

Chapter 61 - Unscentable

Brad POV

Bradley was happy that Brandon allowed him to carry him all the way to the training grounds. There was a large fenced area for hand to hand combat training, which he used for his wolf on wolf training as well. There was an outdoor Olympic swimming pool for endurance training where 50 laps had to be completed without rest. It was hard going for some, but others relished it. And there was a running oval where sprints and long distance running were complete for the unrealised wolves. Once you got your wolf running was done in the woods on one of 4 dedicated training tracks.

He and Benson were very happy that Piper had given them this opportunity to bond with Brandon, and knew she had done. Piper had told him that it wasn't up to her to help him formulate a bond with his son, but she was actively encouraging him to spend time with Bradley.

Bradley took his time in explaining to Brandon how the course was run, wanted to stand and bond with the boy, and was more than happy to stop his explanation and answer any questions he had and then continue on.

Was bloody horrified to hear Piper state she'd been using this course since she was 10, so was Eddie by the sounds of it. Wanted to ask her all manner of questions about how she managed to do that without getting caught, but had the feeling he wasn't going to like the answer, so he left it for now.

The compromise he made was a way of stopping Piper from taking Brandon out there onto the course. No-one under 13 was allowed on it and then there were strict rules and full supervision and not just with one or two trainers on for each child. He did not want Brandon climbing all over it at this age. Regardless that he was an alpha child, and had a half-realised wolf.

That climbing wall was a good 20 metres high, with an abseil drop off the back of it to get back down, as were all the climbing robes and net climbs, this course was designed with fully realised wolves in mind. There were no safety nets here, a fall from that height could not only injure a child, could cause death.

Telling Eddie shoes and shirts off was also a win for him. Piper and Harper, not that they had seen Harper at this point, but Benson could sense her now through his mark. She was there, he believed, would get to see him shirtless.

He was an all muscled up, well defined man, he had broader shoulders than Eddie did, was a few inches taller as well, an imposing man to look at. Could look very fierce if he so chose too.

Bradley wanted to show her how fit he was, how well built and strong he was. It was a little vane he knew, but most wolves were ripped and muscled up. Most she-wolves loved that, and the more muscular the more, that they tended to like it. He was hoping she was no different. Had lived here most of her life, was still a she-wolf regardless, that she lived with just Harper inside her mind, no shifting.

Bradley also wanted Piper to feel like he was solid and strong, someone that she could rely on to protect her and care for her. He had all intention of ripping through this course and leaving Eddie in the dust. Benson, too, was all for showing his Mate he was fast and strong. They had shown him up on the endurance run but he would show her he was the fastest and strongest here in the pack.

Both he and Benson were really happy to hear Brand call out to him “Dad?” warmed his heart and filled his wolf with pride. Couldn’t help the smile that graced his face at that one word. But knew it was all Piper’s doing, that next sentence, “No wolf assistance,” as did Eddie, who promptly burst out laughing.

This pitted just the humans against each other, the woman he thought was trying to annoy him now, was actively trying to find a way to make him loose on purpose. She had told him perhaps he shouldn’t always get what he wanted. Maybe this was her way of doing that. Eddie found it highly amusing.

Was shocked completely and nearly came to a stand still when Brand cheered for Eddie. Was that also her doing as well? he didn’t know. But the hell he was going to loose now. It just pushed his determination up several notches, he was not going to be beaten by his Gamma with his Mate and Son watching on. Hell no, he was the Alpha and he would win this race.

When the sprinklers were turned on and they were drenched in a matter of seconds, both he and Eddie halted on their way up the rock wall to look at what had happened, only to see Piper tip an imaginary hat to them. It made Eddie chuckle as he started climbing again. “She’s playing with you.” he smiled at Bradley.

“What?” It was more like toying with him, he thought.

“Challenging you. Likely her way of playing with you, just go with it, she seemed amused earlier on the way over here.” He hauled himself up onto the top of the rock wall “Right after you said you hold the record.”

“So she doesn’t think that I do.”

Eddie laughed right at him “No she does not.” And he was gone off down the abseil. Brad followed.

As they hit the next obstacle, he’d thought about that. She was fast back in Sydney. “She thinks she holds it,” Bradley commented as they dropped down into the now mud pit of the final army crawl under the bamboo rods, that last part of the course.

“I’m guessing so.”

“Do you think it’s possible?”

“Completely, who knows how often she was on this course unsupervised! over what 11 years? Could have been daily for all we know. A really good way to get frustration and anger out. I’ve been known to come out here when cranky and run it with all the sprinklers on as well.”

Bradley did know that about the man. Didn’t like that Eddie was keeping pace with him while chatting away without any issue at all. It was Eddie who ran the agility course for training. Whereas Brad focused on training his warriors in hand to hand and wolf fighting. Wondered if Eddie was actually holding himself back a little, Brad was only on this thing every 3rd day but Eddie was on it every day, he trained all the juniors in how to use it properly and then was here to check the top warriors, give them a good challenge which Brad knew he could do.

Bradley managed to crawl out first, but barely so, was up and on his feet like a second before Eddie was. Although Eddie had been laughing for the last half of that army crawl, he could hear both Izzy and Brandon cheering for him and had commented fully amused about being the boys' favourite. Was still amused even though he didn’t win.

Shoved that man right over and back down into the mud, the minute he was on his feet, for his amusement and comment, about Brandon liking him more. Annoyed Brad more than a little. Though he was not angry or upset with him,

he was actually happy to see Brandon so excited while out in the pack. He also knew that Brandon had bonded with Eddie.

He couldn't help but smile at Eddie as he was chasing both Izzy and Brandon around, feinting at them with his muddy hands all stretched out. Bradley had actually seen him do this with Harry's pups before. He was a natural with the pups. It didn't surprise Bradley all that much that the man had connected to Brandon and quickly.

It was good, was the boys' first real wolfen interaction without any aggression at all. Not once around Brandon had Eddie so much as lost his temper, or even gotten annoyed, as far as Bradley was aware. Likely never even frowned at the boy, the man knew what he was doing, and had gained Brandon's trust easily, it seemed.

Could here his son laughing as the three of them were throwing mud at each other and then Izzy and Brandon were climbing all over Eddie to hold him down and rub mud all in his hair, was calling him Uncle Eddie. That was new.

His eyes moved to Piper as if she'd know the answer to his unspoken question and she just shrugged, and said "Izzy's Mate."

"Aunt Izzy," Bradley had commented, as he recalled that's what the boy calls her "So Uncle Eddie."

"Yes." Piper nodded simply. Didn't seem phased by it at all, he noted.

"You're okay with this."

"It's fine. Are you not?" She asked right back.

"No, no. It's all good." Bradley assured her and it was, the boy was enjoying being here. He'd liked the park and played with some of the other kids, had started calling him dad and now he had an uncle. He was assimilating quickly into the Pack. This was a good thing.

Just needed Piper to come around fully now. Though if she had been playing with him, as Eddie suspected she was, this was also good. Perhaps she would be open to being here sooner than he'd hoped she would be.

The mud on his chest was starting to dry on him, irritating him a little. "I'll go and hose off." he told her.

He called out to Eddie “Clean up Eddie.” and watched the man pull both Izzy and Brandon from the mud, they were covered from head to toe, all three of them. He walked over to the washdown area and grabbed one of the hoses hanging from the wall, each one had a shower head attachment and all were hooked up to both hot and cold water for the different seasons.

Made sure to turn the hot tap on and get the temperature, not too hot for the boy but warm enough like a shower. He didn’t want the boy freezing out here. It was only 11 degrees or there about, this was the average temperature for the month.

Hosed himself down while the others walked over, then washed all the mud off Brandon. Eddie was doing the same with Izzy. He turned to go and get towels from the store room only to find Piper walking right towards him with towels, hadn’t forgotten where they were kept, it seemed. She tossed him a couple of towels, and then wrapped Brandon in the one she was still carrying.

She only glanced at his half naked dripping wet body briefly, he noted, then kept her eyes firmly on their son. Smiled to himself, their bond was not only still intact but half realised, she was wearing his Mark and the longer it was on her, the more that Mate Bond would pull her towards him. Wondered if she’d had to stop herself from looking at him.

He himself did not need the push. Hell he already knew if she was half naked and dripping wet he’d likely be on her, his hands would be all over the woman, he wanted her. Had already seen that woman in gym gear. She didn’t look it, in her workwear, but under those close she had on was a very lean, and well-toned, lightly defined six-pack and v-line. It was not so over done like some of his female warriors.

Bradley found Piper very attractive, it was a shame that those golden brown eyes of hers, never smiled up at him, not directly anyway. He’d seen her smile plenty with Brandon and Izzy, but never at him, for him. Still had to work on that.

Today had gone better than he’d hoped for, better than he had planned. She not only listened to him but had talked to him about her lineage. Bradley knew he was supposed to let Annabella do that. He’d thought and still did that it was better coming from him, so she understood that he did know about her type of wolf.

Now the fun she was letting Brandon have, to see here inside the pack. Bradley knew that Piper had meant what she'd said, that she didn't want Brandon to want for anything, she would give their boy everything, even if she didn't like it herself. She had seen how happy and excited he was at the park, had expanded on that just to see him even more happy.

Though her being here, because Brandon wanted to be here, still bothered him, knew she likely meant that too. Which meant that he now had to be careful not to get the boy to tell her to stay. He wanted Piper to make that decision for herself. Wanted her to stay and be his Mate of her own free will, not just to please Brandon or give him what he wanted.

He might have to sit down with the boy and explain it to him, so he didn't just unwittingly tell her what he wanted, to get his own way. He had no idea if the boy or his wolf knew just how much pull they had on their mother and her actions or reactions, for that matter.

They all walked back towards the pack-house once all the mud was gone and towels were wrapped snugly around Brandon and Izzy. "Piper I have put you and Brandon in the Luna's suite. It's across the hall from my room."

He knew she knew where his room was, just hoped she was alright with this. She didn't say anything at all, just nodded her head, she was holding Brandon's hand the entire way, he would be to, but the boy was holding his towel closed so he couldn't, but he was walking on the other side of the boy. They would look like a family walking this way. It made him happy, Benson too. Seems his wolf was also happy with the day's interactions. Though Aspen was asleep currently, it might change when he woke up.

They walked into the pack-house to find Lilly and his father, Benjamin, coming down the stairs. This would be the first time he'd seen them since their arrival. They both smiled at Bradley, then he saw his father's eyes move to Piper and then the boy. The man looked very happy that she and the boy were here in the pack, but it was Lilly who spoke first.

"Bradley, you haven't seen your sister Hadley now, have you? missing again it seems." she shook her head a little.

"What?" he huffed, annoyed with the girl instantly.

"Sorry not actually missing, just ignoring everyone I guess."

“Oh,” he calmed down. “She’s having boyfriend trouble apparently, Cooper was handling it. Apparently, the wolf is paranoid about my reaction.”

“What boyfriend?” his father interjected. “I know nothing about this.”

“I only found out myself today, it’s only recent, I believe, Cooper said just after she turned 18.”

“Hmm, I bet he’s paranoia is well founded. You are very protective of your little sister.”

Lilly nodded. “Let it go, I’ll talk to her myself later, now please. Explain to me, why your all wet?” She frowned at him and waved her hand at Brandon and Izzy more specifically than he and Eddie.

“Mud fight.” Eddie chuckled.

Bradley shook his head. “Piper wanted to show Brandon the agility course, then she turned the sprinklers on us while Eddie and I ran it for Brandon to see.”

Heard his father snort with amusement, “I like her, already son.” saw the man turn his eyes to Piper. “It’s good to finally see you sweetheart.”

Saw her just stare at the man and say nothing. He would have been her Alpha for the most part of her life here, wondered what feelings she had towards him. Did she blame him for anything? It was possible. His father seemed to understand and didn’t push it.

Turned to Brandon and hunkered down “Now I hear, you are big and strong already, beat two of the Alpha Unit already in a running challenge, beat them good and proper.”

“I did. I beat Uncle Eddie and Harry.”

“Hey! I’m owed a rematch, Izzy tricked me into getting off that treadmill.” Eddie stated.

“I still won.” Brandon poked his tongue out at him.

“You did indeed, young man, stepping off a treadmill is as good as giving up. Now come here and give your grandpa a big hug.” he held out both his arms to the boy.

Bradley watched as Brandon actually took a step towards his mother. He might be willing to talk to the man but was not ready to hug a complete stranger after two minutes of conversation. He saw her hand slide through the boy's hair, a comforting gesture he thought.

"Not yet ready." Bradley commented quietly, motioning for his father to get up. He didn't want the man pushing the boy.

"Well, I guess I am a stranger to the boy." He huffed as he stood up, but then smiled down at Brandon "What about dinner in the private dining room? All of us together?"

Bradley looked at Piper. He had no idea if she would be comfortable with that. "We'll see, perhaps tomorrow, father. Give Piper and Brandon a chance to be a bit more comfortable."

Saw his father nod and then turned to walk away.

"Now Bradley, about Hadley's boyfriend, some slack when you meet him. She is an adult now, you know."

"If he's game to meet me," Bradley snorted. "Likely thinks I'm going to beat him senseless."

Heard a shocked gasp, knew it was from Brandon and realised what he'd said in front of the boy. He looked right at him "I would never do that Brandon." He told him quickly, "Just an expression is all." He added "Come on let's get you upstairs a warm shower or bath and some cleaner dry clothes."

He could have kicked himself for that comment, he was trying to make the boy more comfortable with him, but here in the pack he had fallen in to his Alpha mentality and stated what was completely natural for him, beating someone was part of his job, how was he going to explain that to young Brandon, if he'd grown up here he would know this already and it wouldn't be a problem.

The school here taught not only human world subjects but ran wolfen society classes as well. He would learn all about who was in charge and how packs ran, who punished who and what crimes were punishable, that the Alpha Wolf was not just the leader but expected to beat and punish those who needed it.

Not that he would actually beat this wolf, who was Hadley's boyfriend. A stern talking to would do, though he didn't know who the wolf was at this point. Didn't seem that anyone did but Cooper. Would have to talk to that man.

Would hunt him down after his own shower, actually hadn't seen Cooper since Hadley had stalked off away from him down the Alpha corridor away from him, was likely attending to pack business, he knew the man was capable and was handling everything so that Bradley could focus solely on Piper. Was thankful for that. Could well be in Helena in the office for all Bradley knew.

Chapter 62 - Unscentable

Piper POV

The Luna Suite. Bradley had walked her and Brandon right to it, they'd taken the elevator to get up here, not something she'd ever done, always just walked the stairs, she knew where it was, had hated seeing the words on the door, had learned to not look at the door at all, pretty much just refused to acknowledge it existed after a while. It had just been another reminder of what she'd never be.

He'd opened the door for her and Brandon, swiped a card over the lock, just like in a hotel she supposed, that was new, just had regular door handles the last time she'd been here with key holes. Must have upgraded everything. She did note the pack-house looked slightly different, more modern than before. Brad had replaced all the windows and flooring, and noted there were shutters outside. Likely to keep the winter cold out.

