

## Chapter 3 - Unscentable

Piper POV

Suitcases were all packed and downstairs by the stores counter, they were all ready for their long weekend away to Whistler, she had booked a two-bedroom Panorama Suite at the Four Seasons Resort, the flight from Portland was also booked and a car would be picking them up from the store to transport them to the airport. As there would be one waiting on them at the airport when they landed.

It was actually really nice to be getting away and just take time out and relax, snowboard with Brandon all weekend. He'd been so excited for the trip over the last two days, already had written out what he wanted to do on their down time and what runs he wanted to snowboard on.

Piper was in her studio, it was Friday midday and she'd not seen any wolves in the past 3 days, since her run in with Cooper, obviously upsetting that girl, had made her want to go somewhere else to get her Luna's gown. Which suited not just Piper but Harper as well. They were not going to make a gown for their former Alphas, Mate. No way in hell.

She was sewing crystals to the bodice of a strapless gown designed by her for a wealthy heiress, was sitting with a container of those crystal beads next to her and the ivory coloured gown was laid across her lap.

Lifted her head up at the sound of her store's front door banging open and then shut. Frowned at the sound of her bell crashing around like crazy. Heard her name be stated by a very angry sounding man. Sighed heavily.

It was likely the Whitmore girl's father, she'd had to delay his daughters dress fitting this weekend, pushed it to next weekend and the girl had pitched a fit, and thrown a tantrum like a two-year-old, then yelled at her it was unacceptable, and she was going to tell her father. It wasn't unacceptable at all, the girls wedding was not for another 4 months, and this was the last fitting, then she could pick up the dress the following weekend if she had alterations, which Piper was certain she would, had every other time she'd had a fitting.

Stood up, knew by the sound of the angry footsteps on the stairs and the lighter ones following, the man and his prima donna of a daughter were on

their way up the stairs to likely tear strips off of her. Hung the dress she was working on back on the mannequin and brushed it out to straighten it.

This was the only part of her job that she did not enjoy, dealing with wealthy aristocrat people who believe the world revolved around them, just like Alpha wolves they were, lording their power over everyone and trying to make people do what they want. Annoying to say the least.

Turned as the door to her studio banged open and stopped dead at the sight before her, Bradley Drake himself, stood there in the doorway, dressed in dark grey slacks and a dark blue long sleeved dress shirt, his blue eyes and their green flecks practically glowing with anger and directed solely on her.

Felt pain tear at her and Harper, her heart rate doubled at the sight of him, felt like she couldn't breathe at all as she stood staring at him. Her own Mate, who never knew who she was. Never would. Felt goosebumps breakout all over her body, as pain spread through her. Couldn't speak, couldn't even draw a breath at the sight of him.

He still smelled the same to her, his scent filled her nostrils, and she heard Harper whin inside her mind. Then there was Hadley his Mate, right next to him and his hand moved to the small of her back, as he brought her into the room. Felt gut wrenching pain twist her heart, which was now beating erratically inside her chest, at having to see them together. She did not need this. Did not want to see him with her.

Finally managed to take in a half-strangled gasp of air, as she took a step back away from him, shook her head slightly. He was looking right at her, and she knew that his Alpha senses would pick up on her erratic heart beating uncontrollably, her sudden inability to breath. Her reaction to him in this room, she couldn't hide it, the pain that she was feeling, that was pulling at every fiber of her and Harper at seeing him with another was too much, for them to handle.

"You will make Hadley the dress she wants." he stated coldly still glaring at her.

Piper shook her head no, because they would not. She would not let someone else wear the dress that should have been hers, especially not the woman that was taking her place at his side.

Saw him take a step towards her, felt Harper push forward as they stepped back from him, a snarl came from her at the threat he posed to them. Saw his eyes go more than a little wide, obviously thought he had come here to deal with a human, saw his head tilt and watched as he drew in a deep breath, trying to figure out what she was.

Harper's eyes would not give them away as a wolf, her wolf's eyes were white irises with a black outer edge, they did not have the standard green or yellow of a wolf.

