

## Chapter 16 - Unscentable

Bradley POV

Took that man 15 solid minutes to emerge from his shower. Bradley was starting to wonder if his Beta was interested in the woman himself, so very evasive he was about her, had spent the night watching her, he didn't like it and Benson was stalking around inside his mind glaring out at the man. It would not have gone unnoticed by his Beta that his Alpha's wolf was on the surface staring him down every 15 or 20 seconds, while they watched the man get dressed in clean clothes.

"What?" his Beta had snapped at him as he'd finally yanked a shirt on.

"Spill it or Benson is gonna order it out of you. What the hell is going on, Cooper?"

"It's complicated, Brad." he'd sighed. "The boy..." he shook his head. "Is definitely a wolf, already got his wolf too."

"What? How old is the boy?" Brad was completely taken aback by this news.

"I don't know, I'm guessing 7 maybe 7 ½." His Beta was looking right at him.

"A wolf at 7?" It was very unusual to have a wolf that young. He was an early shifter, he supposed.

"Mm, Hmm." Cooper nodded "Aspen, I think is the wolf's name. At first I thought they were talking about some friend of the boys, but this morning when the two of them went for a run, the boy's eyes, his wolf's eyes, they're white like his mother's wolf." he smiled just a little "when she beat him, he was all annoyed and stalked off, unhappy she had out run him."

"To be expected, I guess, he's just little. What's the boy look like?" curiosity was itching his brain.

"His mother, actually, has the same light brown hair, even the same highlights must be natural colouring, he has her fair skin too. His eyes however, are not brown like hers."

Bradley took a deep breath and asked the question he didn't want to think about "And the boy's father? Is there a man in the picture?"

“No man that I saw, just her and the boy. I ran the plates to her car. It’s registered to Piper Whitlock, so work and home lives are completely separated, I’m guessing.”

“She’s at work right now?” he asked was more than a little bit relieved that there was no man in the picture, calmed down a little. Benson was still agitated.

“Yes, the boy is at a birthday party from what I gleaned…” Cooper sighed heavily “Bradley, how is Benson right now?”

“What why? A little annoyed and more than frustrated, but at you mostly. Curious about the boy. Why do you ask?”

Watched as Cooper pulled his phone out and then went through it, turned it over and slid it across the table they were sitting at, towards him “That’s the boy.”

Bradley picked up the phone and looked at the boy. It was a picture of him smiling coming down some stairs out the back of a house, his wolf fully on the surface, looked very happy in the photo and it clearly showed the wolf’s white eyes. Benson pushed forward to look right at the boy himself, curious about the boy too.

Cooper sighed again “There is more.” He reached over and slid the screen to the left, brought up the next photo and Bradley shot to his feet. As he looked at the boy now, it was like staring at his own eyes, in the reflection of a mirror, he’d know those eyes anywhere. His eyes moved to Cooper a second later. His heart was racing inside his chest and Benson was not happy all of a sudden.

“He’s yours, I’m willing to bet.” Cooper sighed “Like I said, Brad, it’s now complicated.”

Bradley turned his eyes back to the boy in the photo, stared at it for a long time, his brain was ticking, and Benson was now prowling around inside his mind very unhappy. They did not sense the boy. Most Alpha’s could sense their own offspring, once they got their wolves. Benson did not sense him. Even now, Bradley could sense that his wolf was trying to feel out his son right this minute. He was getting nothing and it was frustrating his wolf.

Piper's reaction to him last week, could have just been because she'd born him a son, and had not told him, might not be his Mate after all. He sighed and Benson snarled at him at that thought. Didn't like it at all, his wolf believed it even more now that there was a child. The time line did fit, her leaving a child between them, the pain he'd felt. It had to be, she was going to be his Mate and he knew it.

Stood there, actually uncertain as to what to do right this minute, where to go from here. Obviously, he couldn't just leave her out here, not his child for that matter. A male Alpha child, a rogue, he suddenly realised, she'd gone rogue, so his own son would have been born as a rogue as well.

The boy would be in danger. The boy was the heir to his pack and likely had no idea who or what he was to that pack. Likely didn't even know who his own father was. Bradley doubted that Piper would have told him anything of his birth family. He'd likely never even seen the inside of a pack. May never have even seen another wolf at all.

Swore out loud, "We have to go and get them."

"I think more recon is needed. We know nothing of her life outside of work, at all Bradley, we should watch for now. Perhaps approach this differently. You can't just go stalking into her home and lay claim to the boy and take him."

"Actually yes I bloody can." Bradley corrected his Beta. "He is my son. So I bloody well can." and he could, he was an Alpha and she'd left and taken his child with her. Though he did understand, there was no way she could have known for weeks about the pup, but still she could have come back and told him. Should have and didn't

"Don't do it, Bradley, if she is your Mate and we all suspect she is. Including your father. Who now had a lot to say on the matter I believe, she was hurt a lot. Likely damn near dying when she left and you know it, you go in there and just try to rip that boy from her, likely will end up in a wolf-on-wolf fight with her. Do you really want that? Benson going his own Mate, or his Mate going him? She-wolves are damned protective of their offspring, viscous as a matter of fact. Mate or not, she will tear into you and Benson to keep him."

Bradley did know it, that she'd been hurting a lot. Had researched into it, how long one could survive the pains of betrayal, it came down to how strong the wolf was, mentally and physically, how often they had to suffer the pains and for how long.

“What do you suggest then, Cooper? I have a child, with Piper Whitlock, and both of them are currently rogues, living unprotected. It's not safe for either of them at all.”

“I think we try and approach her gently, stop pushing so hard to get to her, give her some breathing room. Let things calm down in her world where you're concerned. Why don't you and I go and get you a look at your boy, see how Benson reacts to him, see how Brandon himself and his wolf feel with you close by. There should be some sort of connection between the two of you.”

“Even now, Benson doesn't sense anything at all,” Bradley muttered, “and he should.”

“Might be because you can't scent her. What was it your father actually said?”

Bradley thought about that for a full minute: “That she's not safe out there, to make sure that pendant she wears does not come off, especially around you three. My own Alpha Unit. It's weird, he really pressed that part.”

“It is weird, Brad, but I'd be willing to bet, it's the pendant that keeps her scent hidden.”

“The pendant?” he frowned, “and why would one want to hide their scent?”

“Yes, likely a protective charm of some sort. I watched her, she did not once put on any scent-masking spray, got out of bed, got dressed and then just went running. I smelled nothing, got to be the pendant. She tucked in inside her gym top before the run. Got out of bed wearing it too.”

Bradley frowned “What do you think will happen if it gets taken off?” he wondered out loud.

“Let's not risk that!” Cooper commented. “Trust your father on that one. Didn't he say it was likely her own mothers?”

“Yes, a family heirloom, all Whitlock's wear them.” he sighed, he was beginning to not like this at all. “Stated he would contact her mother's pack, to come and help out, talk to her. Something about her family she needs to know, though he also stated he thought she had been collected by her grandmother after her parents died and returned to her mother's old pack. Because he couldn't find her.”

“Accounts for why she was never placed with another family then.” Cooper nodded. “I’ll drive, leave Piper for today. She did get the feeling she was being watched yesterday, and kept looking over her shoulder.”

“Well, she knows where here, trying to get to her, so no surprise there, did you sleep at all?”

“Yeah, in the woods, her house backs right into a woodland area. I stayed close, so I could hear when they got up, not that I needed to, Brandon was all hopped up and ready to challenge Piper to a morning run. Apparently, his wolf wanted to kick her butt.” saw Cooper laugh softly. “Doesn’t sound as though he has had his wolf long.”

They were watching from a little way a way, as Brandon hung out with the kids from the birthday party, there were a good two dozen children all running around, in the very large yard. Bradley couldn’t help but smile. The boy he could see, not only knew every kid there, but was quite popular, the human kids always on him, even the birthday boy himself, that kid seemed to be his best buddy.

He sat on the roof of their car, watching along with Cooper. Benson was up and watching as well. Though he couldn’t feel any connection to the boy, Bradley did feel happy while he was watching the boy. He was glad he was a happy child, but Cooper had already told him that from what he had seen and heard.

Piper and Brandon had a really good relationship, that he seemed happy and healthy, was how he had explained it. But neither he nor Benson could sense out the boy at all. Just felt happy watching him.

Cooper had taken him over to Pipers house. It was a nice sized two-story house, had three bedrooms and nice open space living area upstairs, open planned kitchen, living and dining area. Polished floor boards in the kitchen with a granite-topped island and two stools for them to use to eat breakfast at, he supposed.