He'd handed her the card, and smiled at her. She knew, as the Alpha, he would have his own, a master key to access every room in this building. There was no point in locking the door, it wouldn't keep him out. Though she was fairly certain he could likely lock her in if he so chose.

He did not however, enter the room, just ushered her in and said to take their time and warm up, then stepped out and closed the door. She heard the lock click, shook her head. Turned and looked at the room. It was designed like a large hotel suite, she thought, with a deep plush-looking couch and matching arm chair. They were both in a cream suede material and they had green throw pillows on them. There was a fireplace with a large wall mounted TV above the mantle.

Had a very nice ensuite, all white marble with a few decorative long narrow jewel green coloured tiles that ran down from the ceiling ranging from a quarter to half way down the walls, kind of brought to mind dangling vines, she thought absently as she filled the massive soaker tub for Brandon.

He was sitting quietly waiting, he did seem a bit cold to her, but he did only have a towel on, had already peeled his wet clothes off, "It's like a small pool, mum." he commented.

"Mm, it does." it could pass for a small plunge pool, she thought.

"My bath is not even this big."

"That it is not," Piper acknowledged, his bath was not even half the size of this one. And the one in her own ensuite back in Portland was not half the size of this either, though her bath was a luxury she'd given herself, the only one thing she allowed herself really.

"Hop on in," she said when it was full. "I'll leave the door open, to listen for you."

"Alright." he'd nodded and hopped in, the water level came right to his shoulders when he sat down, it was filled with bubbles "It's so deep."

"No silly business," she commented. "But relax and be warm."

"It's toastie warm already." he grinned up at her.

She stepped out of the bathroom, leaving the door open all the way. He could swim, but still she would keep her ears tuned to him in there, make sure he was safe.

Walked herself over and sank down on that plush looking couch, it indeed was soft and lush to sit in, leaned back into it and looked at the rest of the room, only one large bed in here, up against the far wall, though she could see that a single bed had been brought in, and not just some trundle bed either, a proper single bed. Bradley's son would sleep comfortably, it seemed.

She sighed to herself and knew why this room was a one-bedroom suite, most Alpha's would not have a Luna with a child already. So no need for other bedrooms. It was tailored to a single woman, not a single mother. Wondered if she could be moved out of this room and into another.

There was not enough room in here for her and Brandon. As much as she loved him, she liked having a room to herself, her own quiet space. Otherwise, things felt crowded, shook it off and got up. She could only ask, though it might not go down so well.

Walked into the closet and found all her clothes were not only neatly hung and folded but were all ironed and pressed, as were Brandon's for that matter. The weather here was cold, being so close to winter. And in this closet were clothes designed for the warm summer that had been approaching in Sydney. They had no winter wears here.

Got out some pyjamas and laid them on his bed for him. It wasn't all that late, only just coming up on four in the afternoon, but she was not intending to go roaming about, was starting to feel tired already, probably should still be in the hospital, not fully recovered, she supposed. As for that family dinner offer, she had no intention of doing that today, was not at all ready to deal with that. Though it did appear Bradley seemed to understand that, hadn't pushed it and had said as much.

Piper could hear Brandon splashing about in that bath, playing some imaginary game like any 7 year old would, shook her head and smiled to herself, just knew there was going to be water and bubbles all over the floor in there, the boy, it seemed, was more than comfortable right this minute. Not relaxing either, wound up and energetic still.

Went back and got him some proper clothes out. He was not going to want to be in pyjamas or want to crawl into bed at this hour, though she could feel that big bed calling to her and Harper, it wasn't just her who was tired she realised. Harper felt exhausted to her. They were still recovering from the blood loss. Though she couldn't feel Harper healing her any more, that might be why her wolf was so very tired.

Took the opportunity while Brandon was in the bath to have a look at herself, her injuries. There were no massive amount of horrible scars that she could see, though she still had staples in one of her arms and along her side. They were no longer necessary, plucked them out, a short sharp sting as each one was removed, shook it off.

Did have a few fine scars, though they were thin and white already, likely mostly healed on their own before Harper had woken up. Patched up before leaving Sydney, by Cooper, she imagined, he'd done a good job of keeping her scars to a minimum, though whether he'd been trying to do that or not,

she doubted it. Would likely have been a rush job to stop the bleeding and get the heck away from vampire territory.

Not much she could do about them. What was done was done, she had not wanted to fight, had told that stupid woman as much, moved her eyes to her neck where she had been fed on. A savage bite, shuddered as she recalled the feeling of those fangs digging into her to feed on her, not something she ever wanted to feel again. The skin there was scarred, that creature had bitten hard and it looked to have torn some of the skin away, dragged its fangs down her skin as it had staggered away from her. Had a permanent reminder, she supposed, nothing she could do about it, two puncture marks and the slightly torn skin below, might lighten up with time, who knew.

Her eyes moved to the other side of her neck, where she had been Marked by Benson. Silver filigree adorned the crook of her neck, didn't recall how that had felt at all, no memory of getting that. It seemed to be made up of interconnecting swirls, though she could actually see what looked like the Pack Symbol in there, shook it off. That was nonsense, but frowned and looked closer at it in the mirror. And there did seem to be a moon like shape outlined by a thin silver swirl that joined to a-filled-in swirl of silver, that looked much like the lake of the pack symbol, it could be she supposed.

Turned away from the mirror, let it go. There was no kitchen or even kitchenette here, not even coffee making facilities. There was also no food in this suite, or snacks of any kind, frowned and then sighed. Knew why, so that they would have to go and eat downstairs in the pack-house dining room. There would be no holing up in this room. Though surely she could order stuff to the room, she doubted that anyone would say no to her. Not with Bradley's Mark on her.

She was hungry, turned and looked around the room, there was no phone in here to connect to the kitchen, huffed and reminded herself she was not in the human world anymore, that wolves within packs didn't need telephones. They just used their mind-link ability to talk to whoever they wanted and get what they wanted to their room.

That was not going to happen. She was not part of this pack, so had no way at this moment to contact anyone. She'd not pledged loyalty, he may have Marked her, but she was still considered a rogue until she and Harper either pledged loyalty to him or Marked him back, she supposed. Didn't really know.

"Mum?"

Her eyes moved to the boy, she'd not heard him get out of the bath. Lost in her own thoughts, it seemed, not a good thing with him being in the bath and all, would have to rein that in. "Sorry Brandon, what did you ask?"

"Nothing, you were zoned out there, that's all."

"I'm actually a bit tired." Piper told him honestly "Go and get dressed."

"Do you think that TV has all the channels like in the hospital?"

"Yes" she nodded.

"No PS5 mum."

She looked at him, had no idea what had been packed and brought here or not. "Yours could be in a suitcase. Get dressed first though." she commented as he headed toward the open walk in closet.

He pouted right up at her "Then set it up if it's there." shook her head "On the bright side Brandon, your friends will be awake to play with you more, from here."

"Oh, I forgot that." he grinned. She knew it would make him happy to hear this, he was gone to get dressed and then sat and watched him drag a suitcase from the walk-in and open it. "Sweet, it's all here." He was already pulling it out to set it up when there was a knock on the door.

Watch him actually run over to answer it, she let him was to tired to bother, was likely only going to be one of three people. But internally sighed to herself, assimilated very quickly to being here, he had wanted to know what a pack was like, he'd told her as much, and had asked her to go and have dinner with Bradley.

Took all of one day for him to be comfortable here, saw the boy smile right up at his father, saw Bradley smile right back at him, seemed he was very happy with the boy's reaction to him. And why wouldn't he be?

"Hi dad."

"Hi son, what are you up to? I thought..." his eyes moved to Piper "We could take a look around, show you about the pack-house."

"Mum can I?" Brand looked at her, seemed excited.

"If you want to," piper nodded, but didn't get up from her place on the couch.

Saw Bradley frown instantly at her.

"I'm actually tired." She answered him before he made some comment about wanting her to go as well. She knew from his frown, that was what he'd been going to state. He had used the word 'we' and he'd looked right at her.

"Alright, it can wait until tomorrow." He nodded "Dr Samuel, did tell me you'd be a bit tired for a day or two." watched him step into the room, look down at Brandon "Are you alright to wait until mum's feeling better."

"Yes, was going to set up my PS5 anyway."

"Go do that then," he tousled the boy's hair.

"There is no food in here...Brad." she commented, oh that was weird using his name for the first time right at him. She shook her head a little, she was going to have to start using it at some point, especially if Brandon was going to want to be here all the time and it did certainly look that way.

Found his eyes right on her, it was not missed on him, that this was the first time she'd called him by his actual name "I know, this suite." he looked around, "Is not designed well for our situation, I'll have some brought up. What would you and Brandon like?" he sat himself down on the couch.

"If I had a phone to the kitchen I could get whatever I want, whenever I or Brandon are hungry."

Saw him lean right back into the corner of the other end of the couch and look right at her "Let me initiate you back into the pack, and you can mind-link to anyone you like...order food at will."

"Don't push me." She glared right at him.

Could feel Brandon's eyes on her, turned to look at him and sighed. There had been a bit of anger in her tone and she knew it. Aspen might be sleeping but that didn't mean he wouldn't wake up, if Brandon got upset.

"It was a suggestion, Piper. I'm not going to force you. I told you I would give you time. I meant that."

She really wanted to comment about that, it had not sounded like a suggestion to her, she'd barely been awake 12 hours and he was already wanting to initiate her back into his pack. He'd said he'd give her time, but he hadn't. Was still pushing to get what he wanted quickly. Not only had she woken up here inside his pack, she was Marked by him as well. Yes, he was going to give her the time she needed. Not.

"Set up Brandon, it's fine. I'm just tired, therefore a bit grumpy." Piper commented "Don't wake Aspen over it."

"Alright, but you're not going to fight with dad are you?"

Closed her eyes, it was entirely possible if he didn't stop pushing her she might just punch him with all Harper's strength right in his stupid face. But she would contain that until he wasn't around. "No, Brandon," she said, instead "it's been a long day...I didn't appreciate the comment was all." and she had not. 12 bloody hours. Yeah, that's giving her all the time she needed.

"Why did you bring me here?" She turned her eyes to the man in question. "to your pack?"

"You needed a hospital Piper."

"There would have been more than one in Sydney, I'm sure."

Saw him frown "You needed a pack hospital, not a human one. We left in a very big hurry, due to not wanting vampires to come and attack us, we'd have been completely out numbered and quickly so."

Piper could not argue with that, just sighed "I'm hungry and tired." she told him.

"What would you like to eat?" he asked simply.

"I don't really care, to be honest, I eat pretty much anything."

"I don't want vegetables." Brandon piped up, showed he was listening to them talk.

"Hm, you never do." Piper shook her head, and yawned. She really was starting to feel the pull of sleep, it was dragging at her quite quickly. Maybe

just sleep would do her. “Brandon, why don’t you go with your father to get food.” she offered. That should make the man happy.

“Piper?” It was Brad.

“I’m really tired, you go and eat.” She told her and yawned again.

He was suddenly right in front of her “Piper?” He sounded worried.

Looked right up at him, and blinked didn’t realise he was so very close. She must have shut her eyes for a moment, a micro sleep, maybe “Go, I’m fine.”

“I’ll call the doctor, perhaps your not ready to be out of the hospital.” His hand touched her face.

Shoved him away from her. “I’m just tired, you yourself said the doctor told you I would be tired for a day or two.”

“I don’t know, you’re practically falling asleep while talking to me.” He frowned at her as he sat next to her.

Piper got herself up, realised Harper was actually asleep already. “It’s been a long day, emotionally and physically, Harper is exhausted, I think it’s just spilling over to me.”

“Are you certain? You lost a lot of blood.” Brad was also on his feet now, frowning down at her.

“I’ll be fine.” she waved him off “Go, take Brandon and get him some dinner, I’m going to lay down for a bit.”

He stood staring at her for a very long time, like he was trying to assess her or something. Watched his head tilt slightly and realised that was exactly what he was doing, he was using his wolf senses to check her heart rate and breathing “You don’t have any pain.” he commented. Not a question, a statement.

“What? no.”

“I know, I’m just stating a fact I already know.”

“And how could you know this?” Piper raised an eyebrow, though she really just wanted him to leave so she could lay down.

“Because Piper, I feel it when you’re injured, knew you’d busted your knee before you told me you were injured. Felt every damned hit from that vampire and even felt it feed on you. Set Benson off into a massive rage, damned lucky he stayed inside of me, in his rush to get to you.”

She was just staring at him now, a deep frown on her face, she didn’t understand that, he’d not even had proof of who she was to him, hadn’t scented her at the time.

“I’ll let you rest, but I want Dr Samuel to check you over first thing in the morning. I’ll stay with Brandon till bed time.” watched him turn and pick up the boy and say “Come on, let’s go get an early dinner and let mum rest.”

Did not know what to make of all that he’d said, but was actually very tired, changed into her pyjamas and crawled into the bed. It was soft and comfortable, curled around a pillow and allowed sleep to claim her.

Chapter 63 - Unscentable

Piper POV

Piper woke up to a darkened room. She was feeling completely hollow to the point her stomach was actually aching right that minute. Heard Harper whining inside of her mind, could feel her pawing gently at the edges of her mind. They were starving hungry. She’d not eaten dinner, crashed out not long after Harper herself had. Now it was late, in the middle of the night.

‘Food.’ Harper told her.

‘Agreed.’ Piper answered that ache in her stomach was horrid.

‘Starving.’ Harper piped up again.

She turned her head as she sat up in the bed, could see Brandon was sleeping there in the bed next to hers. Even noticed he had his pyjamas on, looked about the room. There was no-one else in here, Brad must have put him to bed and actually left the room. She was thankful for that.

Got out of the bed, they should have left something to eat for her, surely. Turned the lamp by the couch on and looked around. No food still, not even snacks or fruit, sighed and shook her head. So much for that, she had told him

there was no food in here. Thought Brad would have left something for her to eat. Clearly not.

She was going to have to go and get something herself, though she did not want to leave Brandon alone in this room. What if he woke up? Would he get scared or panic that she wasn't in the room?

Piper did not know the answer to her questions, 'Food, I'm hungry.' Harper huffed at her hesitation to leave the suite, and as if on cue, her stomach growled loudly at her, bit her lip. What to do? Food was a must. Harper had been healing her all day and was in need of energy right now. It was their hunger pains that had likely woken both of them.

Was going to have to risk the trip to the pack-house kitchen. Well, at least she knew where it was, and at this late hour there would be no-one around either. Not that Harper seemed to care or be concerned at all right this minute about running into other wolves, her hunger was out weighing everything else.

Stood at her bedroom door, as she opened it quietly, glanced back at Brandon to make sure it hadn't woken him, flicked the door lock to stay open so she could get back in, quietly, and then stepped out into the hall, the decision made to go and find food which they would bring back and eat in the room. Anything would do, just grab whatever she saw, regardless of what it was.

There was no-one out in the corridor, the lights were off bar two one at each end of the hallway, Bradley clearly wasn't concerned about her running away or coming to any harm. Otherwise there would have been some sort of detail on her. Closed the door with a quiet click.

