolf?" she asked.

Again Brandon nodded "He just wanted to protect you."

"Alright, how do you feel though? It must have been weird, frightening even. You only found out what you were yesterday."

Brandon shook his head. "Actually, Aspen's been talking to me for a while now."

"What?" Piper asked, completely shocked by this revelation. "How long is a while?"

"About 6 months now," he shrugged.

"Why didn't you say anything? You must have thought terrible, horrible things."

"Not really." he looked right at her "I've seen your eyes change colour a lot, and Aspen told me, he was my inner self, he's seen Harper, told me we were just like you. That one day my eyes would be able to change too."

"I'm so sorry Brandon, if I had known, I would have told you much sooner."

"It's alright. I understand why you didn't. That man, that woman, they're all mean. You're not like them."

"I can be Brandon," she admitted honestly, "not to humans, but I am very much, mean, to my own kind. It's hard to explain."

"It's alright, you don't have to now."

“Any questions you have, I will try to answer them honestly, but can they wait until we get home? Are away from this place.”

He nodded “Are they all wolves, all those people, the big men?” he asked her.

“Yes,” she nodded “You’ll likely grow up to be big like them, you’ll need to learn...” sighed “to fight, it is wolves nature to fight for dominance and control. Aspen is very young, but actively challenged a fully grown wolf today. Not a good thing, he could have accepted and if so, by law, wolfen law...” goddess, she did not want to think about that at all.

Saw Brandon look right at her, registered actual fear in his expression, he knew or guessed, Piper pulled him into a hug and sighed “you have to try and control Aspen, it will be difficult due to what he is, but if you two can come to a mutual understanding it will be easier.”

“What is he?” she heard the worry in his voice.

“His type of wolf, I mean. Wolves don’t normally appear this early, not till...for your type of wolf 13 or so, most don’t get their wolves until 16, so Aspen is very early.”

“Is that a bad thing?” he asked.

“No! Not a bad thing, just a surprise is all.” She looked down at him and reassured him.

“We should go to that man. I don’t want us to get in trouble, mum.” he told her.

“Alright, we’ll talk more at home, okay.” she agreed, she too did not want to incur Alpha Timothy’s wrath.

They arrived 15 minutes early to the room, written on the paper.

Alpha Timothy opened the door himself, smiled right at her and Brandon, all friendly like “Come on in.” even sounded happy to see her.

She knew better, he was not to be trusted. Not considering he was black mailing her into working on her weekend away, when all his daughter had to do was call the damned store and schedule an appointment with her.

Piper sat at the suite's dining room table, with the man's daughter, Celeste was her name. Piper was listening to the girl who was describing the dress

she wanted and making notes. It was a bit difficult to concentrate, due to Alpha Timothy sitting on the lounge in the living area next to Brandon. It was a good 20 feet away, she'd never get there in time if that Alpha opted to hurt her son. She kept looking over at them worriedly.

"I'm not going to hurt your boy Piper." He commented after the 5th time she'd looked over there, "I'm just curious is all."

She still didn't like it, neither did Harper for that matter, and her wolf hearing was tuned into Alpha Timothy and Brandon, which also didn't help her focus on Celeste's ideas for her dress.

Celeste was watching her sketch and huffed, a few times stating "It's not what I pictured," and made Piper start again.

After the 4th restart, Piper sighed "Alright Celeste, can you possibly sketch even roughly what it looks, perhaps that will help me to help you get what it is you want.

"Oh, I think so." the girl smiled at her and took the offered pencil and pad of drawing paper.

It would usually help if they knew what they wanted, and Piper could work from just about any sketch given to her, she could usually tweak it and make it her own while giving them the desired dress they wanted.

"Will I be making this dress? Or just designing it?" she turned her eyes to Alpha Timothy questioningly, he'd only said she had to design it.

Saw him look right at her, "I guess that is up to Celeste." he smiled right at her.

She held in an irritated sigh and turned her eyes back to Celeste. The girl she could see, unfortunately, did not have a single artistic bone in her body and the sketch she produced was not good at all. Piper held in the heavy sigh of frustration that was trying to escape her when the girl handed it to her, smiling at her.

"Alpha, this might go a bit easier and quicker, if my son was next to me." she told him honestly.

"Well, I'll order us all some dinner and you can design while we all eat."

It was not what she meant or wanted, but she had no choice, he was calling all the shots at the moment. The man ordered food. A lot of it, even made sure that Brandon had more than one meal to eat, even encouraged the boy to eat more, told him he was a growing wolf and needed to eat lots.

“Piper may I ask your wolf to present herself to me?” Alpha Timothy asked her half way through his meal.

She felt Harper bristle inside her mind, did not like the request at all, neither did Piper for that matter, “She is not interested.” Piper told him truthfully Why do you want that?”

“I’m curious.”

Piper sighed, she’d not eaten anything, even though he had provided her with a meal as well, she was not at all hungry, was just trying to get the dress designed that the girl wanted, but the sketch was terrible, had these weird zigzag lines over the shoulders and then flicks of lines all over the skirt area. Piper did not know what they meant and had to inquire, also did not know what all the dots on the dress were either. Looked like a 2 year old had drawn it if she was honest with herself.

Apparently the zigzags were ruffles and the flicked lines were feathers and the dots were crystal beading. Looking at the sketch it kind of made more sense to her now. Was trying to design something similar.