There was a good sized deck off the dining area and there was a table and chair setting out on that deck, there was a small yard not even fenced at all, and it had a couple of large stone stairs that led right into the wooded area behind the house. As Cooper had said it did.

The house had no alarm and Coop picked the lock to the back door in less than a minute, access to her house was too easy. Bradley didn't like it, if they could get in this easily, so could anyone else. Human or wolf, or any otherworldly creature for that matter.

Piper's bedroom was large, had its own fireplace in the corner by the window, though it was gas and not natural wood burning. She had a massive en-suite, with an attached walk-in wardrobe. Her suite took up 1/3 of the entire top floor. Though it was very simply decorated, a large queen sized bed, and two bedside tables in black wood, a simple black padded bedhead. And a chair by the fireplace that was it.

There were photos on the fireplace mantle, all of her and Brandon doing various activities, snow boarding, snorkelling, sailing, one of them indoor rock climbing, been to Disneyland and Universal studio's, there were several of just Brandon as a baby, one even of him surely just a day-old, so tiny all rugged up in a crochet baby blanket.

Bradley picked one up and sighed. He'd had no idea, he'd missed so much of the boy's life. He wanted to take one or two for himself, but didn't. Piper was going to know he had been here in her house, in her bedroom. In all likelihood, would be able to smell him. He didn't really care about that at this point. But he would not take something from her home it wasn't right.

Piper was going to have to get used to smelling him, he wasn't going to give up, hadn't been before, but she had no hope of brushing him off now. He fully intended to bring her in and raise that boy in his pack, keep them both safe in the pack-house.

Brandon's room was full of things, he wanted for nothing, had everything he could possibly want. There was a snowboard up on a hook on the wall, a pair of ice skates hanging just below it, he had baseball gear in one corner of his room, had a soccer ball and basketball in a bag inside his walk in. the boy had a large king single bed and a shelf of track and field medals, that made Bradley smiled, touched them all, read them all first or second place he was fast it seemed.

There was a study desk under the window that looked out over the back yard and next to the window was a large pin board with lots more photos. The boy had travelled with Piper all around the world, it seemed, there were pictures of him and her at the Eiffel tower in France, near Big Ben in London, the Sydney

Opera House in Australia, on the Great Wall of China. He shook his head. This kid had been to so many places not even he had been.

There were a few of them snowboarding, and recently he realised, likely on the long weekend, she had gone away, it seemed. He plucked a photo from the board and turned it over. There was nothing written on it, but he looked like he did now.

Opened the boy's computer and turned it on. Password protected, he sighed.

“Try Aspen.” Coop smiled at him as he leaned on the bedroom door frame.

“What are you smiling about?” he asked him.

“You, just touching everything, can't seem to help yourself.”

“Ha Ha,” Bradley muttered, but the man was right, he did want to touch everything, typed Aspen in and it worked. Sat himself down in the boy's chair and went through his photo gallery. Sure enough, there were more photos and he could see they were just downloaded this week.

So definitely recent, there were quite a few of just him, and a few of him and Piper smiling up at the camera. They did look happy in every photo. It made him sad to know he'd missed out on so much, but there was nothing he could do about it.

Walked into the third bedroom and found it wasn't a bedroom but a studio in which she could work from home, found a ripped up dress hanging off a mannequin in the back corner of the room slightly behind a decorative privacy screen. The mannequin had also seen better days, he noted. Though the rest of the room was immaculate, it looked very similar to her store studio, including the comfortable high-backed winged chair. Touched her computer on the desk next to the door. It was also password protected. Neither he nor Coop could crack it, wasn't Brandon, Harper, Whitlock, wasn't Bradley or the pack's names. Wasn't Jewel or Talon either, they weren't going to be able to crack it, they didn't know that much about her.

The house was neat and tidy, even Brandon's room, though full of stuff was in an orderly manner, seems Piper liked to keep things in order. The place he noted had minimal furniture, there was no clutter at all other than the photos, and a few framed magazine covers with her name on them in her studio. There was nothing at all.

Bradley frowned and looked around at the downstairs. There was nothing, not even a vase. Basic furniture only. No art prints on the wall, not even souvenirs from their trips and they had been all over the world.

Turned and walked back up the stairs, looked at the open-spaced living area, it had a gaming vibe to it. Likely Brandon's space, the boys' room was full of stuff. Her room, however, when he went back into it, nothing on either of the bedside tables bar a phone docking recharging station. There were no prints on the walls in here either, it was a bedroom without clutter no real personal touches, just those photos, there was nothing here that said who she was at all.

Walked into her en-suite and looked at the dual sinks, there were just the basic items needed toothbrush, toothpaste, a hair brush and deodorant and one bottle of moisturiser. No clutter in here either, now he had seen many female bathrooms, they were covered in products, make-up and hair dryers and straighteners, curlers, perfumes and all sorts of other things.

Opened the draws, only the top one had anything in it make up, neatly stacked, so she could see what was in there. Opened the cupboards found only a hair straightener and a curler. Just bare basic needs.

Turned and headed into her closet, it was loaded with clothing, from gym wear to casual jeans and tee-shirts, to a few summer dresses, then there was a section of suits, work wear, he guessed. Even owned several evening gowns and cocktail dresses. Plenty of clothes for all occasions.

He did note 3 large suitcases on the floor along the back wall, all just simple and plain. Frowned as he looked about, Brandon had everything he could possibly want or need, Piper had nothing, it was weird.

"What's wrong Brad?" Cooper asked him.

"It's odd, like Brandon lives here, but she doesn't. It's all Brandon and nothing is about her at all. Like she doesn't..." he shook his head, he didn't know.

"Maybe the less stuff she had the less time it takes to pack. Maybe thinking ahead, to run again...as a rogue, might have to run sometimes, so she doesn't see a point in collecting anything." he offered up.



“Could be, but then why is Brandon’s room full to the brim?” Bradley shook his head. “It’s weird, like she doesn’t want others to see who she really is, when she has visitors.”

“She might not.” Cooper sighed “Been on her own, Brad, for a very long time.”

“Not healthy for wolves to live alone.” he sighed, not good they were social creatures, she’d isolated herself from her own kind, had good reason to, but all he could see now in her own home, was that there was still nothing personal about her. It felt lonely, he realised. Her part of the house was cold and lonely, wondered if that was how she really felt.

“No it’s not.” Cooper agreed. “Come on, we should go before she comes home.”

“She’s going to smell me in here regardless.”

“I know, you touched everything, even her stuff.” Coop was smiling again. “Come on, let’s go check on Brandon once more before deciding on a plan of action to take.”

“She’s going to run, once she realises, I know about Brandon.” Brad sighed heavily.

“She won’t go far, got three businesses to run Bradley, she knows your stalking her, hasn’t left, just trying to limit exposure to you, and once she finds out Hadley is your little sister, things will be different between the two of you. I’m sure of it.”

## **Chapter 17 - Unscentable**

Piper POV

Piper heard the male Canadian accent in the store, and felt Harper bristle inside of her mind right away. Heard him state his name was Timothy Avery and that he wanted to see Piper Harper.

She got up from her desk as quietly as possible and headed for the back door, was about to step out of the building when she heard him, sounded fully amused to her ear at that “Tell Piper, not to leave, my men are out back.”

Stilled her hand on the door handle, he'd been actively listening for her with his Alpha Wolves hearing. He might have been talking to Laura downstairs, but he knew that she would hear him, this was not what she needed right now.

Two bloody Alpha's hunting her and both of them trying to force her into making dresses at that, why did Alpha wolves have little to no respect for others?

Looked out the door to her balcony and down the stairs, saw a man casually leaning on the stairs railing at the very bottom. He looked right up at her, smiled also seemed amused to her. Obviously, he'd been told she was likely going to leave, they were prepared for it.

She stepped back inside her office, she could hear Laura coming up the stairs and the foot fall behind her, walked back over and sat down at her desk once more. There was no getting away. He'd stated his men, which meant nothing to Laura, but to Piper, she knew it meant his Alpha Unit was with him.

It was very unlikely that she would be able to get away from them. She'd only seen the one, but he had stood right where he could be seen on purpose. The other two could be anywhere for all she knew, out in the alley or just standing around blocking all the exits to her building. That was the likely position.

Watched as Laura came into her office "Sorry Piper, this gentleman, insists on seeing you."