Heard the sound of a door opening, she bit her lip. Perhaps she was being watched, turned in the direction she'd heard down the corridor to her left. Stood and stared at the sight of Hadley coming out of a door down there. Hadn't laid eyes on that girl since the day in the alleyway.

Realised it was the Beta's suite she was coming out of, she was carrying a pair of shoes in one arm as she stepped right out of Cooper's room, looked to be sneaking out, in fact, her hair was messy and she was just wearing a tee-shirt.

Saw that girl's head whip right around, her eyes wide, though she did not look directly at Piper, but at Bradley's room instead, and it dawned on Piper. She'd been told she smelled like Bradley, his scent was now hers. Hadley had

smelled Bradley and that whip of her head was because the girl was sleeping with the Packs Beta and she thought her brother, the Alpha, had just busted her coming out of Coopers' room all dishevelled and likely smelled like him too.

Piper just stood and watched, till that girl's eyes found her in the hallway. It didn't take long a few seconds, saw her bite her bottom lip. Piper had heard the comments about Hadley having a boyfriend, that the wolf himself was paranoid about the Alpha's reaction to her new boyfriend.

Yes, it was very likely that Cooper was highly paranoid about Bradley finding this out, and he had good reason to be. He was doing his own Alpha's little sister. From recollection, she was just on 18 and Cooper was the same age as Bradley. Oh, the man had every right to be concerned about his Alpha finding out.

Raised an eyebrow at the girl, but said nothing, saw Cooper a moment later step into the doorway of his room, still buttoning up his pants, looked right at her, frowned at her in fact. It was pretty clear that neither of them had been expecting anyone to be out here in the Alpha corridor at this hour.

Watched with full curiosity as the two of them looked at each other, likely having a quick conversation via the mind-link as to what they were going to do about being caught. Then Hadley glanced at her and hurried off down the hall and disappeared down the omega stairs.

Cooper was walking right towards her "Inside Piper."

"No, I'm hungry and so is Harper."

"I'll get you something, but we need to talk." he commented, and opened her room door.

"I don't care Cooper," she commented softly, not wanting to wake Brandon. "What you do or who you do it with." and she didn't. What others did was none of her business.

"So you won't...say anything." He asked just as quietly.

"No." Piper shook her head "That is your problem to sort out."

She now understood why he had been in the hotel lobby talking to Hadley on the phone, hadn't wanted Bradley to over hear whatever it was they were talking about, likely lovers talk or something like that.

"Good." was all he said on the subject. "I'll go and get you something to eat."

"Be quick. We're starving, no dinner."

"Right." He nodded and was gone.

Piper was curious as to how long that had been going on. They were obviously not Mates, there wouldn't have been an issue if they were, their relationship would just have been accepted by all. She could well imagine that Brad wasn't going to be happy about it, and that's why no-one knew about it. Why her boyfriend 'Cooper' was paranoid, he was going to get his ass kicked when Brad found out.

Cooper came back in record time, less than five minutes. "You might want to shower, you scent of Hadley." she commented as she took the plate of food. Hadley had been missing, well unreachable, cutting of mind-links to her during the afternoon. She'd not seen Cooper all day either. That was odd for where the Alpha went so did the Beta normally. Unless that man had been with Hadley all afternoon.

He was frowning at her as she stood looking at him, said nothing for a long two minutes while she stood and ate a pair. "You really won't say anything?"

"Nope, not my place too." She shrugged and saw his frown deepen as his eyes moved to her neck. Ah! She was Marked by Bradley, the Luna so to speak. It was her place. "I don't care, Cooper." she shrugged and closed the door on the man.

She didn't particularly care either, was not going to involve herself in that man's mess or Hadley's choice of lover either. She didn't know them, or how their relationship had come about or when it started.

Certainly had not been out there in the hallway looking or snooping around, had come across that little scene by pure chance, it was an accident and nothing more. But she was willing to bet those two were going to be more than paranoid about her outing them to Brad. Hmm, she had leverage over the pack Beta and an Alpha at that. That was an interesting turn of events.

Sat herself down on the couch with the plate of food. There were several pieces of fruit, two sandwiches and even a piece of cake. Looked like he'd just grabbed anything and shoved it on a plate, like what she had been planning on doing.

Looked at the clock. It was just after four thirty in the morning. Ate everything on her plate, it was likely that the Alpha and his unit would get up for training at five, even though it was dark outside and likely bitterly cold, wolves ran hot, so they would get up and train regardless till the snow started falling.

Cooper and Hadley had been cutting it close to getting caught by their Alpha, she supposed, though they might be counting on him being distracted by having Brandon and her here.

Bradley had certainly gone out of his way to tell her and on more than one occasion he wanted her. Though he was unhappy about the way she'd been Marked, he was not going to take it back, would not be accepting a rejection from her.

Got up and lit the fireplace, it was a bit on the cold side in here, stood and let the warmth from the fire relax her. Harper was settled now she had food in her belly. Wondered if Brad would let her go and buy warm clothing for her and Brandon, though she did not believe he would let her outside of this pack at all, especially with Brandon.

No, that man was probably expecting her to try and leave the minute she was healed up, so he was unlikely to allow her to go into Helena and do some winter shopping. Likely thought she wouldn't come back at all.

Sighed she had three businesses to run on the west coast. How the hell was she supposed to do that from here, had a home out there in Portland. Brandon had school and friends out there as well. He had told her that he liked his friends.

Wondered what she was going to do about all of this 'Harper?' She asked her wolf.

Harper's thoughts and opinions needed to be taken into account, she'd lost the ability to shift from their life here inside this pack, had not wanted to come back here anymore than Piper herself hadn't.

'I don't know.' was the reply.

'You have a preference at all?' Though Piper knew her wolf had been quiet the whole time here, she also knew that Harper had also been watching Brandon with Brad, and she'd actively watched Brad on the agility course. Hadn't felt pain at seeing him either, not like she normally would, that as new to them.

'Not really.'

Waiting on Aspen, Piper thought to herself. Brandon was clearly happy here. Just one bloody day inside the pack and already happy. Sighed, thought it would have taken more time than that. They must really have bonded on that plane at some point.

Aspen, however, from all reports, was not happy. If they were a rogue pack as Brad suspected, then it could very well be likely that Harper was indeed waiting on Aspen's decision. If he said 'no' it was going to be a 'no' from Harper, that much Piper was certain of.

Brandon got up at 6 stretched and yawned before getting out of his bed. She smiled at him from the couch. "Sleep well?"

"Yes I did." He smiled back at her "Dad said you were out cold, though..."

"Though?" She prompted him.

"He sounded worried about you."

"I'm fine. I was just tired is all."

He hugged her. "Aspen is really happy that your okay, just like me."

"He's awake?"

"Yes, slept all afternoon and night."

"How often is Aspen awake?" Piper asked him. She'd been meaning to ask him that question for a little while now.

"Most days now, it used to be like two or three times a week, but now it's every other day or every day now. It kind of depends, I think."

"On what's going on around you." it wasn't really a question, more of an observation.

“Yes.” he nodded.

“You might want to talk to Aspen about your father.”

“Why?”

“Why? He picks you up all the time and from what I heard, Aspen might not like that.”

“Oh, alright.” He nodded and hopped off the couch and ran for the bathroom.

He came back and climbed back onto the couch next to her, happy it seemed like normal “Hey! You ate breakfast without me.” he pointed to the empty plate on the coffee table.

“I did not, that was a midnight snack. I woke up starving, you.” she poked him. “didn’t bring me any dinner.”

“oh sorry.”

“Hmm, starved me.” she flopped down on the couch. “I nearly starved to death,” pushed herself up a little and then flopped back down but on top of him this time “My own son, starving me.”

He was laughing and shoving at her “you were sleeping.”

“Oh,” she feigned horror, “I nearly fainted from hunger.” threw her arm over her face. “Oh the pain and suffering, my own child, starves me.”

“Mum.” He laughed down at her.

Piper smiled up at him and made herself comfortable, her head in his lap. Refused to move at all when he pushed at her. Just smiled.

“Mum, I can’t reach the remote.” He was trying to get the TV remote off the coffee table and couldn’t not with her on him. She reached out for it herself, feigned not being able to reach it either, “Muum,” he whined, and she accidentally on purpose knocked it off the other side of the coffee table and onto the floor.

“Oh the horror,” she laughed, “neither can I.”

Started laughing even more when he squirmed and really started trying to get out from underneath her. She squirmed and wriggled just as much till he was practically in hysterics over her antics.

Even Harper was fully amused and chortling inside of Piper's mind. Then they were up and had the boy pinned down on the floor as he dashed off to get the remote, and he was a little ball of arms and legs squirming everywhere trying to get away. Pinned him right down and blew the biggest raspberry on his tummy "Stop." He was yelling at her while laughing.

"Never." She and Harper stated together, fully amused. They did so love to tickle their boy and hear him laugh.

"Well, good morning, I see."

Piper's eyes lifted up and she found a smiling Brad leaning on the door frame to her room. He had opened the door but not come into the room. She'd not heard him knock but then, that would have had to compete with Brandon's laughing and squealing.

"Help me." She heard Brandon call out to his father. She may have looked up but was actually still tickling the boy.

Saw Brad's eyes move towards the boy and shake his head. "No. it's good to see you two like this, so happy. I like it."

Piper stood up and released the boy.

"Don't stop on my account, it was very cute. My family, all happy."

"What brings you by?" Piper asked him.

"You Piper. Why else would I be here? I wanted to see you. My eyes were met with a wonderful sight to see." He was smiling right at her "Breakfast?"

"Don't you have training?" She sighed, already pushing her to go downstairs again.

"No, I've left Cooper in charge of that."

She saw Izzy squeeze passed him and into the room. He didn't move at all and she didn't seem to mind pushing passed him.

“Did I miss, tickling the boy? I heard laughing.”

“What? No!” It was Brandon and his eyes were wide, then Izzy was after him. Piper could only smile at them. Poor boy never had a chance when they were all together, watched as Brandon climbed up and over her bed with Izzy in hot pursuit. He ran round the bed and then around the couch, Izzy chasing him only half-heartedly, letting him keep his lead, but her hands were out the whole time, wiggling her fingers at him, as he ran away laughing from her.

After two laps around the couch, Brandon shot towards Brad, all arms out “Daaad.” pleading for the man to help him, it seemed.

Heard Brad laugh and then watched him scoop the boy up, step right into the room and popped him right up onto his shoulders to sit safely out of reach, and he was, the man was a good foot taller than both she and Izzy.

Izzy came to a stop, hands on her hips. “No fair.” she pointed a finger right at Brad “You’re too tall,” and then came and dropped herself down on the couch next to piper, who’d sat down to watch them. “Does everyone get up so early here?”

“Yes,” Piper laughed. Izzy was not a dawn riser.

“Ladies, let's go and have breakfast.” Brad announced, “Duck son,” he said to Brandon and stepped right out of the room with him.

Chapter 64 - Unscentable

Bradley POV

It was a sight for sore eyes that was for sure. For both he and Benson alike, he'd knocked on the Luna Suite's door after linking to his Unit to get them to handle training today, also asked them to get most of the ranked members out there for training.

For although Brandon had been fine having dinner with him in the dinning room, Aspen was not awake and most didn't come for dinner till nearly 6 and it had only been a quarter to 5. they'd actually had a nice quiet dinner just the two of them, he'd not shown the boy around even though Brandon had wanted to, wanted Piper to be there. So they had retired early to his room shown him around before going back to the Luna Suite, though Brandon had asked what a Luna was.

They'd sat in the Luna suite and he'd explained to Brandon that a Luna was the Mate of the Alpha, told him "Your mother is the Luna to this pack." the boy had just stared at him and not really said anything.

Brad had let it go, had helped the boy set up his PS5 and even played a few games with him. Piper was out completely it seemed, didn't matter how much noise either of them made laughing or teasing each other, she didn't even so much as flutter and eye lid. It bothered him a bit. But he'd let it go her heart rate and breathing were normal. Just sleeping deeply it seemed.

Not getting an answer to his knock he'd worried that she had snuck off, so had opened the door himself to check they were still in there, couldn't use his hearing all the rooms here in the pack house had sound proofing, wolves mating got loud, no-one needed to hear that.

What he'd seen, Piper and Brandon laughing and playing together, was a beautiful thing to be hold, she was tickling the hell out of their boy, they both looked and sounded so darned happy, that his own heart was near exploding inside of his chest with joy.

Every part of him ached to jump right in there and be a part of that moment, but he knew he couldn't, Piper likely would not take kindly to it just yet. But he was praying hard that one day soon he would be able to be a part of that family moment. He was watching his son and his Mate full of joy and happiness, didn't seem to have a care in the world.

Watching his own Mate, be happy, really truly happy, and he knew she was. He'd seen them before, the way they were with each other, their own little world so to speak. But now to see it inside his very own pack. Something that Brad thought would take weeks or even months to happen, he couldn't stop smiling as he watched them.

This was how it would be. How is should have always been he now knew, this was also what he wanted. Piper was never getting away from him now. Not that he'd have allowed it before, but now, after seeing this, he wanted to see it every day. Wanted to wake up to it. To the sound of them both laughing. To the sounds of them being so very happy.

Watched her blow that raspberry on Brandon's exposed tummy and nearly roared with laughter himself, as all his little arms and legs were suddenly hitting and kicking at her to try and get away. She was not going to let him up,

Brad knew that just from watching, she was having too much fun herself. He wondered what had started this little joyous moment he was watching.

Heard Eddie and Izzy comment about the laughing they could hear, he was heading off to training as instructed, Brad was not going to training, wouldn't be, needed to spend time as much time with Piper and Harper to grow their bond. To get her and her wolf to come around to he and Benson.

Felt Izzy slide passed him into the room, didn't even care, heard Eddie via the mind-link 'that is good to hear.'

'It is.' Brad had returned.

He chuckled himself when Izzy went to tickle Brandon herself, and chased him all over the room, he could see that even Piper was still amused and smiling, didn't even stop her smiling with the knowledge that he too was right there in the room watching himself, didn't stop Izzy either from chasing the boy. Likely something else they all did on a regular basis.

Brad loved that Brandon ran right over to him, arms out asking for help. He would finally help the boy, though only to get what he wanted. Piper downstairs for breakfast. He knew he was pushing her a little too fast. But a big part of him wanted the pack to see them together, and while she was all happy, was his best chance at getting her downstairs.

He could sense Aspens presence in his boy. The wolf himself had not surfaced at all, didn't try to stop him from picking up the boy or putting him up on his shoulders, seemed to be okay with him today. Maybe yesterday had helped, perhaps the bond he was creating with Brandon was filtering to the boy's wolf as well, he hoped so.

Though it could simply be because Piper and Harper were not full of aggression at this moment either. Or in a state where they could not defend themselves against him. He wasn't sure which it was.

Benson was also happy with all they'd seen this morning, they had heard Harper and Piper speak together teasing the boy, though she'd not been on the surface she was there and happy to. The first time they had seen anything that was not pure aggression come from his Mate.

He was happy to see his Mate and son alright around them, and it did appear that way, both were present in their human counterparts they could sense

them, and neither had surfaced or growled at him for being in the room or touching the boy.