“curious about what?” Piper asked as she started a whole new sketch, a fitted bodice with an inbuilt corset, and pretty beading all over it, it was fitted all the way to the hips as per the detail she had already gotten.

“Her eyes.” Alpha Timothy finally replied as he finished his meal.

“Same as Brandon’s.” she stated flatly, not willing to force Harper forward, didn’t even look at him, put the layers of ruffles on the sleeve of the dress as per Celeste’s idea and then penciled in a feathered skirt, turned it to Celeste and saw her nod, but then was still frowning “I don’t like the sleeves.”

Neither did Piper, for that matter. “How about you let me adjust that part for you, are you open to some minor changes?”

Saw Celeste nod slowly, used another page to design a different style top for the dress, in stead of a scooped neck line, with spaghetti straps that had

ruffles coming off of it, she made it a square neckline with a sheer fitted bolero style top, only pinned at the edge of the shoulder and then allowed the material to flow down off the shoulder to a short bell sleeve that stopped at the middle of her upper arm, edged it with a nice white satin ribbon, not a ruffle, but still flowing material, it looked much better.

Turned the sketch to the girl and saw her actually smile and then nod her head, the back she made much the same but had a slit and just one button to hold the sheer fabric in place, and then used the same ribbon to have the dress lace up the back instead of buttons or zipper.

Brandon sat next to her at the table. Even when the meal was over, she drew up the front and back in full and then the top of the dress separately as well, with more detail on the bodice, and was finally done, handed her sketches to Celeste, who frowned again.

“What’s wrong with it now?” Piper asked, somewhat annoyed with the girl, and couldn’t keep that annoyance out of her voice, the girl had been happy with it previously, now it seemed not to be.

“You didn’t put your signature on it.”

Piper raised an eyebrow, “Give it back,” she stated, and the girl did. She signed Piper Harper to the sketches, saw the girl light up instantly and showed her father, watched as the man smiled right back at her.

“What do you say, Celeste?”

“Thank you Piper, it’s beautiful...I’m going to go and call mum.” and then she was gone from the table, taking the sketches with her.

Piper raised an eyebrow, she had been forced to come here and design that dress, and she was certain she was going to be forced to make it as well at some point, so didn’t understand why she said thank you. Or why her father made her say it, for that matter, it was made only because he’d threatened her into it. Not out of the goodness of her heart.

“May I go now?” Piper stated flatly.

“Yes Piper, thank you for helping. My daughter has no talent for design and no-one in my pack has understood what she wants, she saw you and begged

me to have you design her dress. Told me you would be the one to understand her.”

Piper said nothing, just wanted to leave, she did not care for his explanation at all, it was late and she wanted nothing more than to get away from this man and his threat. She'd done what he asked now. Stood and took Brandon's hand to lead him out of the suite, Alpha Timothy followed her all the way.

“Oh, one more thing.” he stated as she stepped away from his door.

She turned and looked at him, her jaw tightened, saw him just smile all charmingly at her, he knew she was more than annoyed and didn't care in the slightest.

“Good night Piper...Whitlock.”

That snapped her head up and widened her eyes. She did not go by Whitlock in the human world. How had he known that her last name was Whitlock, heard him chuckle and saw his eyes practically glitter with amusement. “If you ever need help Piper, my pack is open to you and your son. Always. So keep my details.”

She wanted to ask him how he knew that, but did not. Just turned and walked away. It was likely Aspen's eyes, it was a hereditary trait.

“Piper,” he called out to her, “I really mean that, you'd be safe inside my Pack.”

She glanced back at him briefly but said nothing, continued on walking away, he'd threatened her to get what he wanted today, and now he was telling her she'd be safe in his Pack. That was very unlikely. She did not understand him, didn't like that he actually knew who she was either. Likely just wanted his pack to benefit from her profit margin, he would take a slice of it and likely a large slice at that.

“Mum.” Brand asked once inside their own suite “How'd he know our last name?”

“I'm not sure, other than your birth certificate and schooling, the house and the car. We go by Harper.” she was frowning. It had to be his and her wolf's eyes that gave it away. Her mother always told her, no matter what, keep the Whitlock name. It was important. So when she'd had Brandon even though

she was going by Harper then, she'd put Whitlock on his human birth certificate, written unknown as the father. Not that the human's cared about his lineage.

"Pack." she told him "We'll leave first thing."

Brandon didn't say anything, just went and packed his stuff up, likely he to wanted to get away from here as well now. Checked her flight time, they were or had been going to have a late check out and go boarding again in the morning before leaving for home. So their flight wasn't till later afternoon. Couldn't it seemed get an earlier one, so was just going to have to deal with it, they could hang out in the air port she supposed.

Sat on her bed and googled how long it would take them to drive home instead, 7 and a half hours, be quicker to drive than wait on their flight.

Organised a rental car and would suck it up and lose money on their airfares, found Brandon standing next to her bed looking up at her. She smiled at him "Climb in. I thought we could drive home tomorrow. We can leave early."

"Okay." he nodded as he got up on the bed.

Piper settled him in the bed and lay down next to him, brushed his hair away from his face. "Are you scared, Brandon?" she asked softly.

"No, but..."

"But?"

"Are you mad at Aspen...he got us into trouble."

Piper pulled him into a hug. "No! Aspen is very brave, Harper and I are very proud of him to be honest." she kissed the top of his head "Just needs a little better timing is all."

She stayed awake and ran her hand through his hair until he fell asleep, then finished making the car rental arrangements, before settling herself down to sleep as well.