"It's fine Laura, I'm nearly done for the day anyway." she waved her out of the office, couldn't blame the woman. It was not her fault. Turned her eyes on Alpha Timothy "Why are you here?" She asked bluntly as she watched him look about her office.

Touched a few of her framed photos, picked up one of her awards and smiled after he read it.

"You've done very well for yourself, Piper, I'm proud of you."

Piper watched him put it back on the shelf, then undo the buttons on his suit jacket. A single-breasted, navy blue suit with a grey pinstripe, was tailored for him, had been made for him, she realised.

He sank down in the chair on the other side of her desk. He was still smiling. "It's amazing, you've gotten so well recognised in the human world, yet stayed hidden from your own kind for so very long."

"Is it?" she asked, not really caring for his opinion at all. It was not amazing to her, she'd never been recognised by her kind, so it was not amazing at all, it was just how her life had always been. As for the humans, they did see her, didn't rely on their sense of smell to recall people, actually used their eyes to see people.

"For a rogue, yes..." he smirked right at her "Changed your name to fit in with the humans? Or changed your name to hide from your old pack?" he questioned her.

"I do not have to explain myself to you." she stated flatly "What do you want?" she rephrased her original question.

"I should think that is obvious," he stated simply, but did not elaborate.

It, however, was not obvious to her, he'd not brought Celeste with him, so if he wanted her to make that dress, the girl should be with him for sizing and measurements to be taken. If he was here to threaten her, he'd not stated that yet. If he was here because he knew who she actually was, it could well be that he was an enemy of Bradley Drake, her former Alpha, and he'd picked up on Brandon's bloodline.

"It could be one of many things. Black mail again?" she muttered "to force me into your pack. To tell me you've informed the Wolfen council of my illegal business's. Or you could be here to hurt me and my son for that matter."

"I would never hurt you or Brandon. It's not my style young lady...I do, however, disapprove of you and your son being unaffiliated, so yes, I would like to bring you in." he nodded, leaning back in his chair to just watch her.

"I'm not interested," Piper told him honestly, and she was not. Pack life had not suited her at all, been damned painful in the end.

"You might not be, but you will be coming along." he told her in his no-nonsense Alpha tone.

"Will I now?" she snorted, he couldn't actually make her do anything, she didn't belong to him or his pack. "You actually can't make me."

“No.” he admitted “I can’t...but I can make your life very uncomfortable, till you fall into line.”

“My entire life has been uncomfortable,” she shrugged. “ You have no idea what my life was like before I left it behind. What I went through, or how much I can put up with being uncomfortable for that matter.”

“I can well imagine,” he sighed heavily, “To go rogue for one so young, and female. It must have been traumatic.”

“I’m not going back to Pack life. I don’t like wolves, I’m not one anymore, so just leave.” she snapped at him.

He was staring right at her now. She knew why. She had just insulted his kind and renounced them in the same breath, claimed she was no longer one, his pale blue eyes were boring into hers, a deep frown on his face, he’d not liked her words at all and she knew it.

“You are still one, and your son as well...you can’t just declare not to be one of us, when it is who you are.”

“Can’t I?” even Harper rolled her eyes at that, she’d stopped emerging and showing herself when she was 20. They were now just two minds at this point.

“No you can’t,” he stated flatly.

“I beg to differ, I’ve lived as a human for a very long time and I intend to do so for the foreseeable future.” and she did, she had nothing to go back to.

Bradley did not and never would recognise her. Hell the man had even been granted a second chance, Mate. Something Piper and Harper alike were hoping the Goddess who’d cursed them once, would see fit to spare them that. Once was enough, neither of them ever wanted to go through that pain again, not ever.

“Your not safe out here Piper. Neither is your son. He’s Alpha blooded, I can tell.”

“That is none of your business. As for not safe! I’ve been out here alone minding my own business, since before he was born. No issues, no threats, till you, that is. So go back where you came from, problem solved.”

“Not going to happen Piper.” He shook his head.

“I’m not leaving my business’s, and I’m not going to your Pack.”

“You can keep the business’s, they’re doing very well. Will make an impressive investment for any Pack. I’ll just register them and make them legal. You can open one closer to the Pack, and be provided with staff from within the Pack. Nice and safe, like how it should always have been. The one’s you have here on the west coast, can stay and be run by your human employees. Nothing will change.”

“No thank you.”

“I’m not leaving Piper...You will be falling into line.”

“I will not be.” She shot right back.

Actually saw him laugh “Oh child, I think you will be, like I said. I’ll be making your life very uncomfortable till you do. My men here, are not all that I brought with me, and it’s not gone unnoticed that there is another Alpha and his unit watching your store.”

Her jaw tightened “I am a rogue and I will be staying that way.”

“No you will not be, you have family out there, other Whitlock’s. I actually know a couple of them, told them I’d come across you at the Alpha meeting in Whistler, they were more than shocked by your rogue status, also more than a little horrified actually.”

“I don’t care.” she snapped, “I’ve had enough, get out of my office, get out of my store.” she did not want to hear about others, a family she knew nothing about, they had not come to help her when she’d lost her parents, likely only here now due to what Brandon was.

“No.” Timothy stated firmly.

“I’ll call the police and have you arrested for harassment.” Piper shot right at him and meant it.

Saw his jaw tighten now, “I’ll take you, long before they get here, Piper.” he snarled right at her, didn’t like her threatening him, it seemed he could dish out threats but couldn’t take one himself. “you and I will go and pick up

Brandon and go to my Pack or I will have my men collect him without you. I do know where he is right at this minute...in fact, I do believe my men aren't the only ones watching the boy."

That snapped her head up, saw him smile smugly at her, at the fear that shot through her "Don't you dare threaten my son." it was Harper fully on the surface and snarling at him.

Watched as his wolf also pulled forward and stared right at her. His eyes were white just like Harper's, a smile touched his face and then his wolf receded. "You will be coming home Piper. It is where you and your boy belong. You need to be protected, as your Alpha and I am. I will be, I will order it."

Harper snorted, she didn't want to get into a fight with him, he was like her. It seemed "You're not alone Piper, neither is your wolf. Your life likely was not fun. Come in, let the Whitlock elders talk to you. Please, I will ask nicely, just one more time. Then I will force you, and you nor your wolf will like it."

She was glaring right at him and as if to make his point. She saw his eyes glaze over and then a moment later, there was movement on her balcony, and the bell chimed on the stores' front door. He looked right at her pointedly, pulled his phone out and called someone, "Take a photo of the boy as proof, send it directly back to me." He hung up.

Took less than 15 seconds before he turned the phone around and showed her a picture. It was Brandon at his friend Finley's birthday party. "Up Piper," he said and stood himself "We'll take your car, so as not to upset the boy."

Piper did not like this, but she could not escape, there was a man on her balcony barring her exit that way and now there were two standing just inside her office doorway as well, barring her exit, and she doubted she'd make it passed the Alpha to her studio door not that that would help only lead back into the store.

He was clearly going to force her hands, to get what he wanted from her, if she didn't comply with his wishes, glared right at the man. Showing her full displeasure at the situation.

"It's for the best Piper, just trust me." he told her. He sounded like he was trying to reassure her. She did not trust him, not at all.

Stood up and grabbed her handbag. She and Harper would not risk Brandon being taken by him or his men. The boy was all they had and he had Aspen, not yet fully realised, but this could force his wolf to emerge and shift him for the first time. She didn't want that, he was very young.

"Call your men off now." she snapped right at him.

He nodded and saw him wave his unit to back away.

"Not those men. The ones on my son." she grated out, could actually feel Harper's aggression growing inside her, nothing ticked her wolf off like a threat to their child. She'd not shifted in years, didn't even know if they could anymore. But somewhere deep down inside of her, Piper was willing to bet that Harper would shift her to her grey and white wolf if it was the only way to save their son. Harper was right this minute, stalking around inside of Pipers mind, all her hackles were up and her ears were flat back against her head.

She was walked to her car in the car park, glared at his unit, as she unlocked her Nissan Rogue. "Are they all coming?"

"No, just me." Timothy smiled at her, he waved his unit away. "They'll follow in our car in a minute." he got in the front passenger seat "This is a nice vehicle." he commented as he looked it over.

She already knew that, had even splashed out and got the platinum model with all the high-tech safety features, and the Pro Pilot Assist, made for easier driving, considering she'd not learned to drive until away from the pack, had only bought her first car at 23, and then bought this car just a year ago, really liked her car, was actually considering it for all her company cars. Nissan Rogue, just really tickled her funny bone, because she was a rogue, but it did have all the room needed as well.