Harper had not growled or threatened him yesterday either, when Brad had put his hands on Piper, that they both believed was a good sign, seeing as she'd threatened practically everyone else about touching her, curiously enough Harry was still not on that list.

Though that man had not once attempted to touch her at all. Watched her, spoken to her, but he'd mostly just stood back and done nothing. Made Bradley wonder about that comment on the plane. About being Gamma blooded and that he was just much more subtle in his way and use of it.

Was glad to hear that both Piper and Izzy were walking behind him, hadn't really given them much choice in the matter, but Piper could simply have stayed in her room if she had wanted to. Popped Brandon down on the ground by the elevator and let him press the button.

He was not about to go walking Piper and Harper through the pack-house as it's members were all waking up and heading for training, wanted to get her to breakfast and out of the dinning room before training was over and every one piled on in, also didn't need Aspen freaking out or being over whelmed by the sudden influx of ranked wolfs.

Allowed the three of them to step into the elevator before him, and hit the ground floor button, stood and watched Izzy and Piper, they were chatting well Izzy was going on about how Eddie's suite was plush and elegant and the colours and style were amazing, Piper was smiling at the woman, enjoyed seeing her friend so happy he realised. She seemed to just want everyone around her to be happy.

Held his hand out to Brandon when the elevator opened and the boy took it without issue, made him very happy, every time that the boy was happy to come with him, even more so than yesterday or last night because Benson could sense Aspen was right there, which meant that his wolf was also allowing this to happen, a very good thing.

There were half a dozen omega's in the dining room, along with a dozen school kids that ranged from 5 to 18, those kids were getting breakfast, all ranked members children, though only 4 of them old enough to have wolves. Their parents would be at morning training so they were here to have breakfast.

Most of the night border patrollers were here too he noted all chatting and socialising after their shift, they all looked to him and nodded in greeting, also looked to Izzy and Piper as they headed for the buffet breakfast that was set up, they were currently walking in front of him, Piper knew where she was going and Izzy had likely been here for dinner last night. They both actually seemed quite comfortable to him.

His patroller's looked from Izzy to Piper, and then bowed ever so slightly almost all in unison he realised, she just looked at them, kind of looked rude not greeting them back, but she just needed time to adjust. Only a few had laid eyes on either of them since they'd arrived.

Though everyone was aware that his Luna had a son, most were not yet aware that the boy was his. Bradley could actually see it dawning on the adults, though he was all Piper in looks, those eyes were Bradley's and the boy was looking at everyone right this minute not just the other children but the patrollers as well, he was also holding Bradley's hand as they walked into the room.

Found one set of eyes right on him, a very confused looked and then that confusion turned to apologetic right before his eyes he realised just what was going on. Kane, he was the border patroller who had reported Piper going rogue all them years ago, he hadn't been able to give a very good description of her, no real detail, no real surprise there, without her scent no one could recall much about her. The man had figured it out from the child that was walking with Bradley. Did the math real fast.

'Alpha, I'm sorry, my description...'

'It's alright Kane...to be honest with you, I couldn't even recall what she looked like, none of us could.' he admitted to the man, a little sadly 'She's been found now, that is all that matters.' and it did.

Bradley turned his eyes to her as she walked with Izzy to get some breakfast, Brandon let go of him to run over to them. Bradley loaded up a plate himself and then waved the three of them to a table and they all sat.

He turned to his son "Brandon, if Aspen starts to feel uncomfortable let me know, I'll clear the room."

Saw those eyes just like his look up at him "Alright." he nodded, but Bradley didn't here any concern or worry in the boys voice at this time. Perhaps Aspen

was indeed just protective and super aggressive due to his own mother not being able to defend herself so he had felt like he had to do it. Keep her safe from everyone inside this pack, a place they knew she did not want to be.

But with her calm, he was calm. Bradley was hoping this was how it worked.

“Piper, Izzy do you want coffee?” he asked.

Saw Izzy nod right away “I’ll get it, I know how Piper likes it, where...Oh never mind I see the...wholely cow, now that’s a coffee machine.” and she was up and gone from the table.

Yes there was a really good coffee machine, a Jura GIGA X8c and a barista standing right next to it to assist, for anyone who wanted coffee.

That machine would make over 2 dozen types of coffee. Easy to use had a touch screen, was literally find the coffee you want and press a button. Cost a small fortune but his pack was worth it, it wasn’t the only one in the pack-house either, there was down with the movie theatre and he actually had the same one in his office building in Helena. Only purchased them about 6 months ago.

Watched as Piper shook her head, “That girl does love her coffee.”

“How do you have your coffee Piper?” Bradley asked, it was time to start learning about her, for them to get to know each other, they both knew very little about each other, though it was possible she knew more about him. Had been a pack member for 21 years, and he’d been the Alpha since she was 17.

“Caramel Latte usually or the occasional Caramel Mocha.” she actually answered him, committed that to his memory. He was glad to see she seemed open to talking today.

“Caramel beans? Or Syrup?”

Got a raised eyebrow from her but she answered “Syrup.”

He was going to make a list of all the things she liked to have, then make sure they were in his suite waiting for her when he won her over. Wanted her to know, he was not only interested in learning about her but had heard her and retained her interests as well.

She was eating a pot of greek yoghurt with muslie with some fresh strawberries and blueberries on the top of it. Noted that it was not a lot of food, it was the only thing in front of her even Izzy's plate had more things on it as did Brandon's for that matter.

"Piper is that going to be enough for you to eat?" he questioned her, didn't think it was going to be, she'd not had dinner last night should be starving.

"I ate earlier this morning, Cooper brought me a plate of food."

That made him frown "When?"

"I was up and going to get something, about four thirty I think, he was already up...in the hallway, offered to go and get me something."

"Oh, he didn't say anything." it was nice that he had, but odd that he'd not mentioned it at all.

Piper shrugged, accepted the coffee Izzy handed to her, Izzy even put one on the table right in front of him, he looked at Izzy questioningly, they had yet to actually speak to each other since Hawaii.

"Eddie states I owe you an apology...the young girl over there said you drink a double shot Cap and made one for you when I asked her to."

"Thank you Izzy." he nodded, it wasn't exactly an apology, and the woman did owe him and his wolf one, this was likely as good as it was going to get. Especially if she was their little packs Beta, he was not going to get a verbal apology, because she had just done her duty. "What do you drink?" he enquired, would make the effort as she was doing. She would be a pack member at some point. They also needed to get along, Piper was right about that she was Eddie's Mate.

"Latte Macchiato."

"Like your coffee strong I see."

Piper snort "Don't ever give the woman a straight Cap or goddess forbid Decaf."

"Disgusting things, no kick at all. Now a triple espresso." Izzy was grinning.

“Goddess don’t ever let Eddie give her one of those, she’ll be bouncing off the walls for hours.”

Bradley chuckled at Izzy’s gasp of feigned offence, then she too chuckled, his eyes moved to Brandon “Now I know you like waffles.” the boy had eaten them after dinner and currently had a stack of them in front of him right now “What else do you eat?”

“Anything but vegetables. I won’t touch them.”

Bradley had seen this himself, seen Izzy tease the boy with vegetables “Fruit?” he asked

“Yeah, most of it.”

“Got a favourite?”

“Hmm.” he shrugged “I don’t know.” he finally said round a mouthful of waffles.

Bradley’s eyes turned to Pipers, she would know, “Mangoes I’d say, followed by blueberries.”

He smiled at her, was happy that she was willing to interact with him and answer all his questions, seemingly without hesitation today. Was not actively avoiding him at all. Likely resigned to the fact she had no real choice at the moment. Was probably just trying to make the most of it, but he would take it as a win.

Found his father and Lilly dropped down into the other seats at the table along with Hadley.

Didn’t know if he liked that, though this was the Alpha’s table and it was their norm, to sit together, but this would be the first time Hadley and Piper had come across each other since Portland.

Saw Hadley look right at Piper, looked very nervous to him, watched Piper look right back at her “Morning Piper.” Hadley said, though her voice seemed soft and cautious.

“Morning Hadley. I see you’re all healed up.”

“Yes, and I didn’t get to thank you for saving me that day.”

“Don’t worry about it, you weren’t the first, likely not going to be the last.” Piper shrugged at the woman.

“Not the first.” Bradley interjected, didn’t like the sound of that.

Saw her eyes move from Izzy to Brandon and ever so slightly shake her head. They didn’t know, he didn’t know either, would have to discuss that with her, if she went about beating up rogue males on a regular basis, that had to stop. Too dangerous, what if her necklace came off or got ripped off, nope that was not something he was going to allow her to do.

“Discuss that later.” he muttered unhappy at the thought that she might have been out there putting herself in dangerous fighting situations on a regular basis.

“I see your boy, eats like you Bradley.” his father commented, he was sitting on the other side of Brandon, the man just couldn’t help himself. Had a grandson, always wanted one, now had one, and had sat himself right next to the boy.

Smiled right down at the boy, saw Brandon look right up at him, then inch a little bit closer to Bradley himself, and heard his father huff, seemed annoyed by the boys resistance to him.

“I’m not the biting type grandson, too old for that.” he opened his mouth and pointed to his human teeth “Look no sharp teeth in here.”

Heard Lilly snort “Not in that mouth, but Colt does.”

“Shush woman, I’m trying to project friendly harmlessness, to my grandson, so he’ll hug me already.”

Bradley could see Piper watching “He’s not good with Alpha’s, never had a nice experience with any of them, I guess you could say.” she told his father.

With any of them, how many had they run into? Would have to ask her that, if it was more than one and they were all mean and threatening it was no wonder the boys wolf was aggressive.

“Well, I’m gonna change that.” His father smiled right at Piper and then turned right to Brandon “Have you ever wanted to ride a wolf?”

Even Bradley shook his head at that comment, the man was going to pull out all the stops it seems, "Father I think that maybe a bit much."

"Non sense, you and your brothers, even Hadley there." he waved his hand in the general direction of his daughter "Has ridden Colt around. He's happy enough to let Brandon, is our grandson."

Could see Brandon's eyes widen "You can ride on wolves? I'm to big to do that, there like dog size right?"

"Hmm, no son...actually a lot bigger two or three times bigger..." remembered that the boy had never actually seen his mothers wolf, though neither had he. Only had a written description.

Felt sadness roll of Benson, they had no idea what Harper looked like, though it was highly likely they had seen her at some point during pack runs and training just didn't remember it, was making his wolf sad to realise this. They didn't even know if Harper could be brought back to full wolven strength, at which she'd be able to shift again.

"Really?" Brandon asked, was staring up at him.

"yes, and if your going to ride any wolf, it will be Benson not Colt." that was more for his father's information than Brandon's. Even Felt Benson perk up a little, seemed to like the idea, it would also be a good bonding experience for the two of them if Aspen would allow it that was.

"Hey, that's my thing. Find your own." his father shot at him "Now Brandon, you really want to ride Colt he's the fastest wolf in the pack. Super fast."

"Bet he can't beat mum." Brandon shot right back.

Saw Piper smirk but say nothing.

"Hmm, a match to be determined, once your mum's fully recovered. I'll accept your challenge young man, and when I win, and I will, you'll let me hug you. That's the deal, no take backsies."

"Deal." Brandon even put his hand out to shake the man's hand.

Made his father very happy, grinned all stupidly happy. Seems he was insanely happy to have a grandson, turned and squeezed Lilly afterwards all happy, Bradley watched the woman just shake her head as well as he did.

Though he did wonder what Piper thought of the challenge their son was making for her to attend. Didn't seem all that fussed about it. Though it was likely she would issue a distance challenge and win by a long shot. Colt was indeed fast but only over short distances, he could likely beat her in a sprint but Bradley was damned certain there was no-one in this pack that would out run his Mate in an endurance race.

Breakfast was actually going really well he thought. Piper and Harper might not have ever wanted to come back to pack life, but it was a natural thing for wolves to be inside a pack, she didn't seem all that uncomfortable, seemed calm and settled and that smirk, he was pretty sure she liked a challenge, was in all likelihood thinking about putting her old Alpha in his place.

Bradley liked that she wanted to do that too. It meant she was going to be here to do so. Perhaps they were thinking about staying and just hadn't told him yet. Took a moment to settle his thoughts he was getting ahead of himself. Letting his thoughts run away with him.

Needed to stop that train of thought, or he'd be trying to touch her before he knew it without realising it. He doubted very much she was ready for him to be all over her, regardless of their bond being active

Chapter 65 - Unscentable

Piper POV

Piper watched as Hadley walked into the dining room. Her eyes met Piper's, though only briefly before the girl went and got food, it appeared she was uncomfortable right this minute. Seemed she had to come and sit at the same table as Piper, must be the Alpha's family table, she realised. Hadn't really thought about it upon sitting down.

Looked more than nervous to Piper now, as she sat down, it was pretty darn clear she did not want to aggravate or upset Piper in case she went to Brad with what she had seen earlier this morning.

Piper had meant what she said to Cooper, she didn't care herself what the two of them did, but it seemed Hadley understood that at any given moment, for

any given reason, Piper could out the two of them to Bradley. Found it somewhat amusing actually.

It was in her tone as well. The girl was more than nervous, Piper didn't bring it up, she'd told Cooper it was none of her business, but now she wondered if Cooper had told Hadley what she'd said on the matter. It was likely. But she still had something on them if she needed leverage, looked right at the girl and wondered just how badly they wanted to keep their little secret.

Alpha's tended to do as they pleased, Piper was betting on it being Cooper not wanting to be found out, Hadley, being of Alpha blood, likely didn't care, could do as she pleased pretty much.

Piper turned her attention to Alpha Benjamin. He was pushing his luck with Brandon. She had to warn him when Brandon edged away from the man. Piper didn't want Aspen raring up and going the man and the boy inching away from him, let her know he was not yet comfortable with the very large man next to him.

Alpha Benjamin was the same height as Bradley, but was actually bigger than him, muscle wise, likely he still worked out all the time. Still probably trained several days a week. This was not a large pack and all who were capable, retired or not, were likely ordered into battle if there was a rogue attack. Or a rival pack coming at them. They had some pretty close allies if she recalled correctly from schooling, that could get here quickly, but till that help arrived they had to handle everything on their own.

Life inside a pack, was not always just loved up wolves, it could be quite terrifying at times. She'd seen it first hand, felt the pain of loss and had reported rogues on the move inside the pack itself. Trying to keep this from Brandon was a must at this point.

She was going to have to sit him down and talk to him, explain just how important it was to keep Aspen inside of him, but if there was an attack, how did you do that? If he felt threatened in anyway by a pack attack, it was likely that Aspen would just rip right out of the boy.

Watching Brandon's reaction to the possibility of actually riding a wolf, she could see that he was a bit confused and then just saw amazed at hearing just how big they could get. Almost shook her own head when it seemed Brad and his father, Benjamin, were almost arguing over whose wolf he was going to ride.

Piper didn't think she'd seen any child ride a wolf before. Wolves were proud creatures, and that could be seen as a weakness, that they were softhearted and not strong and fierce. Especially the Alpha wolf, felt Harper actually huff inside her mind at their 'who's wolf he'd ride', seemed she was annoyed by it herself.