Saw Hadley reach out and touch his arm, her eyes moved right to the way her hand landed on his arm, the way her fingers curled gently around his forearm, so very familiar, more pain touched them, felt her whole body shiver and then start to tremble as she heard Hadley say his name softly.

Then they were gone, out of the room, through the interconnecting door to her office, out the door to her balcony and down the stairs at full wolf speed, slamming doors closed behind her as she went. Ran all the way to the small courtyard that she shared with the 3 other boutique stores along the street.

Tears welling as she desperately tried to calm down and not to cry. He'd smelled her, still had no idea who she was, just stood there glaring at her like he hated her, had come into her office to make demands of her for his new Mate.

He had no idea how much it would hurt her, never had and why would he now. Her rejection had been in effect for years now, she was nothing to him, never had been, never would be. Hated that she still loved him, that Harper too felt for her Mate. Hated that they could still smell him, leaned on the brick wall and felt cold all over, even with the sun shining on her still felt cold.

Had one hand over her mouth and the other was clutching at her chest, as she tried to calm herself down. Tried to let go of the pain that was eating them alive, Harper was already curled up in a ball of pain and misery inside her mind, pain was radiating off of her in waves at seeing him with another.

Slid down the wall and hugged her knees to herself, put her head on her knees and just stayed there. They had moved states away, left Montana altogether, so that they would never have to see him, never even have to hear his name in passing. The industry she was in, was nothing like his, and she made sure never to run in the same circles.

His pack was all about construction, they built skyscrapers and gated communities, private log cabins and homes for the super wealthy. The only risk she ran, was that they might at some point work for the same human, but even that was slim, seeing she had moved several states away.

Now he was here in her place of work, angry at her, for her refusal to make a Luna dress for his Luna. There were plenty of other places that the girl could go to get a dress made, hell the woman could get one made right in her pack. Piper was certain that Rene's boutique was still there, that Rene herself was still making dresses for the packs she-wolf population.

Closed her eyes and willed that man to leave, to just go away, to never come back. The pain was too great, knowing who and what he had been to them once. Knowing it would never change. He had another Mate now, tears burned down her cheeks in hot rivers, they could not deal with him. It was just too much to handle.

Sat there on the ground, trying to calm down, it was all she could do, closed her eyes and just breathed, long slow, deep breaths in and out until the pain eased off. It did not go away completely but eased until it was just a constant dull ache, would likely take all day to go away. Took her phone from her pocket and called her own store, called Izzy, who picked up as professional as ever.

"Izzy, is he gone?" she asked softly.

"Yes Piper, are you alright? Where did you go? He sounded very annoyed that you just left."

"I don't care Izzy. He left is all I care about. Did you see him drive away at all?"

"No, Piper. What is going on?"

"Nothing. Don't worry about it. Just...I will not be working for him, for that woman or anyone from his company. It's Drake Industries, the answer is no."

"Piper if you are in trouble."

"I'm not Izzy." she reassured her "New protocol though, no taking any appointments without knowing the company they work from alright."

“Okay Piper.” Izzy sounded a bit more than confused, but Piper knew that the woman would follow instructions. Was nothing but professional all the time. Had been working for Piper now 6 years, helped her to open her other two boutiques one in Olympia, Washington and the other in Los Angeles, California.

Izzy was also about to help start preparations for the first international store, in Sydney, Australia. She had been to a fashion show out there and presented her gowns, and they had sold out, she had orders for more already. Izzy would be opening and going to run that store, a full manager of her own store. There was no-one else that Piper trusted to do so, she and Brandon would be going for a three month period of time. Perhaps longer, depending on how things went, smooth or not.

Got up off the ground finally and headed inside by the back entrance to the ground floor, made her way through the storage area, passed the dressing rooms and to the front of the store. Saw Izzy looking at her somewhat worriedly as she walked towards the front window and looked outside.