Drove all the way to Finley's house to pick up Brandon, she was a bit early, but that could not be helped, got out of the car, as did Alpha Timothy. "Stay here, I don't need Brandon freaking out." she muttered as she walked passed him, saw him stop and lean back on the car, acknowledged her words.

Walked down the path and rang the doorbell, apologised to Finley's mother, Susanne, about having to pick Brandon up early, saw the woman look to the man by her car and then smile at her "He's nice looking, your boyfriend?"

"No." Piper shook her head, did not elaborate any further.

Brandon was surprised to see her, "We have a visitor." she told him and he frowned up at her, then looked more than annoyed when she walked him outside and his eyes landed on Alpha Timothy.

Watched as Alpha Timothy, stood and even opened the back door for Brandon to get in the car, he was smiling at the boy, ruffled the boy's hair "Good to see you son." he smiled right down at him.

Brandon jerked himself out of the way and climbed up into the car, but it was the rather loud growl that she heard from somewhere behind her that made her turn her head, saw Alpha Timothy's head whip around as well, as he closed the door.

"Get in the car Piper." he snapped, his eyes were already searching and she saw him breath in, trying to scent who it was. "Not mine." he confirmed "In the car now." he repeated himself.

Piper hurried around the car. She'd never had this problem before. Not till this man bloody showed up, had likely brought trouble with him, she was in the car. "Buckle up." she told Brandon as she put the keys in the ignition, here eyes were still on Alpha Timothy. He was still searching the area, and did not think about the fact that she was now in her car alone with her son. Likely thought she would just do as he told her to.

Turned the engine over and hit the central locking to lock him out, put the car in drive, saw his eyes move right to hers as he realised what she was about to do, reached for the door handle, as she hit the accelerator and then sped off down the street, saw him in the review mirror, just stand there and put his hands on his hips and shake his head.

Stupid man should never have gotten out of the car, now he was alone and with whoever had growled at them.

"Mum?"

"I don't know, we have to go, Brandon." she told him honestly.

"Where will we go? What did he want this time?"

Where? She had no idea right this second, was just driving away. She didn't think their house would be safe. Obviously he'd been watching her. Likely



what she'd felt yesterday "Want's us to go and live in his pack in Canada." she answered his other question, was not going to lie to him.

"What? Why?"

"I don't know." she shook her head "He just turned up." Turned onto the I26 and headed into the city, turned off at Green Hills and made her way into Portland Heights, where Izzy lived. She was not home currently but Piper had a key. Hopefully they would be safe there until she could think of something or somewhere to go.

"Is Aunty Izzy home mum?" Brandon asked as they pulled up in her driveway and the car wasn't there.

"No, away. Out in Maine. I'm sure she won't mind, I'll call her once we're inside." used the key and let herself in. Brandon looked worried. "It'll be okay Brandon." she tried to reassure him.

He just looked at her, didn't believe her, she couldn't blame him either, there life had been turned upside down by Alpha Timothy a week ago and now here he was, back again to harass them. It should be her choice to live inside a pack or not. Yes he could forcibly bleed her into his pack. But he couldn't stop her from going rogue all over again. No-one could stop that. And it was what she would do.

They just had to stay hidden for now. Till she could figure out a plan, she was due to leave with Izzy for Sydney in just a month. Perhaps she and Brandon could go earlier and have Izzy follow. That could work.

Sighed gave Brandon the TV remote "Find something to watch, I'll go and call Izzy." watched him nod.

She walked through the house to Izzy's bedroom and closed the door before sitting on the bed and dialling her number. The poor woman was going to be stuck in the middle, when she got back, needed to be given a heads up on the current situation.

"Hey Piper, what's wrong?" she asked right away.

Piper sighed "I got trouble Izzy," she answered honestly. "I got hauled in by this big shot CEO called Timothy Avery when I was away with Brandon, to

design a dress for his daughter, now he's turned up at the store and is demanding I go with him back to Canada."

"Say no."

"I did, he threatened to just take Brandon and make me. We're at your place. I managed to get Brandon and run with him." she sighed, didn't know how long it was going to be safe here either.

"That's fine, stay as long as you like. What about Drake Industries? Are those men still around?"

"I don't know, to be honest. I haven't seen them." though now that she thought about it Timothy had told her he knew there was another Alpha watching her "I don't think they've left." she added, then there was that growl, it was definitely a wolf out at Finley's place.

"You need me to come back?"

"No Izzy, just wanted to give you a heads up, as to what to expect when you get back is all."

"You're suddenly very popular, Piper. Who's this Timothy Avery guy? I get Mr Drake and his sudden obsession. He might have seen Brandon. Those eyes are unmistakable. He would recognise his own son I imagine, from his eyes. But what's with the new guy?"

She was not wrong. If Bradley had seen Brandon or even one of his unit they would likely have wanted to get up close to the child. Perhaps that was the growl at Finley's Bradley or one of his unit, now that she thought about that moment, it had been when Timothy had called him son. She bit her lip. She didn't know.

"I don't know about Timothy Avery, but he calls me Piper Whitlock, Izzy. Not Piper Harper, said he knows others in my family."

"What family. I thought you appeared fully grown here in Portland." she teased her a little, trying to lighten the mood.

"I don't know, my mother and father died when I was 10. I have no idea." and she didn't. Yes, his wolf had white eyes like Harper and Aspen, but it could just be a coincidence.

“I looked into Drake Industries on my flight out here. Mr Bradley Drake is a very wealthy bachelor.”

“He’s not a bachelor, he is getting married soon.” Piper sighed “It’s why the girl came in, she’s his wife to be.”

“What no way? He’s like 36, his bio states, that girl can’t be more than 18 or 19.”

“It is what it is,” Piper murmured “ It’s why he’s demanding I make her the dress she wants. Wants her to have everything her heart desires.” she felt pain touch her heart at the thought, couldn’t help it. That girl was getting everything and Piper had got nothing. It still hurt, would likely always hurt, she imagined.

“Sorry Piper.” she heard the compassion in Izzy’s voice.

“I was nothing to him, Izzy.” she said out loud, even heard the pain in her own voice. “I never was, never will be.” she sighed, really wanted to move on, wanted to forget him. But just couldn’t seem to do it. Hell she had thought they had moved on until that girl walked into her life. Till he’d walked her right into her studio and stood next to her, demanding she have everything she wanted.

“Piper, are you really alright?”

“No...” she answered truthfully, “but he’ll leave and give up, it’s just a damned dress. That girl can get something else made. Or buy off my rack, I don’t really care which.” and she didn’t, just wanted that man and his Mate away from her, for good.

## **Chapter 18 - Unscentable**

Bradley POV

His eyes landed on Piper’s car as it pulled up. Cooper had told him that she owned a Red Nissan Rogue. Both he and Cooper stepped behind their rental car and out of sight. They didn’t want her to spot them, his eyes fell on the man inside the car, couldn’t see him clearly with the sun hitting the windshield and causing glare.

When she got out of her SUV she did not look happy. The man also got out, Bradley used his wolfs hearing to pick up her words, “Stay here, I don’t need

Brandon freaking out.” watched the rather large man lean on her car and watch her, turned his sight to Piper, heard the conversation she had with the woman at the door. Not her boyfriend. Felt actual relief at that.

‘He’s a wolf.’ Coop told him via the mind-link. While Bradley was focused on Piper, his Beta was focused on the man, it seemed, his eyes moved back to him.

‘An Alpha Wolf,’ Bradley confirmed as he breathed in deeply, using all Benson’s senses to pick up what Rank he was, account for the size of the man. What he was doing here with her, leaning so casually on her car, the man looked very comfortable. She had not though.

From her comment it was likely that Brandon would also know this man, and wasn’t going to like him being there either. Saw the boy’s facial expression at the sight of that man by their car and actually smiled. His boy did not like the man, it was clear.

Had to watch that man touch his son’s head, “Good to see you son.” those words ripped a very large and aggressive growl right out of his wolf Benson, he was not about to contain it. There was another Alpha laying claim to his child, not something he or Benson were at all happy about. Cooper’s hand on his shoulder, a firm grip, saw with satisfaction as Brandon pulled himself away from that Alpha wolf.

A good boy, knew that man was not his father.

Saw both Piper and the Alpha’s head whip around to see where it had come from, and Bradley’s eyes widened as he recognised that Alpha they were allied packs ‘Alpha Timothy Avery, of the Ice Moon Pack.’ He told Cooper via the mind-link, though it was likely his Beta also recognised the man ‘Her mother’s home pack’s Alpha.’