Perhaps would have wanted that for herself. It was possible or it could just be that she didn't have that option open to herself, when Piper tried to ask her got silence on the matter. Didn't want to talk about it.

Found herself the centre of attention at Brandon's 'Bet he can't beat mum.' comment. This did actually amuse her as well as Harper, smirked to themselves at the memory of beating even the Alpha of the pack just days ago. Then a deal was struck on her behalf, sighed internally as she watched Brandon shake that man's hand.

The boy had just made his first Alpha to Alpha deal. Looked right at Brad who was just watching his son, who settled comfortably back into his chair after shaking Benjamin's hand, was back to eating his breakfast, some of his or all of his weariness gone it seemed.

Brad didn't seem bothered by this deal their son had just made. Perhaps she was mistaken in what she saw. It could be simply family rivalry she guessed. She didn't know.

Felt a cold breeze blowing in from outside as a wolf opened and closed one of the doors to the outside area of the pack, and saw Brandon shiver a little, as she did. Curiously, Izzy didn't even notice it.

Brought her mind to clothing and shopping. "Brad, I need to take Brandon to get warm clothes, it's cold here."

Saw the man's eyes turn directly upon her, a frown on his face, knew exactly what he was thinking, it was clear for all to see, he thought she was going to use that as an excuse to run away back to Portland. If she was going to do that she would have done it at four thirty this morning when she was the only one awake.

"I'm a bit cold," Izzy commented.

"Piper, I'd rather you didn't leave for now." Brad stated flatly.

“I’m sure you would. Will you have the three of us freeze? We were not packed for a winter trip. You were the one who decided to bring us here, without warning.”

“No fighting in front of the boy.” It was Alpha Benjamin, his tone seemed to brook no argument.

“Piper, I can send someone, a personal shopper to do that for you. Just give me your sizes, that’s all I’ll need.”

“No, I am capable of doing this myself, I will do it myself, in fact. More than capable of being out in the human world.” She didn’t have to take orders from Benjamin and would speak as she wanted. He could suck it up.

“Wait, wait, wait.” It was Lilly. “Bradley, take the girl shopping yourself, all of you go. Wait for training to be finished and Eddie can go with you as well, your whole unit, if you want.”

Piper frowned at the woman, she did not need a babysitter or a Gamma, or an entire unit to do some simple winter shopping.

“Alright.” Brad nodded “After training is complete.” he agreed with Lilly, then looked at Piper. “I’ll take you all shopping, we can make a day of it.”

She didn’t need a day of it, but seeing as she’d been the one to bring it up and they did need winter clothes, didn’t argue about it “Fine, I need to talk with Brandon today, before he comes across Timothy Avery.”

Saw the boy frown at just the mere mention of the man’s name, but he said nothing.

“Timothy was roped into training this morning, for that very reason,” Brad informed her.

“Good.” She stood up “Come on Brandon, you Aspen and I need to talk.”

“About?” She heard Brandon ask as he got down from the table, also noted that Brad stood up as well, frowned right at him, but let it go. She was just used to doing everything on her own, and likely wasn’t going to be like that with Brad around all the time.

“Why don’t we use my office? It’s quiet and no one will come in.”

Piper nodded and took Brandon's hand to wait for Brad to pass. She knew where his office was, across from the pack-house front door. Also, knew you did not lead an Alpha anywhere inside his own pack, least of all to his own office.

He held his hand out to the boy and Brandon took it.

She blinked as he stepped and they had to fall in step with him, saw the smile on his face before he looked away. She could well imagine how they looked right this minute. It pleased him obviously, "Izzy," she called out, and got a full frown from him.

"I'm right here, no need to yell." The woman, it seemed, had gotten up to follow them even without being asked to.

"She needs to know as well, might help in a...situation." Piper answered his frown.

Saw him just nod and then continue on walking. They were all just about to walk into his office, when she heard a woman call out "Alpha Bradley." She turned as did he. The woman was older, had long grey hair braided down the right side and dangling over her shoulder, was wearing a simple pair of loose-fitting jeans and a plain pink tee-shirt. "Wait...please may I come in as well."

"Annabella, your Elder." Brad stated calmly at her questioning look.

She sighed "No Timothy."

"At training, remember."

"Fine," she muttered, and walked off into his office, let go of Brandon's hand and he was off already looking around the office, such a curious nature. Though she supposed this was his father's office, he'd have heard that. Also knew the man would want him to take over one day. She'd told him as much. Was likely off to investigate what would be his one day.

Saw the woman step into the room, looked right at Izzy and frowned, smelled her, twice even, then looked at Brad with a raised eyebrow.

He just shrugged "We don't know yet."

“Hmm, should be fun for you when she arrives.” the woman snorted, smiled right at Izzy, inclined her head slightly, then moved on. Brad frowned at the woman now. It was likely this Annabella was old enough to register what Izzy’s wolf was, though Piper and Harper had no idea and Brad had just stated they didn’t know either. It was curious, though she didn’t seem to want to elaborate.

Walked right over to Piper. “My goodness look at you, you look just like your mother.” she smiled at Piper “my name is Annabella, I’m your great grandmother.”

“So I heard.” Piper acknowledged, “What is it you want?”

“Just to help you understand what you and Brandon are. Apologise for not realising you were orphaned and coming to collect you. I also have this for Brandon, for when he needs it.” she took a ring off her finger and held it out to Piper. “It’ll protect him, and don’t worry about the fit. It’s magic will adjust itself to fit him, like your pendant’s necklace, your wolf would have worn it, they are magically imbued to fit us and our wolves when shifted.

Piper stared at the ring. It was made with the same stone as her pendant, she realised, and she did know her necklace had adjusted to fit Harper as well. She’d never taken it off, not even thought about it, not even on her first shift. She’d seen it on her mother’s wolf knew it wouldn’t break.

Took the ring “Brad told me already what I was.”

“Good good.” Annabella nodded, “though I would have liked to do that myself. I guess, under the circumstances acceptable. Do you understand?”

“I get it.” Piper nodded “We’re here to tell Brandon, so his wolf will not emerge too early.”

“If he does, Piper, it’s okay. I’ll come along with some of the other Elders, we’ll teach the pack in the ways of not always using their wolfen senses. It’s how our entire pack runs, you and Brandon will be seen all the time. Though you do smell like Bradley now and Brandon, she smiled at the boy, still smells like your kin, due to Aspen not fully emerging yet. Why don’t you sit down and let me explain it to him? I’m very good at this, explaining to the children. Will you let me?”

Piper moved her eyes to the boy and blinked at him. She'd not been keeping track of him, the boy was in Brad's Alpha Chair, spinning himself around and around. Glanced at Brad worriedly.

"It's fine," He smiled "He's happy and that is what matters."

"He's in your chair," She murmured.

"I can see that." he actually chuckled "It will be his one day." Then he just walked over and stopped the chair from spinning, "Son, come and meet Annabella, she's got something very important to tell you."

"Me?"

"Yes, you. Your very special."

"I know." He grinned up at Brad and hopped off the chair.

Piper sat down and before Annabella could start anything, educate Izzy on wolves and how they used their sense of smell for everything, she frowned a lot, seemed to talk to Fade quite a bit and then said "Is that why Eddie smells so good to me all the time?"

"Yes."

"Oh, bloody man has been smelling delicious for two days now, driving me nuts."

"That'll be the reason why you can't say no to him."

"Wait...does he smell like that to everyone?"

Even Brad laughed now "No, Izzy. One of those scents only you and Fade can smell, it's his own unique Mate scent." Brad told her.

"Hmm, well how do I know which one that is?"

"Well to me, Eddie smells like. Cedar and ginger, so whatever else you smell, is unique to you."

Saw her giggle almost instantly as she realised what it was.

“Now keep that to yourself.” Piper smiled at her, though had a feeling she would likely tell her at some point. Especially if she found it that amusing. Brad's unique scent was Blackberries. No-one else but her could smell that about him. Though now she wondered if they did because she smelled like him. Shook it off.

“But it's so funny.”

“And all yours, he's your weirdo, remember.”

Izzy nodded “All mine.” she smiled, really liked this about Eddie.

“Yes, always.”

Watched her lean back on the couch. “I wonder what I smell like to him? Hey, can I ask him?”

“Yes, of course.” Piper nodded.

Izzy seemed very happy with all this, smiling away to herself.

Piper indicated for Annabella to sit and talk with Brandon now.

The woman sat cross-legged on the floor with him right in front of her, and wove their lineage into a story like a fairy tale.

“There was a wolven princess, her name was Iris, and this princess held a secret from all wolven kind, one of the utmost importance. That she was the most desirable princess to all wolven kind. No male wolf could resist her, she'd been locked away in her castle for years to keep her safe from those males.

“A witch had been brought forth to create a magical charm to hide her from all those wolves. That were not her Goddess Gifted Mate. She had to wait many long years to find her wolven prince, who was her Mate. But because of the magical pendant,” Annabella pulled out her pendant and showed him hers, “Her prince could not scent her. He did not know that she was his Mate.

“Princess Iris did suffer much pain and heartache, because he did not know who she was. She prayed long and hard to their Goddess to give her away for only him to scent her. Sadly, there was no answer to her prayers.

“Filled with sadness, the Princess could still not obtain her Prince, until one day when she could not stand the suffering and pain any longer, she climbed

to the top of a long hill within her kingdom, and on the night of a full moon, when she felt the closest to their Goddess, she sat once more and prayed with all she had.

“Offered up her own blood to the moon goddess herself, begged with her head bowed low to the earth, cuts to both her arms as her blood seeped from her to the earth, her blood offering, as one last effort to obtain her Prince.” stopped in her story and got to see him lean forward, wanted to know if it worked.

“and finally, her prince, his wolf, an Alpha wolf with the strongest sense of smell, caught the scent of her blood and he hunted all over the kingdom, tracking the scent of blood and his Mate, feared the worst for her. So much blood he could smell.

“His wolf raced him to the top of the hill to find his Mate, so small and frail now, lying in the grass whispering words of prayer to their goddess to please bring her Mate to her, to let him scent her.

“His hand touched her hair softly and when she looked up there he was looking right down at her, saddened by what he heard, what he knew, she had been within his reach all this time and he’d never know.

“The Princess looked up to her Prince, unsure as to if he could smell her or if he had just come across her. She’d been before him many times to no avail. Her Prince tilted her chin right up and he and his wolf laid claim to her “Mine.” they told her together. Finally, the Princess had found the way for her Mate to Claim her.

“They could be happy now, be together, and they were, had many little pups. Iris and her Prince’s lineage still lives on to this day, there is a tell-tale sign to let this be known, a wolf, with white eyes.”

“Like me and mum!” Brandon exclaimed.

Annabella nodded, then allowed her wolf to push forward and showed to him her own wolf’s white eyes, “We are all just like Iris...Now little one, you will be the most desirable wolf, but you’ll only want your Mate, just like Iris did. So, when your wolf Aspen emerges fully, you too, will have to wear your own magical charm.”

“I will?”

“Yes little one, a ring to wear always. Your mum has it now for you and when you’re old enough and you scent out your Mate.” Annabella smiled right at him “and your already so handsome. Oh and those eyes. Wow, like looking at the northern aurora, so special already. I bet you’ll just have the most beautiful Mate. Oh, but Brandon? How will you obtain her?” Annabella asked him playfully. “Did you listen carefully?”

Watched Brandon smile real big. “My blood.” he yelled excitedly.

“That’s right, though unlike Iris our Princess, only a little blood is needed, one tiny nick, and your Mate will come running right into your open arms.”

Piper watched him smile all happy. Sighed internally, wondered why her mother never told her that tale. It might have saved a lifetime of loneliness and pain to boot. Annabella really was good at explaining this to him, likely it was her job within her pack.

“Can I see my ring?” Brandon turned to her now.

Though Piper did not want that thing on her boy, not until it was absolutely necessary she did hand it over for him to look at, he turned it over and around and then smiled right up at her “It’s the same colour as yours mum.”

“Mm, it is.” She nodded and looked right at Annabella. “His children?”

“Not all children in the blood line get the gene, but any wolf with white eyes has it.”

“So how do you figure that out before the child’s wolf emerges?”

“Ah, yes, a good question. That was a little more difficult to sort out but we did eventually. So now we Whitlock’s shift for the first time inside, usually with either your mother or father, in a locked room. Then, if the wolf’s eyes are white, a charm is given before leaving the room.”

“And where does one get a charm from?”

“From us, of course, my dear. We have many. They are not tailored to a specific person, but to the gene itself. It can be passed on and given to another. As you wear your mothers now. We will send you a pendant or ring for every child you have and Brandon’s too, just in case they need it. We will always be allied packs, just call and ask.”

It sounded so very simply, to people who knew and understood that was. She really did hope there weren't any others out there like her. Annabella, she realised was not so bad, "Thank you for coming, talking to Brandon. I didn't really know how I was going to do this."

"I'm happy to come for all of your children Piper, explain it or you could pop on up to the Ice Moon Pack for a visit, anytime you like."

Piper frowned at that, she did not particularly want to have to deal with Timothy Avery, not put Brandon in front of that man either.

"I beat him myself, just so you know. Your cousin Tim, as did his own mother and two sisters." She chuckled "It was very humiliating for him, his own mother dragged him out into the middle of the pack and all the Whitlock's got to watch her beat her own son, their current Alpha. One of our little Whitlock laws. You, my dear, might find those amusing to read."

She let that one go, though she was happy to hear he'd gotten a beating for his behaviour towards her and Brandon.

"You said not all children would get the gene." it was Brad.

"No," Annabella shook her head, about 1 in every 3 or four nowadays, depends on the gene pool of the Whitlock Mate, if it's weaker or stronger than the Mates."

"Alright." he nodded.

Piper looked right at him with a raised eyebrow now. She knew why he was asking, she hadn't even made her decision yet and he was already planning more children it seemed. He just shrugged at her, a half smile on his face, likely thought it was amusing that she knew what he was thinking. Rolled her eyes.

Chapter 66 - Unscentable

Bradley POV.

Bradley saw Annabella out of his office and thanked her for helping with Brandon, for also answering Piper's questions, one's he'd also been concerned about himself. He did want more children and once he won Piper over, she was going to have trouble getting him to keep his hands to himself.

He was likely going to Mate the hell out of her for days on end. Smiled to himself at that thought, then shook his head and pushed it aside, it was going to be a good while before that was going to happen. He needed to think about something else 'right' he told himself as he stepped back into his office, glanced at his watch, still had half an hour before training finished.

"Brandon son."

The boy looked up at him, he was still playing with the ring he would obtain later in life, hopefully much later. He was no longer sitting on the floor but between Piper and Izzy. There little rogue pack.

"We need to talk about Aspen." Brad told him as he walked over and sat down on the opposite chair to them. "Now you heard what Annabella said about your wolf emerging."

"Yes." the boy nodded.

"Well, when he does, you'll have to wear that ring all the time."

"Yes."

Piper frowned at him and then turned to look down at Brandon. "Sweetie, your father is not doing this right."

Brad did like it when Piper acknowledged him as the boy's father right to him, made him a little warm on the inside.