Looked both ways up and down the street, could not see his car or anything like what his car had been back then. It could have changed she supposed but did know he would be driving a 4x4 of some sort, all his pack cars were, had to be due to the size of wolves, all large and imposing.

Saw nothing that would pass for a pack car. Then realized this far from his pack, it was likely that he would be driving a rental car, but there was no sign of him or his unit that she could see, turned away from the window to find Izzy still watching her.

“It’s nothing.” Piper told her.

It was obvious that Izzy didn’t believe her “I’ve known you for a long time Piper. It’s not nothing, because nothing rattles you, ever. Not even the big billionaire's that waltz in here thinking it's their way or the highway. Now twice this week, I’ve seen you reject that woman and both her? Whatever they are, the men escorting her. Both of them left annoyed and seemed angry about your response to them.”

“Let it go Izzy.” Piper sighed.

“Piper!” Izzy sighed right back “Come on, it's your past, I know that much. You never said where you were from. You never talk about it, like you just appeared here in Portland fully grown.”

“I did.” Piper stated a little annoyed with her prying.

Saw Izzy actually laugh, “Yeah right...You know them...but, they didn't seem to know you, right?”

“Correct and we'll leave it at that, alright.”

“Fine...and if they come back?” Izzy huffed, giving up on trying to pull information out of her.

“I'm not here. Pure and simple.” Piper murmured.

“I don't think, that either of those guys will believe that.”

“I don't care, I'll be away on holidays anyway and hopefully that will solve the issue. Then I can work from home for the next week.”

“Avoidance isn't always the key, Piper.” Izzy commented casually.

Piper snort, there was not key, she didn't scent to anyone. She was invisible even to her own kind and to others as well, and she had come across a few Vampires, they were fashion addicts, a few fairies and a Bear shifter once, that man had damned near knocked her over, put his hands on her to steady her, and had then looked right at her, smelled her up close, frowned deeply at her. She'd politely apologized to him, he'd continued to stare at her, obviously uncertain as to what to make of her, but had stepped aside and allowed her to pass after a minute.

It was the reaction she got from most other worldly creatures, humans detected nothing at all, and it was likely most other worldly creatures thought she was just human, which is how she lived her life anyhow.

Piper went and picked Brandon up from the bus stop like normal, walked back to the boutique, and the hire car to take them to the airport was just arriving as they got back, very punctual. Didn't waste any time in grabbing their luggage. Told Izzy she'd see her in a few weeks, just in case there were other around listening.

Didn't want to risk it, got in the car and they were off, saw Brandon look right at her, "Mum what's wrong?" he asked.

"Nothing." she smiled at him.

"Weeks?" he queried.

"Oh that, I'm going to be working from home when we get back is all."

"Okay." he nodded smiling now. Their home was a lot closer to the school and meant less time on the bus, always made him happier, it also meant he could hang out with his friends and have them over as well. He had a good social life for a 7-year-old.

Piper had no idea how she was going to explain to him about his first shift, she was raising him human, it was better this way, especially if he turned out to be just like her, to have no scent. She could smell him, but he was her child.

Both her parents had never said they couldn't smell her, and they always seemed to know when she was about, so presumably they had been able to smell her. Just no-one else could as far as she knew.

Touched the crystal pendant as she thought about her mother, her wolf's eyes had also been white like Harper's. A hereditary trait she thought, but Piper did recall that her parents both had good social lives within the pack.

She did not understand why she was the way she was, only knew it was horrid to have to live with. Til she'd run away and gone rogue, saved her and Harper from death. Their fate inside the pack had been killing them, slowly but surely.

Belonged to no-one out here. She was a rogue as was Brandon, not that she smelled that on him, didn't smell it on her either for that matter. Likely he too was going to be unscentable, she hoped not, didn't want him to suffer as she had, would not wish that on anybody, not ever.

They arrived at the four seasons, and the runs were still open for one hour, headed straight out with Brandon, he was super excited but kept reminding her "No work mum, you promised."