‘Perhaps your father got a hold of him?’

‘Maybe, but they definitely know him.’

‘Brandon, doesn’t like him, that’s for sure,’ Coop agreed.

Saw her get in the car while Alpha Timothy searched the area ‘Idiot she’ll run.’ Bradley thought. It was clear to him that Piper didn’t want him around.

Watched her start that car of hers and just speed away, shook his head, how did Alpha Timothy not see that coming, even he had.

Saw the man just stand there and watch her drive away, shake his head, didn't seem all that concerned "Is that you Alpha Bradley?" he called out as he reached into his top jacket pocket and pulled out his phone.

Bradley frowned, likely his father had gotten a call in, he and Cooper moved into the man's line of sight, he strolled towards them while talking to who Bradley presumed was his Beta, informed them to be on the look out for her she had driven away while he was distracted.

Ended the call and looked right at him "Alpha Bradley, that could have gone much better if you had not interfered. I had her, now..." he waved a hand down the street. "gone."

"What do you mean? You had her."

"Your father called. She's actually my cousin and I was...had managed to pull her in."

"Didn't look happy about it," Bradley commented, and she had not and, by the speeding away didn't want to be pulled in as he stated.

"Hm, she's wilful, I had to threaten her to get my way. Like I did the first time I came across her."

"You threatened her? Not even I have resorted to that." He did not like it at all, surely there was a better way.

"Hmm, you have an agenda, I believe, I only want to get her to my grandmother, those two need to sit and talk. Your issue...the boy is yours, I'm guessing...should have picked it when I saw him the first time."

Bradley did not say anything, just looked at the man.

"I'm curious how he was conceived, and you will be explaining that to me, especially why she went rogue."

"I guess," Bradley shot right back, "We should both ask that question." saw the man frown right at him.

"We'll take your car," Timothy stated calmly.

“To where exactly?”

“Her place, I will need her and the boy’s passports, so she can come into Canada.”

“And you think I am just going to let you take her and my son,” he snapped, Benson was getting angrier by the second.

“Yes I do, Bradley. We’re allies have been for many decades, and I need her to understand about herself, her lineage before you come in and try to get the boy, he will not want to go with you, fiercely protective of his mother.”

Bradley frowned now as he got in the car. “What are you talking about? What do you know?”

“That his wolf appeared last weekend, when I confronted her about disrespecting my daughter in front of a room full of Alpha’s no less. Doesn’t respect any ranking system. I don’t think, not anymore anyway, have been a rogue to long. The boy he screamed right at me, his wolf right on the surface. It was the first time she saw it. Panicked and tried desperately to calm him down. Didn’t want him shifting in broad daylight, in front of a bunch of humans.”

Bradley’s frown deepened. “That’s unusual.” and it was the boy was just 7.

“Very, but it appears his Alpha Gene’s make him very strong. Unfortunately, he’ll be just like her, like me and all the Whitlock’s, though most males are fine, the women, however...” he sighed and looked out the side window.

“However?”

“End up dead at a very young age, if they don’t know what they are. Killed by their own pack usually.” the man sounded sad.

Bradley’s eyes turned right on the man, questioningly. He did not like what he was hearing, “Elaborate.”

“I’d rather not.” he looked at Bradley “How was the child conceived?”

Bradley’s jaw tightened “I’d rather not.” he used the man's own words on him and turned to face forward again.

“If it was rape, Bradley. I will Alpha duel you to the death.” he commented casually.

Bradley understood that he meant it though, not only did he mean it, he did not intend to loose that duel either. He had seen the man fight, he was a fierce wolf.

“It was not that,” he stated “I have never done that, ever to anyone.”

“Won’t want her to say it was. I will be asking her. I’ll believe her words over anyone else’s and act accordingly. Your father has a pack agreement with mine about that girl, and no harm to her from your pack or...” he snorted sounded a little amused “You might want to dig it up, Bradley, and read it yourself.”

Cooper pulled the car up out the front of Piper’s house, they all got out and he watched as Timothy clicked a small black box and the garage door opened, and the man simply strolled into the house like he had a right to be there, walked up the stairs to let himself into her house like he had been here before.

They waited outside by his car for 20 minutes, more of the man's wolves turned up. He recognised the mans Beta Ryan, right away “Alpha Bradley, Cooper.” he nodded to them both as he walked over “The boss still inside?”

“Searching for passports.” Bradley nodded.

“Hm,” he leaned on the car next to him, “She’s a handful I see.” he smiled, “like her mother was and her grandmother for that matter.”

Bradley said nothing, watched as Timothy came out empty handed and shook his head. “Couldn’t find them.”

“Likely on her all the time,” Cooper offered up “She’s a rogue and would likely keep them handy to her, for...exactly this kind of thing I’d be guessing.”

Bradley sighed, as did Timothy.

“Bradley, I would appreciate it, if you let me and my men handle my cousin. Bring her in and get her to understand what she is. Before you come and lay claim to the boy.”

“It’s not just the boy, Timothy. I believe she is my Mate.” He told the man.

Now that got his attention, he was looking right at Bradley now, a deep frown on his face. "You could not know this. Would be unscentable to you."

"She is. I don't smell anything at all, but..."

"But?"

"There was an incident," he sighed. "only a select few know what I am going to tell you."

"No one here will speak of it." Timothy nodded.

"I suffered the pain of rejection, but did not have a Mate at the time. It was also the day that Piper went rogue from the pack, which compounded my pain. My Gamma picked up on her pain of the rejection at the same time. So we believe she is my Mate."

"Hm, unusual, but if she rejected you, your bond is over."

"It was not to my face. I woke up in agony not knowing what was going on. I have also never accepted it, didn't even know I had a Mate."

"Then?"

"A long story I guess...For another time."

"Hm, I'll bring her in and let you know when I have her. Will that work for you?"

"I don't like it," he admitted "But due to certain unfortunate circumstances, Piper believes Hadley is my Mate. I haven't, nor any of my men, have been able to get even so much as a phone call through to her, to tell her it's not the case."

"How on earth, does one think your little sister is your Mate?" he shook his head seemed confused as well as unhappy.

"Hadley insisted on getting a Piper Harper gown, I finally let her, sent my unit with her for protection while she was here...Didn't go down so well."

"So well?" Cooper snorted "she made Hadley cry."



Timothy shook his head understood right away “And you the over-protective big brother, came in and tried to lay the law down and demanded Hadley gets what she wants, right? And Alpha insisting on a Luna Gown for a girl.”

“ Yes.” Bradley nodded simply.

“Stupid Bradley.”

“How was I supposed to know? I didn’t even know Piper Harper was a previous pack member.”

“ Then how do you know now?”

“Her reaction to seeing me with Hadley, pain rolled off of her in waves and then she just bolted out of the store. Made a new protocol for her company to never accept anyone from Drake Industries for an appointment. Kind of all just...” he shrugged “fell into place, though it was Hadley that made the comment that Pipers whole body just went crazy and it did. I’d never seen a reaction like that to just me walking into a room before. Hadley thought Piper reacted like a Mate would...No-one in my Pack bar my Unit and my Doctor know what happened to me that day, so it was an unusual statement. Gained my attention and made me really think about her reaction.”

“How old was she Bradley, when she went rogue?”

“21.” he answered honestly.

Saw the man close his eyes and swear under his breath, obviously knew the ramifications. “Right! Let me handle it.” he muttered “Ryan did you lo jack her car.”

“ Of course,” he snorted like it was a stupid question.

“Go home, Bradley please. I’ll keep you informed and once she’s calm and understands, I’ll send for you and we’ll do this the Whitlock way of finding out if she is your Mate or was.”

“Just ask her, she’ll know right.”

“ Yes,” he nodded, “but for you to know to actually scent her that’s another matter. We’ll get to that once I’ve got her brought in” and then he just turned and walked away, his Beta falling into step with him.

“Alpha Timothy.” he addressed him by his full title.

“No harm will come to her or the boy, I give you my word. And I will not tell her you know either. You can do that yourself.”

There was not much he could do at this point. He was certain Timothy was not going to hurt her or his child. They were his kin. He was also very certain that he was not going to allow Bradley or his Unit to assist in her capture either. Didn't like it, didn't like that he had threatened her. Wondered what that threat was.

Sighed looked at Cooper who huffed himself, wondered if he should have her house cleaned out and all her stuff packed up and taken back to his pack. Even if she was not his Mate anymore, he would be insisting on her staying in his pack to raise Brandon. He was the rightful heir to his pack.