"What you need to know," Piper continued and tilted the boy's face up to hers. "Can I talk to Aspen?"

Brad blinked as he watched Aspen push forward on request, so much control already, shocked him quite a bit. He'd thought the boy's wolf was all primal instincts, which he acted on. Although he'd heard the wolf mutter at her after the run challenge, he'd never actually seen the wolf be called out for a conversation before. Didn't realise he could be.

"Aspen, what I need from you, is for you not to emerge in wolf form till it is absolutely necessary. I didn't know what I was, you do now."

Saw Aspen tilt his head and stare up at his mother, "You suffered like Iris did." his gravelly voice rolled right out of him, before his eyes moved to Bradley himself.

"Yes I did." Piper acknowledged, for though there was nothing about the pains of betrayal in the story, she and Brad both understood that was what was meant by pain and suffering to the Princess in the story. Seems so did Aspen.

"Why you left!" he turned back to look at her once more. "I understand better, now. One-sided bond."

Bradley watched Piper nod her head. Not once did she blame him, he also realised she'd talked to Aspen before, likely called him out before, his wolf might be young but still had that inherited knowledge all wolves got.

"My pendant made me invisible to this pack. I understand that now. I did not know before. My parents died when I was 10. I didn't...they didn't tell me any of this...when you emerge fully Brandon has to wear the ring, he'll, you'll become invisible to this pack."

Bradley frowned now, no he wouldn't be, because Brad was going to be training his pack in not using their wolfen senses, and he was going to start that right away. But perhaps keeping that to himself at this point and what Piper was telling him would keep Aspen inside the boy. Decided not to interrupt her.

"Do you understand?" Piper asked a minute later when Aspen still hadn't responded to her.

"I will come, when I come." Aspen stated and then just receded, didn't sound overly happy about being asked not to emerge.

Piper's eyes met his, and she actually looked a little on the worried side to him. This was all they could do, ask his wolf not to emerge. Aspen, being an Alpha wolf who was already fierce and stubborn, would likely do as he pleased.

Sighed himself, "Let it be for now, we'll have to wait and see," there wasn't much else he could say. "Best you keep that ring on you at all times, I'd say." He didn't much like it, but it was what it was unfortunately.

Piper nodded at him, seemed just as unhappy about it as he was, watched her slip that ring on to the middle finger of her right hand.

“Training is nearly finished, I’ll organise the boys and cars and we’ll head into Helena to do some shopping. Why don’t you head on back upstairs and grab your things, I’ll come and get you when the boys are cleaned up and ready.”

“Piper, can we look at places for the new store to go?” It was Izzy, already asking about her new job. Likely missed her work.

“I guess so.” Piper nodded as they got up, “though I have no idea, what stores or real estate is available.”

Brad smiled, stood and leaned in the open doorway to his office and just watched the two women, each of them had one of Brandon’s hands, stroll off down the pack-house towards the elevator, watched as they got in the elevator talking about what Izzy wanted in her store. Piper and Brandon were both walking about the pack-house unescorted and seemingly unconcerned right this minute.

She was becoming comfortable inside the pack, though he had a feeling it was because Brandon was comfortable, he was going to take it as a win. A step closer to gaining his Mate.

Mind-linked to his entire unit, told them of the plan for the day. They all seemed a bit shocked that he’d agreed to letting her off pack territory already, though Eddie chuckled at him but said nothing further, that man likely had tuned into Piper himself this morning and felt all that happiness and joy pouring off of her.

He sat down at his desk and looked up available real estate. There was nothing really available that even looked close to her store in Portland and he had seen the one in Olympia. It too looked very similar, also knew from Eddie that the store in Sydney was pretty much just a bigger version of the one in Portland. It seemed she had a style.

But he could at least drive her and Izzy around and let them look at everything that was available for themselves. Cooper sank himself in the chair across from him freshly showered and dressed for the shopping trip. “Have you arranged for the press to see you and Piper together in Helena?”

“What?” Brad frowned at his Beta.

Watched Cooper roll his eyes at him “Come on Brad, we talked about this in Portland, she has got a human world life. We need for the humans to see you two together, remember. Start that human world relationship going.”

“Oh, it had completely slipped my mind. A complicated morning.”

“Why? What happened between you and Piper?” Cooper was leaning forward, now looking at him worriedly.

“Nothing like that. Actually, Annabella managed to talk to Piper and Brandon, she was very helpful with Brandon and Aspen. She is definitely the right person to explain who they are to children.”

“Good, that’s a good start.” Cooper leaned back in his chair again.

“It was.” Brad nodded “But Aspen was not happy about being asked not to emerge though.”

“Alpha wolf and a rogue at that.” Coop shrugged “What’d he say?”

“I’ll come, when I come.”

Cooper snorted, now fully amused, it seemed “Sound’s like you.”

“I’m not like that.”

“Really? An interesting statement, Mr. I’ll do what I want when I want.”

Even Brad laughed now, he did often say that when he was annoyed about his brother or father wanting him to do something he wasn’t in the mood to do or didn’t want to do at all.

“I’ll make some calls. Grace will be discreet but get some good pictures of the two of you together, likely Brandon as well.”

“Alright.” Brad nodded, he didn’t think that Piper was going to be overly happy about it when she found out, but it would just be a few pictures, surely she wouldn’t get too mad.

“Oh hey I heard you got Piper food this morning.”

“I did.” Cooper nodded and stood up. “I was up and she was coming out of her room. I offered no big deal.”

“Thank you.”

Watched the man wave it off “I’ll go bring the cars around. You, me, Piper and Brandon in one car and Eddie, Izzy, Harry and Betsie in the other.”

“Betsie?”

“Mm apparently, they need new baby furniture for their new suite.”

“Oh yeah, sorry kind of slipped my mind with all that was going on with Piper.”

“I guess so.” Coop nodded and strolled out of his office.

An hour later, they were in Helena, and after Cooper parked the car, he got out and helped Brandon from the car, held his hand out to Piper. She just looked at him and then got out by herself. He had tried.

They all strolled at a casual pace down the walking mall. There was no real rush at all. He let Piper, Izzy and Betsie all stop and look at whatever took their fancy, though she would not let him pay for anything at all, not for her and not for Brandon. It irked him, he wanted to be able to provide for her and their son. Certainly could afford it.

But kept that in full check, just smiled and nodded as though it didn’t bother him when it really did. This was what she was used to doing, paying for everything. He knew she could afford it, likely no limit on that platinum AMEX she was swiping away on. Like him, she didn’t even look at the prices of things, knew without a doubt she could afford them.

He bought coffees for everyone except Betsie, who wouldn’t drink caffeine while pregnant, got her a herbal tea, and Brandon a strawberry milkshake. He strolled along and held that boy's hand, at one point, right there along with Piper as well, the boy between them, Brandon, seemed happy enough.

Piper still looked at him with a raised eyebrow when he did that. Bradley just smiled right at her, he was not going to be deterred from holding his sons hand or having them look like a family either, had no intention of ever stopping doing it, well till the boy was too old for it, he supposed.

Brad was more than happy two hours into shopping when Brandon complained he was tired of walking around, ‘his feet hurt.’ Brad just picked him up and popped him up on to his shoulders “Better?” He asked.

“Yep, and I can see everything from up here, your so tall dad.”

Brad smiled, “you will be to I imagine, just like Grandpa and I.”

The boy did love using the word ‘dad’ as much as the word ‘mum’, when he wanted to point something out to either of them or both of them, he got to hear him say twice now, “Mum, Dad, look at that.” one full sentence. Warmed his heart greatly. It was clear Brandon was all in for them, being a family.

“Why don’t we go and get some lunch?” he offered when Betsie sat down and looked a bit tired.

They sat and ate in a nice saloon and grill place. He offered Piper a glass of wine only to recall she’d stated she didn’t drink it, so he offered her something from the bar, to which she declined, just had a soda like Brandon did.

The chatter around the table was mostly revolved around Betsie and Harry’s new pup on the way. She was only 2 months along but already seemed be showing a little, wondered if there was more than one in there, but left it alone, they would announce boy or girl or twins when they were ready.

Even Brandon had questions for his Uncle Harry and Aunt Betsie. Apparently they were now family to the boy because Harry was Eddie’s brother, even asked about their other children and how many cousins he suddenly had, how many kids they wanted. Stated he was an only child.

Heard Betsie giggle at him “You’ll get brothers and sisters one day I’m sure.”

Saw Piper damned near spit her drink all over the place and everyone laughed. She however, didn’t seem to find it amusing at all, not ready to go down that road. They were bonded and at some point she had to know it was coming.

Brad just smiled at her when she glared at him. He didn’t say it, though it was likely from the expression on her face she thought he would put a stop to that line of talk. Especially when she found Brandon, looking right at her questioningly. Brad was not getting involved in that one, he actually had no idea what her thoughts were on the subject.

They’d have to talk about it at some point, but not until after she had fully accepted him. It was too early for that though. However, if she asked him she

would get a definite yes, he'd not gotten to see her pregnant with Brandon, had missed out on so much, wanted to have that experience with her.

When Piper didn't answer Brandon, the boy's eyes moved right to him, asking him the unspoken question about him getting brothers and sisters. Guess he liked the idea. Felt Piper actually kick him under the table, laughed at it, didn't really hurt, he didn't think it was meant to either, just a warning to shut it likely.

He just smiled at Brandon. "Too early to even consider thinking that far ahead son." It was the only answer he could come up with. That wasn't going to infuriate his Mate. Seemed to settle the boys' questions for now.

Then they drove Piper and Izzy around the city to look at real estate for her new store, vacant buildings for sale or blocks of land. She didn't want a lease, she wanted to buy. That pleased him a lot. Both her and Izzy hopped out and looked at the places, though they didn't really seem all that happy with the space, or location at this point.

"You know Brad," It was Cooper, they were both leaning on the car while Piper and Izzy peered through the front window of a building for sale.

"Mm."

"You do own a five-storey building yourself. You could show the ground floor to Piper, have it redesigned to her liking. It's currently just a Grand Foyer."

"Mm I could." Brad nodded "Do you think she'd want that?"

"To be close to her Mate, all the time? Yes Bradley I do." the man shook his head at him, seemed dismayed to be having to answer the question.

"Got to get her to be my Mate first," he sighed.

"Well, it'll take months to redesign and remodel. You two should be good by then, right?"

Brad looked right at Cooper. "Why are you so helpful all the time suddenly, instead of playing devils advocate, like you normally do."

Watched the man shrug "Just trying to help you get your Mate. We all want that."

“Hmm, I get the feeling there is something else going on...what’d you say back in Sydney about you might have already done something wrong and need a beating for.”

“Hmm, let’s just sort you and Piper out first, that can wait.”

“What did you do, Cooper?”

“Nothing.” Cooper commented and leaned away from the car, “Ready ladies?”

Brad stared at the man with narrowed eyes. Oh, there was definitely something going on. “Spit it out Cooper.” he stated as he got in the car.

Heard Piper chuckle softly from the backseat, saw her turn and look out the window, when he looked at her to now “What’s so funny?”

“You.” She bit her lip and held in more laughter, then looked right at him “Can’t control your Gamma. Can’t make you Beta talk. It’s funny to me...Bet I could have a guess at what is going on.”

“Piper, there is a lovely building just down the way.” It was Cooper. “I’ll drive us there right now, walk you around myself.”

Heard the woman snort with full amusement “If you like Cooper.” She answered him.

The man was more than aggressive in his drive to Black Haven headquarters, where he housed his Law Firm and ran his construction businesses from. Watched that man get out and bang the door shut behind him.

Oh yes, there was something going on and it was clear to Brad that Piper did actually know what it was. Cooper stalked all the way around the car, looked quite cranky to Bradley, yanked her door open and snapped right at her, his Luna “Are you ready?”

“Enough Cooper.” Brad got out of the car and rolled his Aura right at his Beta, saw the man’s shocked expression, and then and only then seemed to realise what he’d done, backed off instantly from Piper.

“Sorry Piper.” He even apologised.

“It’s fine.” She didn’t even find his behaviour offensive, still seemed fully amused to Bradley.

“I’ll take her, Cooper, you can stay here and calm down.” he reached in the car for Brandon, no issues with that the boy reached up to allow it. He even sat him right on his hip, saw Eddie pulling up as he closed the door.

“Jeez you know some warning would have been nice,” he muttered as he got out and helped Izzy out.

“Agreed.” Bradley answered him, glaring at Cooper. “Come on Piper, Izzy. Eighty percent of the ground floor can be remodelled here if you like the space.”

Could see Piper looking at the building. She would recognise it, it had been the pack's head office for years, even when she'd been in the pack, “This is your head office!” she stated with a frown, she could also read the signage which was in big bold black lettering, Drake Industries & Black Haven Law Firm. All his businesses ran out of this building.

“It is, Cooper pointed out to me.” he encouraged her and Izzy to walk inside. “The whole bottom floor is basically dead space, just a very large foyer.”

“You want me to build a bridal store in your company foyer?” she asked up at him.

Izzy was already off and looking at the space. It was empty just had a large reception desk and four elevators off to the left. There were three she-wolves sitting at the front desk manning the phones. They all looked up at him a bit surprised to see him, but bowed their heads “Alpha.” they all said in unison.

“Ladies,” he greeted them back.

Watched as their eyes fell on Brandon on his hip and then Piper, smiled himself when they all greeted her as they had him “Luna.” watched Piper turn and look at them, they all bowed to her as they had to him.

“Hello,” she answered, and then moved on, saw Eddie frown at her for a moment. The man was a tuned to her, it seemed she was uncomfortable with the term ‘Luna’, he thought. But let it go, she'd not actively accepted him yet, so maybe she didn't think it was appropriate.

Stood with Brandon and leaned on one of the pillars dotted about the foyer, with Eddie and just let them walk around and talk, Izzy was clearly happy with the space, already appeared to be mapping out what she wanted where.

Piper, it seemed, was listening to the woman, and he wondered if she'd told Izzy about becoming a full partner to her business yet. Didn't think so, Izzy would surely have told Eddie and it would have gotten back to him.

Saw her looking up at the ceiling and wondered why? Watched her shake her head, he wasn't actively listening to their conversation, she didn't seem happy about anything. This went on for a good forty minutes. Brandon had fallen asleep on his shoulder out of sheer boredom, it seemed, not that Brad minded.

He was also happy that in the past forty minutes not once did Piper turn to look back at him with Brandon, she obviously trusted him with their son, she'd also told him last night to take him for dinner, and left him to put the boy to bed.

Now she was here and all business it seemed, as was Izzy. These two had done this before, that much he could tell, by the way they were walking and looking and discussing in depth. Probably what he looked like with Cooper or his own father, he realised. It was nice to see he had a Mate who could handle a business. Had a competent business partner as well.

Both women walked back over to them. Izzy smiled. "I like the space."

"Piper?" he asked.

"No loft space, for my design studio." she shook her head.

"Is that important to you?" he asked.

"I like my loft space, it's a good place to work and the platform gives me a good view of my store."

Brad smiled right at her. "I'm sure I'd be willing to demolish some of the first floor to make room for your design studio and office."

"Offices." Izzy corrected him right away. "My store this one. So I get an office too."