Piper was laughing at him now, he'd said it for like the tenth time, as though he didn't believe her, that he thought she was going to find an excuse to work this weekend. Piper had not even brought her sketch pad or any drawing pencils, this weekend was just her and Brandon, snowboarding and maybe some hiking, if the weather permitted and Brandon wanted off of the slopes.

He loved being outdoors, in the forest, went camping with his best friend once and loved it, did not surprise her at all, not considering what he was, and an Alpha wolf would love it even more, especially once shifted the hunting and chasing of prey. She had no idea when he would have his first shift, usually at 16 but research told her anywhere from 13 onwards.

Piper was going to have to sit him down at some point and explain other worldly creatures to him, before then, might have to get him to watch a few movies first to see what he thought, though at just 7, it was a bit too early for those types of movies.

They had dinner in their room, and he was now playing an online game with his friends back home, she didn't mind, was happy that he was just happy. Told him she would go for a walk and be back in a short while. He'd hollered "No work mum." as she'd headed out the door.

Made Piper laugh, "I promised already didn't I."

She saw him narrow his eyes right on her for a moment and then nodded his head, Piper had stepped out of her room and headed straight for the bar downstairs, needed a drink, it wouldn't touch the sides or affect her in anyway, human alcohol did nothing for her, just wanted one, had a long stressful day and wanted a drink, human would do.

Sank down on a bar stool and ordered an espresso martini, loved the smell of coffee, so it was a good start, could sit and sip it and enjoy the smell of it, just relax a little. She was well away from her home, and the stress of the day.

Heard Harper growl inside her mind, full annoyance in her growl, as the scent of wolves hit them, glanced in the mirrored back splash of the bar and saw a half dozen muscled up men and a few young looking women headed this way, downed her martini in one go and banged the glass down on the bar, "I'll take another." she told the bar tender as those wolves sat down at the bar, but before he could serve them.



Picked up that martini and downed it in one go as well, as the bar tender swiped her credit card, she would normally enjoy sipping on her espresso martini, but her night just got completely ruined.

Took her card back and spun her stool around, muttered as she got up and walked away from the bar “Hate the stench, that just came in. you’d think animals would learn to shower.” heard the dead quiet of all of them, every one of those blasted wolf’s had heard her comment and she knew it, didn’t even care at all, she’d scented more than one pack, multiple in fact. It irritated her nose.

“What a bitch.” came a female voice.

Piper snorted as she walked out of the bar “First class bitch at that.” she shot back letting them know she had heard the comment as much as they had hers. Didn’t know why they were all here, didn’t care, had ruined her mood completely, stood and waited on the elevator to go back up to her room.

“Oh, my goddess, you’re Piper Harper.” a voice cried out all excited.

Piper rolled her eyes, so not in the mood, the woman or girl sounded very young and very excitable, a bride to be she thought, only brides would know who she was, turned and looked to where the voice had come from, saw a very pretty young woman hurrying towards her.

Dressed in a beautiful white cashmere sweater, black leggings and white furry boots, but it was the scent she gave off that made Piper look back to the elevator and pray it would open before the woman got to her. She had seen the rather large man strolling along behind the young girl, an Alpha, he was likely the girl's father, they had similar looks, same dark hair and slate grey eyes, he was smiling at the girl.

She reached Piper before the elevator did “Oh my, I love your Goddess Gowns, I want one when I get married.”

“Married?” that was a human thing. Playing at being human seeing where they were she guessed.

“Yes, I can’t wait to meet him one day, the man I will marry.”

The elevator opened and Piper stepped into it “I suggest you find him first, then buy a dress. Not the other way around, might seem desperate otherwise.” she told the girl, as she hit the button for her floor.

Saw the girls mouth open in an ‘O’ of shock and just stand and stare at her as the doors closed on her. “Can’t seem to catch a break.” she muttered to herself as the elevator took her up to her floor.

Must be some sort of Alpha meeting going on, just our bloody luck, go away to get away from wolves, only to find a whole bloody hotel full of them, on the bright side they did know what she was and would leave her alone.