Maybe he could convince her to give him a chance. He'd not known about her. Surely something could be done about this massively screwed up mess of a Mate Bond between the two of them. Perhaps if she spent some time with him they could regrow their bond and come back together.

Looked at the house for a long minute “Organise movers Cooper, all her and Brandon's stuff, everything, have it moved to the pack.”

“You sure on that. You don't want to wait?”

“No, I don't want to wait. Regardless of the outcome, both Piper and Brandon will be in my Pack. I'll sort it all out with her, it is what Benson and I want. To sort it out.” He turned and got in the car. “Lets go home. Let Timothy bring her in. He's her cousin, and likely to have more luck than I will.”

Cooper drove. He was quiet for a long while, then said “You know Timothy said she was like him, he's Mated and has children. I can scent him. No wolf will mark another without scenting them first, unless chosen mates. Perhaps once that charm comes off in private just the two of you, you'll be able to scent her.”

“I don't know.” Bradley sighed as he stared out his window. Benson was also quiet, didn't like that she and Brandon were going to be taken to another pack.

He needed to find out what a Whitlock was, though Timothy claimed to be her cousin, his last name was not Whitlock, it was Avery. Though Pipers was

currently Harper. Even when she had been born, though she had not been given her father's name, was registered as a Whitlock. No siblings either, he recalled. Just one child.

He got Eddie and Harry to drive Hadley's car back to the pack in Montana. They would get there well ahead of them, while he booked himself, Cooper and Hadley on a plane back to the pack, though they would not leave till the next day. It was the earliest flight he could get.

## **Chapter 19 - Unscentable**

Bradley POV

Bradley was standing at the reception desk waiting to check out of the hotel with Cooper and Hadley. They'd had a late breakfast, seeing as their flight back to Montana wasn't until lunch time, looked at the number on his phone when it rang. Alpha Timothy IMP. Picked it up. Maybe the man had gotten her already.

"Bradley Drake," he answered in the human way due to where he was and the humans all around him.

"Bradley, Timothy Avery." then the man sighed.

Bradley closed his eyes. He just knew that something had gone wrong. "What is it, Timothy?"

"Piper got away." he muttered.

"Didn't your Beta, lo jack her car!" he asked, more than annoyed, he'd heard that very conversation himself.

"Yes." Timothy sounded annoyed as well now. "I thought we'd let her settle down for the night. The car didn't move all night. When we got there this morning to collect her, the car was still there, but no Piper, no Brandon."

Bradley sighed now and knew he should have insisted on going himself. "Did you not watch her or at least where she spent the night, put a guard on her at least?"

"I did, must have left before we got there," heard the man huff, "I'm just as annoyed as you are Bradley."

"I doubt it. That's my son you lost and likely my Mate." he grated out, uncaring that Hadley would be hearing this conversation. Only he and Cooper knew at this point about the boy. He still hadn't informed his Gamma or Delta. "Do you have any idea where they are?"

"No."

"Where did she leave the car?" Bradley changed his train of thought, thinking now of how to track her. She'd gone somewhere and that somewhere would likely be to someone she trusted. He was betting he knew who.

"The mail states Isobelle Jenkins."

Bradley frowned, "Isobelle Jenkins." he mused aloud, then he sighed "Izzy." turned his eyes to Cooper, ignored the very concerned look he was getting from his sister, who now appeared way more concerned about the situation now she'd heard him say his son. "You've got Izzy's details right?"

"I'll call her, though I likely won't have any luck, but..." saw the man pull out his phone.

"Izzy is Piper's Assistant Manager, they are quite close." Bradley informed Timothy while they waited.

"Where else do you think she will go?" Timothy asked.

"Your guess is as good as mine on that. I'll have my men make some calls to her other stores. She could have gone off to Olympia or LA. I'll get back to you Timothy." he hung up and closed his eyes, took in a deep breath and then let it out slowly, a rogue on the run with no describable scent to track, didn't even smell like a rogue for that matter, just freaking great.

Looked at Cooper, he was frowning "What?" he asked when the man hung up.

"Voice mail."

Told the receptionist at their hotel they would like to stay at least one more night, maybe two, instead of checking out. Then drove them to her store here in Portland. It was open, he walked in and saw the woman behind the counter smile right up at him. He'd not seen her before. He might have some luck on his side. Glanced at her name tag 'Laura'

“Morning Laura.” he smiled right at her, heard her heart rate quicken, smiled a bit more as he leaned right on the counter, getting closer to her “I’m looking for Izzy, cheeky woman stood me up.”

Heard a little disappointment in her tone. “Oh! She must have forgotten to tell you. She’s home in Maine for her sister’s wedding, not back till Wednesday.”

“Ah, naughty of her indeed. I must punish her when she comes back.” he chuckled softly, allowing his tone to imply it would be a fun bedroom punishment. “You wouldn’t happen to have the number where she’s staying now would you?” he asked, saw the woman nod her head.

“I do actually, in case there is an emergency.”

“Oh, wouldn’t you just call Piper for that?” he threw out all casual like, giving off the air that he knew her as well.

“No, Izzy runs everything.”

“Oh, could I have that number for Izzy, she needs a naughty phone call, she does.” he winked right at Laura.

Saw her blush as she understood his meaning, and nodded “Give me a second, I’ll write it down for you.” and she did just that, wrote down two numbers actually, he raised an eyebrow at her.

“That’s her family home number where she’s staying, and that is the work mobile she always carries.”

“Thank you Laura...Oh and tell Piper I said to say hello.” he pushed up off the counter.

“I will when I see her.”

“Not in today then?”

“No, not for a while, I heard working from home.”

“Well, tell her, Bradley said to say hello, next time you see her.” watched as the woman’s eyes went a little wide, he smiled as it dawned on the woman she’d just given out information to a man, she ought not to have.

“Bradley who?” she asked, sounding concerned.

“Drake,” he commented, “Thanks for the info Laura, you were most helpful.” he smirked right at her, then strolled out the door. Humans sometimes just couldn’t keep their full whits about them, when faced with his eyes and charming smile and he’d laid it all on for that woman.

“Got two numbers for Izzy, in Maine. Nothing on Piper. Though I dare say that woman in there is now terrified she’s going to be fired,” he chuckled to himself.

Leaned back in the seat of the car and put a call into the work’s mobile number. It answered on the 4th ring “Goddess Gowns, Izzy speaking.”

“Isobelle Jenkins?” he used her full name to clarify that Isobelle was Izzy.

“Yes, how may I help you?”

“Where is Piper, Izzy?”

“I have nothing to say to you. Mr Drake I presume.”

“If you don’t tell me, I will come to you.”

Heard her laugh “Go ahead, come and find me. Good luck with that.”

He smiled to himself “Laura was very forthcoming, Izzy...You’re in Maine at your sister's wedding.”

“Stupid woman,” he heard her mutter, “Even if you come here. I will not tell you what you want, because I don’t know.”

“I don’t believe you,” Bradley told her simply, and he didn’t.

“Well now, that is your problem, isn’t it.” Then the line was disconnected. She was so very stubborn, just like Piper. No wonder they got along.

“Cooper, find out all there is about Isobelle Jenkins, from Maine.”

Dialled Eddie’s number and waited for the line to connect didn’t take long.

“Hey Brad, what’s up?”

“Piper’s gone. Timothy scared her off. Izzy is in Maine. How would you like another crack at her?”

"I would love it." he could not only hear the smile in the man's voice, but pure determination as well.

"Go get her. She's at her sister's wedding." he read out the home number for him so Eddie could track it to an address. "I give you permission to charm that woman's socks off, or anything else you need off. To get me information about Piper's whereabouts she went to Izzy's place, then just vanished."

"So you're betting Izzy knows where she is then."

"Yes, I'd bet everything I own on it." he agreed. "Let me know when you get the information."

"Will do."

He sat and thought about it, wondered how far that woman would go to get away from an Alpha or two of them, now. Wondered what Timothy had threatened her with to make her go and get Brandon and return to his pack. She'd not looked happy that was a certainty. Neither had his son.

Put a call into the man and asked him just that.

Was completely furious at the man's answer, and so was Benson, who snarled right down the line at the threat of separating her from her son. Did not like it at all, no wonder the woman had bolted away into the night. It did not appease him to hear Timothy tell him, he'd not actually intended to follow through with it, that he knew he wouldn't have to, knew that Piper wouldn't risk it and would go with him.

"Don't interfere if you are going to threaten her or my son Timothy, I'll find her myself." he'd snarled down the line at the man, and ended the call, even why Timothy was telling him not to interfere.