Brad just nodded "I'll be fine with that." and he was.

Piper had just stated 'no space for her design studio' sounded very much like her decision was made, also had stated 'I like my loft space' Brad would give

her whatever she wanted, to keep her here, including the whole first floor if she wanted it.

“We should get back, Brandon’s all tuckered out.” he commented casually, and saw her glance at him and then just nod her head, was still thinking about the space it seemed.

Chapter 67 - Unscentable

Piper POV

Piper sat quietly in the car for the ride back to the pack, though she had really enjoyed teasing Cooper, he’d not taken to it kindly at all. Not used to someone not doing what he wanted, she guessed, she saw his eyes on her in the review mirror more than once as they drove back.

She was not going to out him and Hadley, had told him as much. But that didn’t mean she wasn’t going to not remind them or annoy them. It was a little pay back for the Beta, for when he’d tried to lord it over her and make her do as he pleased that first day, he’d come into her store.

After the fifth look she’d wanted to snap at him, and yell about their relationship to Bradley, just to piss him off and get him in trouble at the same time. She didn’t like the way he kept glaring at her. Could well imagine if she was a pack member he would have mind-linked to her about it. But he couldn’t and appeared to be stewing over what had happened.

Though if she was a pack member, would he have risked it? She’d be his Luna and that attitude of his back in the city? She could well punish him for disrespecting her. Brad had actually not liked the man’s attitude and she’d not missed him rolling his aura at his Beta, and pulling him into line.

Though mostly she just found his ticked off mood funny, she was still a rogue and he couldn’t order her around, might like to see him try it, might get more bite than bark than he was expecting. It is likely that Mark on her neck actually made her outrank him, even though she wasn’t a pack member.

Piper was actually glad when he pulled the car up inside the pack, got herself out and went round to get Brandon out before anyone could do it themselves. Was actually ready to go and be alone in her room with just her boy. That was the life she was used to. Her and Brandon living together. Izzy having dinner with them every other day, but on their own.

Brandon was awake now and she held the door open for him to hop out, but as he did so she saw Aspen rise to the surface, felt the tension in the boy.

He stepped right around her and a loud growl ripped right out of him, whipped her head around to see what had brought Aspen to the surface so aggressively, placed her hands on his shoulders as she saw Alpha Timothy striding towards them with purpose, coming from the pack-house.

The man was looking right at her, she tried to step in front of Brandon only to find his small hand snap out and stop her. Trying to protect her from Alpha Timothy, it appeared. Bradley was suddenly next to the boy a hand on him as well.

Izzy shot between Alpha Timothy and Aspen, then Piper realised it was Fade, not Izzy, as a low growl emitted from the woman herself.

“Shh, it’s alright Aspen, calm down.” Piper tried to settle him, the boys hand was still on her and it was pushing at her, telling her not to get in front of him.

“Timothy, back away.” It was Brad and he was all Alpha, she realised, heard it clear in his tone.

“Let it go Bradley.” Alpha Timothy rolled his eyes “The boy has to get used to me at some point.” He did not stop coming. “Piper, I need to talk to you.” he practically demanded. The man didn’t seem to understand, or perhaps care, about the situation he was creating.

It was not Brandon, however, whose bones cracked as the first indication of a wolf shifting.

Piper’s eyes moved right to Izzy as she watched Fade start to rip right out of the woman. Heard the entire Alpha Unit swear and Eddie, who’d been standing not too far away, was suddenly right there next to his Mate, though there was no stopping the shift once it started, and surprisingly enough, it was exceptionally fast for a first shift.

Cooper shot passed her, snatched Brandon right from her and Bradley’s grip, and was moving away with the boy. He didn’t want him near the fight that was about to begin, neither did she, saw him take Brandon to the other side of the car. Piper was torn, she didn’t know if she should go with Brandon or stay there with Izzy and Fade.

Brad stepped half in front of her, put a hand on her almost the same way Aspen had she realised, ready to protect her from the ensuing battle that appeared to be about to begin.

Alpha Timothy came to a complete stand still at the shifting wolf before him. They were all watching at this point. None of them knew what type of wolf she was, had appeared out of no where, not on a full moon and was now shifting for the first time, also without a full moon.

Fade stood in full wolf form, she was a rather large all white wolf, very fluffy with the thickest coat Piper had ever seen on a wolf, she had small tiny ears compared to other wolves and bloody long claws that were already digging into the ground, and the growl that was now coming from her was more than loud and aggressive. Fade's tail was low to the ground and all her hackles were up as she stood between Piper and Alpha Timothy.

"Sweet Goddess." Edward was the first to speak, sounded amazed and shocked at the same time, this wolf was so pristine white, she'd likely not be seen standing in front of a snow drift, if she closed those brilliant blue eyes that Piper knew she had.

Had been so focused on Fade emerging, that she had not seen Annabella coming till she put herself between Fade and Timothy. Surprisingly, the woman smiled so big as she looked at Fade. "My Goddess, aren't you a sight for my tired old eyes. Ignore my idiot kin." She told Fade and put a hand on Timothy and shoved him back. "Get you bloody fool."

Timothy's eyes were right on Fade as well, he looked more than shocked by the sight of her fully realised. But he did actually back away, huffed a little more than annoyed. At being ordered to leave by Annabella, Piper thought. But he went.

Watched as Fade stepped sideways to track the man regardless he was leaving, heard Annabella laughed fully amused "Oh I see you have a one tracked mind...Now you come here to me, missy, let me get a real good look at you."

Fade's eyes moved to Annabella as Timothy stepped into the pack-house and out of sight. The woman knelt before Fade and then put both her hands on either side of her large head and looked right at her, was still smiling like this wolf was a blessing to see. Tilted her head to the left and then just chuckled softly "I've waited a long time for your kind to come back to us missy." Bowed

her head and watched Fade actually put her own forehead on Annabella's for a moment.

"Got a name?" Annabella asked as she stood up a moment later, and scratched behind Fade's ears, the wolf practically fell down and purred like a drum at the attention she was given.

"Fade." Edward told her "My Mate."

Saw Annabella look right at him, then walked right over to him and smelled him good and proper, nodded her head "I see why she came to you. You're a Timber Wolf, aren't you boy?"

"Yes," Edward nodded, "and my wolf's name is Timber."

Annabella laughed out loud and turned to look right at Fade, who was now sitting up watching their interaction. "Oh, I see you picked yourself a good one." Got snorted at, turned back to Edward "I'm willing to bet Timber is all white or mostly white, yes?"

"Yes." Edward nodded.

The woman clucked her tongue, "Cheeky girl, you have got yourself."

"You know what she is?" Piper interjected. She was curious.

"Mm I do. She's an Arctic Wolf. Not many around, very primal, run on pure instincts, I wouldn't tick her off. Though," Annabella's eyes moved to Edward, "Arctic wolf Packs a rare thing nowadays and honestly, I thought their gene pool was long gone. I haven't seen an Arctic wolf in near on eighty years, lost most of them to a massive Vampire attack. Is your wolf very Primal son?"

"More than most." Edward nodded.

"She liked that, that's why she came to you."

"Her rank?" Bradley asked "I can't catch it. But you bowed to her in my office as well."

"You won't catch it, and I did." Annabella looked at Piper, saw her eyes move away searching.

Piper turned to see what she was looking at, had to be Brandon and it was Brandon seemed Aspen had receded now, they were still over down by the back of the car.

“First of her kind in eighty years...likely Alpha Ranked herself.”

“Sweet Goddess.” It was Edward again. “My baby’s and Alpha.” walked right over to Fade and smiled down at her “Aren’t you just cute and fluffy.” Saw Fade nip him right on the leg and then just get up and trot away from him “Hey, come back here.” Edward called out to her and walked after her.

Heard Fade snort and then was just gone, running off across the pack, heard Edward laugh, and Brad tell him “Go.”

“You don’t need to tell me.” he was already on the move and ripping his clothes off as he went. Piper shook her head as she saw him shift into Timber and then was running at full wolf speed after his Mate.

Annabella laughed softly “Oh, what a pair, magnificent.” looked right at Bradley. “There pups will be a handful to say the least, all primal all the time. You also won’t be able to bring her into your pack. It’s very unlikely, already has an Alpha, won’t align to another unless he allows it. And she wants it.”

“Great, so what then?” Brad muttered.

“Just go with it, she’ll be able to connect with those she wants to. I wasn’t asking for any of you to tell me her name, I was asking her, and she told me, connected right to me. Arctic Wolf Packs, run a bit like Rogue Packs, but didn’t go around destroying other packs not interested, mostly stay in their wolf form too, very free-spirited and primal, a bit like gypsies I guess you could say.”

“So she’s aligned to Aspen.”

“Yes, and will stay that way, will be a good protector, like I said. Don’t tick her off. All that fur, will protect her in a fight, you’ll get injured before she does.”

Found Brandon reaching for her, Cooper had finally brought him back to her. Safe now, she guessed. She took the boy. “You alright?”

“Izzy’s wolf is huge.” he smiled right at her and seemed excited. It was his first wolf sighting, she supposed.

“Yes she is,” Piper admitted.

“Aspen alright?”

The boy nodded, “He didn’t like that Alpha coming at us.”

“Alright, we’ll try to limit that then.”

“I’ll have a word with him...Put him right in his place,” Annabella shook her head “He’s always been a bit too arrogant for my liking, used to getting his own way and doing as he pleases. Though I think it was likely that he was actually coming to you to apologise. Was ordered to, by his mother and all of us Elders, and if not he gets another public beating.”

“Oh” Piper was more than shocked by that.

“Whitlock laws, like I said, you might find them amusing.” she chuckled “Made by the Whitlock women.”

“Mum?”

“Yes.” she looked at Brandon “Is Izzy going to come back?”

“Yes, she will, though likely not for a few hours, might not see her till tomorrow morning, off running in wolf form for the first time.”

“Okay, uncle Eddie’s wolf looks just like her.”

“He does a bit.” She nodded, Timber did actually look very similar, just not as fluffy and had bigger ears from what she’d seen. “Lets go inside.”

Annabella fell into step with her. “It is good to see Fade. I miss the Arctic wolves, a fun breed. They can be mischievous at times, though don’t usually align to other packs.” Looked at Brandon. “She’s Aspen’s protector I think, so yours as well, Piper. How long have you known her?”

“Izzy...since Brandon was six months old.”

“Hmm, interesting to me.”

“Why?”

“Just is, though I am now curious about Izzy’s human lineage. Would you mind if I stayed another day or two, to ask her some questions?”

Piper blinked at the woman’s question, then turned to look at Brad questioningly. “Up to you Piper, I believe Annabella is asking your permission, not mine.”

“It’s your Pack.” Piper frowned at him.

“Izzy is part of your Pack, and you are the Luna to this Pack. You can make that decision.”

Piper just stared at the man, then looked at Annabella and sighed softly “It’s fine with me, if Izzy is happy to talk to you.”

“Excellent, she will. Fade already likes me.”

They walked inside to find Alpha Timothy pacing back and forth in the foyer. It did not escape Brandon either, though there was no appearance of Aspen, which was good. She did, however, feel him tense up instantly and hugged him to her “You’re alright, I’m right here sweetie.”

“So am I son.” Brad stepped right behind her, slid his arm around her and onto Brandon’s back “I will protect you always, your mother too. Benson and I promise you this.”

Piper watched as Brandon looked up at Brad and then slowly nodded, perhaps this was comforting the boy to a point that Aspen might actually stay inside him for the time being.

“Alpha Timothy, I believe you have something to say to my Mate Piper and my son Brandon.” Brad stated, all Alpha once more, also laid claim to the both of them in front of everyone here in this room.

He did not move away from them. She knew he was trying to make Brandon and Aspen feel safe, it was his job as the Alpha to do so, and as the boy’s father was likely just instinctual for him, she would deal with his arm around her for the moment. Harper didn’t seem to object to it at all. Didn’t even flick her tail in annoyance, though she was up and looking right at Timothy.

She saw Timothy nod his head, he closed the distance between them by half and then stopped, seemed to think better of getting any closer “I apologise

Piper. For threatening you. I did go about this all wrong. I would never have actually followed through on any threat. I only wanted to get you into my Pack, where you would be completely safe, with your own Kind...I'm a bit..." he huffed in what seemed to be annoyance, and his eyes moved to Annabella.

As did hers now, the woman was standing with her arms folded across her chest and was actually staring him down. Piper realised he had to say something specific, and as an Alpha, did not want to, but she got the distinct impression that if he did not, he was going to be punished by one of them Whitlock laws Annabella had mentioned.

Looked back at Timothy and could see his jaw tick, it took him a good 20 seconds before he finally stated "Slow on the up take, and idiot sometimes." and then he bowed his head slightly "I'm sorry cousin, for frightening you and your boy."

Piper nearly laughed out loud, oh! Calling himself slow and an idiot, that must be very humiliating, and to have to say it in front of another Alpha and his Unit from an allied pack no less, people he was going to have to deal with regularly and would remember.

"Will you accept my apology, Luna?"

"Hmm, I will think about it." She commented and saw him get really annoyed. His jaw was really ticking like crazy now, but he simply nodded his head, then just turned and walked away.

Heard Annabella chuckle "Oh, I like you, you're just like Jewel was. I'll send him back in the morning, he's been humiliated good enough," turned her eyes on Brad. "Now, I'll send the Whitlock laws down for Piper to peruse. You young man might want to behave yourself. I just heard you claim a Whitlock woman as your own, Alpha Bradley. Being Mated to a Whitlock means those rules now apply to you as well." The woman laughed now, good and proper, then walked away from them all, with a bounce in her step.

Piper smiled and wondered what those laws actually were, turned and looked right up at Brad herself. He was frowning after Annabella, then his eyes moved right to hers and she wondered if anything he'd done so far, where she was concerned, would invoke one of them Whitlock laws.

"Stop it." He stated, looking down at her.

“What?” She asked right back, but she couldn’t keep the amusement from her own voice.

“Thinking about ways to humiliate me.”

“I didn’t say anything.” Piper shook her head slowly, and bit her lips together to try and stop the smile.

“No! Your look says it all. You will if you get the chance.”

Piper snorted now and even Harper was fully amused. She simply nodded in agreement, because he was not wrong about that. Yes she would.

‘could be lots of fun.’ Harper piped up.

‘it could.’ Piper acknowledged her wolf, indeed it could.

“You might want to let me go now,” She told him.

He huffed right at her, but did let her go and she turned and walked away, off to the elevator, got in it with Brandon, looked back at Brad, he was still staring at her, didn’t look too happy about her acknowledging that she would.

“Dad looks mad.” Brandon commented after the doors closed.

“He’s not mad, he is annoyed is all. Don’t worry about it, it’ll be funny for you and I at some point, I imagine.” and she thought it might well be very funny, for them, well her, not Brad.

Chapter 68 - Unscentable

Bradley POV

Brad did not expect Aspen to actively step in front of his own mother and put a hand on her to keep her behind him. It was a very Alpha thing to do. Not when Timothy was just striding towards them, though he was coming with a purpose, it seemed. Aspen was clearly taking it as a threat to his mother.