Recalled that Timothy had told him he'd also threatened her the first time they'd met as well. It was no wonder the woman was on the run, she'd gotten nothing but threats from him. He was just as guilty for raging at her about Hadley's dress. "Her place, Cooper, let's see if we find something on where she might go."

They did just that. Hadley was wandering around looking at her things, stopped and looked at the photos too. He'd let the cat out of the bag, she'd

not said a single word since he'd used the words 'my son' at the hotel. He'd not missed her expression at the time had said it all.

Bradley was sitting in Pipers' home studio, once again trying to get passed the password when Hadley walked in and looked around, he noted she was holding a photo in her hand "He's got your eyes." she commented softly as she walked passed him and into the room to look around.

"He does, his name is Brandon." he told her with a nod ". You're a girl, Hadley. What do you use for a password?"

Saw her roll her eyes at him. "Yes I am a girl." watched her eyes move passed him to the computer and then just shrugged "I don't password protect things."

"Nothing?"

"Nope..." she shook her head.

"What about your study lap top, the one you take into the human world?" he asked surely that was locked.

"Oh, yeah that. It's mum and dads Mate Bond anniversary."

That did not help him at all with the password. Cooper was off searching the house for anything at all. Heard Hadley gasp from behind him and turned to see her looking at the ruined dress on the mannequin. She'd moved the screen aside, he could see it as well.

"That's the dress I want, or did." she pointed to it.

Bradley looked right at it, though he'd seen it last time he'd not really taken it in, had a defined sweetheart neckline with crisscrossed ruching and a fitted bodice all the way to the top of the hip area, had some pretty embroidered tiny flowers on the left hip and then fell in a ball gown style in lots of soft layers of sheer white material that that had three inch white silk ribbon edging on each of the layers, that fell like cascades down the dress in overlapping folds, almost looked like large curls. It was in a soft white dress.

He didn't think she could possibly have made it and torn it to shreds in just a week. Surely not. Then he remembered Renee telling him only one had ever been made and taken out of the catalogue. He looked at Hadley as she stood there trying to put it back together.



“Leave it, Hadley.” he told her gently. He could see her getting upset by the state of the dress. “I’m certain once everything is cleared up, she will make you your dress.”

“No she won’t.” He heard Hadley say with a heavy sigh.

“Yes she will.” he reassured her.

“No Bradley, you don’t get it...this is her dress...the one she made for herself...” her big blue eyes turned right on him full of sadness “She’ll never make it again.”

His eyes moved passed her to the dress once more and then he sighed himself, her dress. The one she would have worn for him, he realised, was what Hadley meant, the one Hadley wanted for herself, the one he had gone in there demanding she make, for the woman that Piper believed was his new Mate. Wanted her to wear the dress she had designed for herself. No wonder she’d ripped up that photo, no wonder she had refused to make it and told them to get out. No wonder he could feel her pain that day.

He’d waltzed into her office and demanded from her point of view, that she allow his new Mate to wear the dress, she, his actual Mate, had not only designed but would have worn for her Luna Ceremony. It just seemed to get worse with every minute. Nothing he did eased her pain, only made it worse. He had to sort this out and quickly.

She had made the dress, even though she would never get to wear it. Then destroyed it, but still kept it. The woman was torturing herself with it and on a daily basis. He sighed as he stared at it, it was beautiful, she would look beautiful in it.

Was this how she reminded herself to stay away from him? He wondered.

Cooper came up empty handed after searching the place top to bottom, went through every single room, methodically started down stairs and worked his way up, searching for clues as to where she may have gone. Nothing there was not even a hand written address book with people's phone numbers in it that she knew or socialised with.

“Need to search her office at the store.” Cooper stated “I got nothing at all,”

“We’ll have to wait until it closes. I don’t think Laura will let us search the office.”

“The building has an alarm, remember. We’ll need Izzy or another staff member to let us in.”

“Or an alarm code.” Hadley stated, she was still over by the dress. “Coop you go in and seduce the woman locking up, while you entertain her in the back room. Bradley and I will go upstairs and search her office.”

Bradley turned and looked at his little sister, shocked by her bold statement to Cooper. She had just told his Beta to go and have sex with the human woman.

“Not a half bad idea.” Cooper laughed. “But I don’t do humans, Hadley.”

“Why not, a girl is a girl, we got all the same bits.” she stared right at Cooper as if making a point.

“Hadley enough, you’re not to talk like that.”

Bradley watched as she turned her eyes on him and then rolled them. “What can’t he take one for the team? I’m dead certain the man has had plenty of women, and likely done this before. What’s one more notch in his belt?”

“Enough.” Bradley frowned at her. “Out, we are done here.”

“I’d take one for the team.” She shot at him as she stalked by him out of the room.

Bradley’s eyes widened now. What the hell was that? Yes, he’d felt her all Alpha in that comment, but where had his sweet little sister gone? She was speaking words he’d never heard come from her mouth, let alone didn’t want to hear.

“We’ll wait on Eddie,” Bradley muttered and stood up “When did she get a potty mouth?” he asked Cooper.

Cooper laughed “that was clean, not potty mouthed, put it in the most politest way I’ve ever heard, considering.” he looked right at Bradley “I have done that, and the way you put it ‘Coop go fuck that she-wolf till she tells you what we want.’ Hadley’s words were very polite.”

Bradley couldn't argue about that, Cooper was right.

They left locking up behind them, returned to the hotel seeing as he'd not actually checked them out, there was nothing he could do at this point, sat with his laptop in front of him and logged into the pack-house's database via remote access and checked for that alliance contract Timothy had mentioned to him that he might want to look up. Had been going to do it back at the pack, but seeing as they were not returning, this was the only other option to him.

Read through it, it did not just involve Piper but also her mother Jewel as well. It went right back to when she had found her Mate Talon. It stated she was never to have her pendant removed by anyone in the Pack ever. That if she was to produce a child it would come to the Ice Moon Pack, to speak with the Whitlock elders.

That any and all children would retain the Whitlock name, until such a time as their wolf emerged and if there were no white eyes, then the child could claim the father's name. If the wolf's eyes were white, it had to be reported to the Ice Moon Pack. For bloodline lineage to be documented.

It also stated that if Jewel or any daughter that she produced were injured or suffered death at the hands of the pack due to multiple males raping either one of them, it would be all out war. Those male wolves involved would be slaughtered and the current Alpha 'himself' was fully responsible for their deaths. That he would be Alpha Duelled to the death by the current Ice Moon Pack Alpha or by one of the Whitlock elders themselves.

There was a picture of the pendant in the agreement to show what it looked like, not that he had seen it on Piper, a long pale blue pendulum type pendant. His father's signature was on the bottom of the document.

Bradley sighed, something was definitely going on that he had no idea about. And bloody well should be considering the consequences fell right on his shoulders. His father had never put this document before him, never even mentioned it. He was more than annoyed. Turned it to Cooper for him to read. He'd not been wrong about that pendant.

Brad had not seen her pendant, though there was a chain around her neck, he could only presume from what his father had said, that Piper had likely collected it off of her mother's dead body and now wore it, likely always had.

That document sounded as though if Jewel or Piper did not wear said pendant, the whole or a lot of the male wolves in his Pack would turn on them. The word rape had been mentioned by Timothy and it was in that document as well. He really didn't like where this was going.

Timothy himself had said that female Whitlock's didn't live long. He had actually sounded sad, in fact. Had also asked him how their child was conceived, told him to his face if Piper stated it was rape he'd be Alpha duelling him to the death.

This did not bode well, something about Piper and her bloodline was putting her in danger, and she likely had absolutely no idea at all. That pendant was definitely a protective charm, and Bradley, right now, was praying she never took it off, clearly needed to keep it on to save her very life. Though he was damned sure right this minute, that it was also that pendant that hid her from him scenting her out as well. How were they supposed to sort this out? He couldn't just remove it, that was for sure.

Needed more information. Likely was going to have to take her right to Timothy and the Whitlock elders, not something she was going to be willing to do, from all accounts. She'd run from Timothy. Hadn't run from Bradley though, just avoided him, interesting in itself.

## **Chapter 20 - Unscentable**

Izzy POV

Izzy was dancing on the dance floor in their family home ballroom, at the family estate in Maine. Her sister Joanie, looked so very happy as she was being twirled around by her new husband, Mason. They'd met 2 years ago at one of Joanie's friends engagement party and hit it off been together ever since. Mason had proposed a year after they met and were now married. Lucky girl just 24.

Izzy herself was still looking for Mr Right. She knew most of the people in this room, knew nearly all of the single men in there. None of them were her Mr Right. Downed her 5th or 6th glass of champagne.

She was one of 6 children. She had 4 other sisters, as well as Joanie. One was already married, two were getting married within the next 12 months, and one was, like her, still hunting Mr Right. She had no brothers, still irked her father.

He was very old-fashioned, wanted to hand his business over to a son, a man to take over, not a woman. Her sister Cordelia, the eldest, also single, had gotten her business degree and had worked along side their father for nearly 15 years now, was the next in line to take over, but their father was a very stubborn man, and was not going to relinquish control to her until she was married to someone he thought was suitable to hand the company to, not her, but her husband.

Cordelia worked damned hard to attain her status within the family company, had in fact worked her way up from the ground floor. Her father had shown her no favouritism, still didn't in fact, was disappointed that she was not married to a suitable man of his choosing. Cordelia at this point was out right refusing to bow down to his demand, and was more than capable of taking over and running the company.

Izzy herself had also disappointed her father, when she had moved clear across the country and away from the man he wanted her to marry. Who was here at this wedding, this evening himself. He was one of her father's junior business partners. Likely if she had married him, that man would be the one inheriting the family business.

He had stepped up to her twice already, left his date at his table to do so, in fact. Asked her to dance with him, he smiled at her, thinking his good looks would sway her into forgetting what he'd done. She had declined him on both instances.

This attention had not gone un-noticed by her sister Cordelia, who had walked over to her and looked right at her, "You're not going to get back with him are you?" she'd asked.

Izzy knew Cordelia was worried that if Izzy did take the man back, she would lose the chance to inherit the family business, and it really was what she wanted, mostly to prove to their father that a woman could do his job. Though she had worked hard and wanted to earn it, she had earned it as far as Izzy was concerned.

Izzy had told her "Not even if he was the last man on earth."

Saw Cordelia smile and nod then just walked away happy that Izzy wasn't about to be married off to a man they both knew their father wanted to hand the company over to. He was from a well to do family in New York, and a marriage alliance suited both families, but Izzy would not.

She had actually dated him for a full year and a half, set up by both families, thought he was nice, definitely good looking, and he had treated her very well, till she realised he was actually a pig of a man.

Till she had seen him slide his hand up the leg of one of the female employees at her father's office where he worked, all slow and seductive like, right up under her skirt, while he'd been talking softly to her, she'd not heard the words, didn't want to. Watching had been enough. Watched as that woman had not stopped him, had actually parted her legs slightly for his hand to go all the way up, which it had.

Obviously, it had been going on for quite a while, Izzy had felt humiliated by his behaviour as she had stood there and watched as her boyfriend at the time, with view to becoming her fiance and husband, had touched that woman so very intimately smiling the whole time at her, hadn't seen Izzy watching them, to involved in what he was doing, had continued to touch her until Izzy had cleared her voice.

Stated "Phillip, when your hand is free." very angrily.

He'd looked right at her very shocked at being caught, retracted his hand and had the hide to tell her "it's not what it looks like."

Izzy had seen the woman roll her eyes as if to say, ' Yes it was.'

She had ended their relationship right there on the spot. She did not want a man who was going to cheat on her, and by what she had seen, the woman's reaction, she knew it had been going on for quite a while. She'd told her father that she had literally caught Phillip with his hand up a woman's skirt, his fingers inside that woman, and so had left him. When he'd heard from Phillip that she had ended things with him.

To her shock, her father had still tried to convince her to take him back, telling her that sometimes, men just have needs that one woman alone can't meet. Izzy had been mortified by this, that he'd not even cared that she'd been hurt by Phillip, that he still wanted her to marry him, even though he was cheating on her.

This had made her understand a lot more about her own parents some what strained relationship at the time. All her life, on the surface and out in public, her parents were the perfect couple, but behind closed doors, there were heated conversations and separate bedrooms since she was like 10.

They ate separately, and both of her parents had their own apartments in the city away from the family estate where she and her sisters had grown up. Although her father had always had an apartment in the city, she knew her mother had not gotten one until Joanie was 18.

It was likely that her father was just like Phillip, a cheating pig of a man always. Izzy just hoped that her own mother had someone too. As she watched them now, if you never saw them behind closed doors, you would think they were still perfect for each other, they were smiling and laughing, he had his arm around her waist and she was all leaned into him. They looked happy and to be in love.

It made Izzy more than a little sad, though she was now used to seeing it, knew it was so very wrong, she herself wanted a man that would only have eyes for her, and that was not such an easy thing to find. Even on date's men's eyes wandered. As soon as this happened, she ended things. If they were looking while dating her, she believed they were not really interested in her.

Izzy didn't consider herself to be gorgeous in anyway, but she knew she was pretty, and she was loyal and had a really good work ethic, she earned a good living and that promotion, she couldn't wait to be heading overseas, was mostly packed for her move now too. Was getting a fully paid apartment for a whole year, a company car and would be the actual store manager. The money was good too, got a massive pay raise, and all her travel was paid. Piper really was spoiling her and she knew it.

The new store was nearly ready, had spoken to Paul, their building contractor, just 2 days ago, everything was on time. A few hick ups along the way, but nothing Paul had not expected and been able to deal with. He was a very capable man. Izzy was also looking forward to a change of scenery, a taste of the Aussie men too. She smiled to herself, perhaps Mr Right was actually Australian, and that's why she'd not met him yet.

"Isobelle, sweetheart." It was her father, Bryan Jenkins, an advertising mogul. He took her hand in his "Come dance with your father." he pulled her out onto the dance floor. He was a 60 year old man who looked maybe 50, kept himself healthy and fit, had a personal trainer, a dietitian and a chef to make sure he ate properly.

"Yes father." she smiled up at him, though it was not a genuine smile, she had already seen him with Phillip after she had refused to dance with the man, like

10 minutes ago, they had both been looking right at her, she had not liked the vibe, had felt that before.

“Phillip would really like to dance with you, Isobelle. He’s a changed man.” he told her calmly, as he swept her around the dance floor.

“I highly doubt that father, once a cheater, always a cheater.”

He frowned right down at her, disapproval written all over his facial expression at her loudly spoken words.

“He’s still willing to marry you. Even with that crude tongue of yours.”

“Is he. I’m sure his date over there.” she shot up at him, reminding her father that the man had a current girlfriend and that she was here, showing her full well. He had not changed one bit. Wanted his cake and to eat it too. “Would love to hear that. She looks like she thinks he’s completely hers.”

“He will leave her for you, just sewing his oats while you are away is all.”

Izzy snorted “For you, you mean, for the company he’ll get out of it.” she did not believe for a single second that Phillip actually wanted her, just wanted what he would gain from her father by marrying her.

“Stop that, Isobelle, he’ll sign a prenup and be loyal to you. I’ve already discussed it with him, written up the prenup even.”

She was glaring at him now. “Then I suggest you tear it up. I told you already I am moving to Australia in a month, that I am never going to marry him, he’s a pig of a man.” she yanked herself from her father’s grip and turned to walk away, only to find herself facing Phillip himself.

He smiled down at her, she gritted her teeth as he grabbed right on to both her hands and started to dance with her, “Now Isobelle, you must forgive me, come home. I was young and I am willing to admit stupid.” his voice was soft and cajoling “Give up this nonsense and come back to me, it’s where you belong.”

Izzy tried to pull herself free of him, but unlike her father who had let go, and now she realised why, because Phillip had been right there to grab on to her. Phillip was not about to let go so easily. He had one hell of a grip on both her hands, almost painful, she realised.



"I'm not interested, let go of me." she grated out.

"The deal is practically done Isobelle, stop being childish and marry me already." he stated, all arrogant and self assured.

"Childish?" she snapped in an angry hiss, trying not to make a scene at her sister's wedding "I'm not the one, who got caught red-handed."

"Oh, that." he rolled his eyes "it was a one-off thing. It won't happen again."

"You're right about that, it won't because I will not be coming back to you." she stomped right on his foot as hard as she could, and heard him gasp, let go out of sheer reflex, glaring right at her. Izzy didn't care, she turned and walked away. They were not going to rail road her into a marriage alliance.

Was stalking her way across the dance floor when she saw them, Mr Yummy and the other guy from the walkbys of Pipers store. They were both dressed in suits and ties, fitted in well with the crowd, just noticeably taller and more muscular, she realised, actually stood out quite a bit.