Brad had not expected Izzy’s wolf Fade to burst out of her either, at just the sight of Alpha Timothy approaching Piper and Brandon, but she had likely responded to her own Alpha’s rising to the situation. That, along with

Timothy's dismissive attitude to Aspen being on the surface, like he did not care that the boy's wolf might rip out of him at just 7.

Brad knew they were all in agreement to try and keep the boy's wolf inside of him, for as long as possible, including Izzy and Fade, on that he supposed. She could well have emerged herself to stop her own Alpha from doing so. Very protective she was.

To see that large white wolf, with its fur so thick and long, looked to be a double coat, surprised him completely, and those small ears. He'd never seen anything like them in all his life, though he had studied wolves and those small ears filled with fur themselves were indicative of Tundra Wolves, he thought, but he was not certain he had never met one himself. Those bloody long claws of hers, looked deadly to him, were at least twice as long as any he'd seen before. There was no retracting them, that was for sure. Even in human form, those claws would be that long and menacing to look at. Likely scare the heck out of any one trying to take her on in a human fight.

Her teeth were not only bared but had drool dripping off of them in long sticky-looking streams, and the very loud growl that was being emitted from her, was pure rogue aggression. He'd heard that with Harper already, knew that sound, seemed so did Timothy. The man had come to a complete stand still as he looked at the wolf now protecting Piper.

Annabella, however, was not afraid at all, seemed really excited and happy, in fact, to lay eyes on Fade. Got up real close after she sent Timothy away, the man actually went, though Brad did register that both of them seemed to know what Fade was, clearly Timothy was not about to tangle with Fade. Spoke volumes to Brad.

Annabella showed no fear in her at all, and the two even touched heads like kin would, gave Fade a good scratch behind her little ears, and Fade was suddenly all happy herself and purring away. Now that the threat was gone, she was calm.

Eddie's reaction to Izzy's wolf, that man was very happy, likely Timbers emotions spilling over as well, he could see their eyes flickering as they talked amongst themselves or perhaps Eddie was just trying to stop Timber ripping out of him to claim his Mate.

She was a very pretty wolf indeed, though he found it kind of hard to look at her in the late afternoon sun. She was such a brilliant white that it actually caught glare from the sun hitting her fur.

There was not a single ounce of any other colour to her wolf, even her nose was white. Eddie had not been wrong about the brilliant blue of Fade's eyes either, they were a brilliant Cyan Blue nearly so bright they were glowing.

Brad knew the second Fade nipped Eddie's leg, with that all playful bite and then ran off from the man. His wolf was going to rip right out of him and go hunt and Mate his Mate in wolf form, likely Mark her as well. There was no stopping it, he waved the man off with a shake of his head. No wolf could resist their Mate being playful or running away, they would likely chase each other for a long while before the Mating if Fade was faster than Timber that was. It was likely due to her size.

Cooper brought Brandon back to Piper and it was his mother that he wanted. He reached right out for her, liked that at 7 he still liked to be carried around, allowed him to bond well with the boy himself. This was the first time he had seen a wolf emerge from its human. Then he'd seen Eddie shift into Timber, as well. He was hoping the boy wasn't frightened. He was mostly quiet, only had a few questions.

At least Aspen had not ripped out of the boy, and he'd also allowed Cooper to take him from the scene away from Piper. That surprised Brad a little, he didn't think Aspen would, seemed he had and receded back as well. A good thing. Might actually have listened to his mother's concerns about not emerging just yet.

Though Cooper had not taken the boy very far, just enough away to be out of the fight zone, that could have started, the man may have a beef with Piper, for something right now, but he was all Beta when he needed to be, and protecting the heir to the Pack was one of his jobs. Had not lacked in his duty, that growl from Aspen had set everyone of his Unit into work mode. He did note Betsie had been shoved back into the car by Harry. And he was right there by the car's door. She could not shift at this point. He would be protecting her first, and Brad would expect nothing less to be honest.

Damned near laughed himself when he realised that Timothy had to insult himself, by way of apologising to Piper, held it in, was very glad right at that moment that he was not a Whitlock himself. He was also very comfortable

standing in the foyer of his pack-house holding onto his Mate and son, all protective.

Though he had not actually done this to protect Piper, it was more for Brandon and Aspen's sake. He wanted those two to know that he would do everything to protect not just him but also his mother, made it very clear to the boy. A firm statement.

Neither she nor the boy pulled away from him, not even when he'd pulled them back up against him as his arm had gone round them. He did not need to step between them and Timothy, the man was actually of no threat to them, even though they did not like him or his mannerisms, he was their kin and he was from an allied pack.

Piper seemed to understand and just let him hold the two of them to his body. It's likely she realised he was trying to help calm their son as well as she was, but doing it the Alpha way.

He liked that she didn't just accept the man's apology, showed him she wasn't just stubborn with him, but with all wolves at this point. Made him feel a tiny bit better. Though not much.

Neither he nor Benson liked hearing Annabella state that they were now also bound by the Whitlock laws as he'd laid claim to Piper, for all to hear. That woman knew this information from the moment that he had told her Benson had Marked her. So had Timothy, for that matter, neither had said anything on the matter, kept it to themselves.

Annabella hadn't even brought it up in his office this morning, when talking to Piper earlier and she could have. Had mentioned those laws, but not that he was bound by them now. That woman had held off on telling him, on purpose, wanted him to see Timothy humiliate himself. Before announcing it to him, likely just so he could see, what it looked like, a deterrent in all likelihood, and she found it highly amusing to toss it out at him.

So did Piper, for that matter, and her completely amused look as she turned her eyes up to meet his, said it all. She would use the laws on him at will, told her right then to 'stop it' was more than a little surprised to see her actually admit she would use them on him to humiliate him.

Surprised both he and Benson to see her eyes flicker a bit, seems Harper was in agreement with Piper, for she just laughed and walked away, was still smiling to herself as the elevator doors closed on her and Brandon.

Felt a hand on his shoulder after the elevator closed, he turned and found Harry smiling at him. "She's more than amused Alpha." all Gamma, not Delta, he realised, with Eddie or with Izzy he was pulling double duty it seemed "She might just stay due to getting to use them laws on you."

Brad frowned at the man. "That is not what I want."

"Any reason to stay at the moment, is a good reason. Eddie's right, she'll come around when she's ready. I've not felt that much amusement, where your concerned, come off of her since we met her."

"I hope so," Brad referred to her coming around, "I need to go and speak with Timothy about his behaviour and not approaching them like that again...Lets unpack first, it'll give him time to calm down, looked like she ticked him off pretty good. Then I'll go hunt that man down."

There was quite a bit of shopping and he had some of the omega's take it upstairs, though he heard that Piper wouldn't let any of them unpack it and put it away for her, would do it herself, it seemed. Likely used to doing everything herself, no omega's out there helping a rogue.

Alpha Timothy sat in Bradley's office in the chair on the other side of his desk. Usually he would sit casually on the couch when talking with allied Alpha's, tried to keep it casual, but he wanted Timothy to understand this was formal, not casual, and it had not been missed on the man that Brad had been waiting in his Alpha chair for his arrival.

Timothy sat and stared right at him with a raised eyebrow, when Brad told him he would not step up to Brandon like that again, he was all Alpha when he stated it. Brad knew the man was not going to like it, but this was not his pack and he needed to pull himself into line or Brad was actually going to do it for him. He was going to have this man follow rules and protocol here inside his pack. Had been quite lenient with him due to how big his pack was and how many warriors he always brought with him, when aiding them, though now with the knowledge that Piper was his kin and her type of wolf, it was likely this was the reason.

Timothy turned the talk very quickly to his own liking, "I've yet to discuss Brandon's conception with Piper. I need to do that before I leave. I will also wait till Annabella is ready to come home. She should not be out on her own. That pendant around her wolf's neck, does tend to give our bloodline away to those who know about it."

"Is that something I should be concerned about?" Brad frowned.

"Always. Though I and my father before me, deal very harshly with any and all who attempt to kidnap a Whitlock female for their own sick twist needs or wants. Death awaits them, and all around them that have gained the knowledge of what they are."

"To keep them safe." Brad sighed "How often do Whitlock women get snatched?" He needed to know, was likely going to have to put a detail on Piper, if she was going to insist on working out in the human world. Which he knew she was.

"Not that often anymore, only twice now during my reign, and I not only attacked but slaughtered them all, on both occasions, as a full warning to others."

"The women?" Brad had to ask.

Timothy shook his head. "One survived, is still plagued with nightmares and traumatised years later, she is now under the direct protection of the Elders. The other," he sighed, "did not survive it unfortunately, we got to her too late."

"So Piper?"

"As long as that pendant stays out of sight, outside of this pack, and she doesn't wear it openly, I noticed, under her clothing, likely takes some sort of comfort from it being her, I suppose. Should be fine. No shifting into her wolf outside this pack is recommended unless it is absolutely necessary. That's my advice."

"Hmm." Timothy didn't know that she couldn't shift at this point in time, and might never be able to, so that currently was not a problem he had to worry about, perhaps later in their life. One less thing to have to worry about for now. "Annabella might be the person to talk to Piper about Brandon's conception." Brad brought the conversation back to its original topic. "I doubt she will talk to you about that."

“That’s fine, Annabella won’t lie to me about it. Likely try to get to you before I even do, if she is unhappy with the answer she gets.”

Brad raised an eyebrow at the man.

Timothy smiled right at him. “Oh, don’t take her hippy dippy, all happy demeanour, like she’s harmless. Annabella is half Arctic Wolf, likely why she recognised Piper’s friend right away. Annabella thought she was the last of her kind.”

“What?”

“Mm, don’t piss her off, she’s got a good set of claws on her that one, she is also our most revered Elder, likely not just related to Piper but that wolf as well. Annabella is a handful to say the least...when she chooses to be. The pups love her though.”

“So related to Izzy, that is Fades human counterpart.”

“Seems that way, how far off that relation is, only Annabella’s Wolf and Fade would know that, likely not discuss it either, just between them. I heard she wants to run Izzy’s lineage, where is the woman from?”

“Maine. I’ll have Cooper here,” He waved at his Beta who was leaning on the wall listening to the conversation but had yet to interject a single remark.

“Send that file over to you, it might help you track her blood line.”

“I’d appreciate that, you might not want Brandon in the room when Annabella questions Piper. I’m very direct in my line of questioning about my Whitlock females and I imagine so will Annabella.”

“Alright.” Brad nodded, there was nothing he could do about that. He knew this was coming, had been warned himself by Timothy, though the fact that she and Brandon weren’t afraid of him should go in his favor, or at least he was hoping so. “After dinner, do you?”

“Yes, I’m sure that will be fine.” Timothy nodded. “Remember Bradley, I will and so will Annabella, take her word over yours.”

“I am aware of that.” Brad nodded.

Though he still had no idea what Piper's thoughts on that night were, they'd not discussed it, they could well be anything, she had rejected him right after that. Sighed internally, he could very well find himself in a duel to the death before the night was over.

"Just so you know, Bradley. There will be no Proxy, your father can not step up for you, even though you had no idea about the contract."

"I wouldn't ask him to, Timothy, as ticked off with him as I was...still am, I suppose, I will stand and be accountable to whatever my Mate states."

"Good. Hopefully, and I do mean this Alpha Bradley, this will all come to nought." The man stood and walked out of Brad's office.

He heard Cooper sigh heavily from his place by the wall, "What do you think she will say?"

"I don't honestly know. I've not mentioned it to her at all. Not told her about that clause, I didn't want to, to be honest, and I have no idea how she feels about that night... I only know she rejected me after it." It did concern him.

"Brad, that could be for any number of reasons. You know as well as I do, she was going to leave anyway, the cameras up on the Alpha floor showed she had a bag packed and was ready to leave."

He did know that, also knew she'd not been expecting him to come home that night either, he'd been supposed to be off to an Alpha meeting in an Allied pack for a few days. "I wonder how often she slept in my bed over the years?" He voiced allowed.

Saw Cooper look right at him and then shrug a moment later "Could have been all the time or never, that might have been the very first time she did that."

Brad didn't know, he was curious, he now realised she could have gone anywhere and done anything inside this pack. With no scent, no-one would have ever been able to track her movements. Hm, make for a good spy investigating enemy packs, he thought absently. Though not anymore, she smelled like him now.

He sighed and got up to make his way to her room. He had to tell her about the meeting that was needed between her and Annabella. At least she

seemed to like the woman now. Knocked on the door, Brandon answered it with a smile up at him. "Hi dad."

He really did love hearing that come from his boy, smiled right down at him "Hi son." loved saying that too. Hoped he would get to do it for a very long time to come and not just for the rest of the day. If that duel happened and he lost.

Realised the boy was already changed into some of his new clothes, as was Piper, he noted when his eyes moved to her, they were both wearing jeans and fluffy socks, no shoes on, and both of them were wearing long sleeved light weight knitted tops.

Her knitted sweater fit her like a glove, showed off all her curves to him, smiled at her, she did look good in Maroon, "Piper I need to have a word."

She was looking at him.

"Out in the hall if possible," he asked, didn't need Brandon freaking out or even hearing this conversation. It was likely to set Aspen off "It's very important, Please." he added, when she didn't get up right away.

Saw her sigh and finally get up. "Just a few minutes, Brandon," he assured the boy, who simply nodded, didn't seem all that concerned by his request.

Closed the door after she walked out, found her eyes on him questioningly "Annabella needs to talk to you, regarding that contract between our pack and hers, the one I mentioned briefly that surrounded you and your mother. I'm not going to get into it with you." He shook his head and halted her questions. "Best you just answer her questions honestly and I don't want..." he stood and thought about that for a moment "to influence your answers, or to make you hesitate on anything, or...think you need to not answer honestly."

"What is it about?" She was frowning up at him now.

He much preferred her smiling at him, and she had done that today. Right at him, though fully amused by her own thoughts, it had been right at him.

"Best you go in with no idea. So she can gauge your reaction." he sighed "Just be honest with her, regardless of the questions."

"Am I in trouble?"

“No.” he shook his head “It’ll be after dinner. I won’t go far either. You can use my office...or your office if you like.”

“My office?”

“Yes, the Luna’s office.” he told her it would be hers if nothing came of the questioning.

“Oh, I don’t mind, I guess.” She shrugged.

“I’ll organise it. Brandon will have to stay with someone while you talk to Annabella. Timothy wanted to do this questioning himself. I vetoed that.”

Piper just nodded up at him, seemed confused but curious at the same time.

“I’d like us to all have a family dinner beforehand, please. In one of the private dining rooms.”

Watched her narrow her eyes right on him, he didn’t really want to push her into it, but depending on the outcome of her conversation with Annabella, this could well be the only chance for a family dinner he could have with her. And he wanted to have that just in case the worst happened. “Please,” Brad asked again, and saw her nod her head finally.

Chapter 69 - Unscentable

Piper POV

It was the way Brad was looking at her, when he asked her to attend a private family dinner, and that please, she could see that there was something else going on. Didn’t know what it was, but whatever it was, was causing the man concern.

Though he was trying to mask his emotions and convey to her nothing was wrong, something she was very good at doing and detecting herself, for that matter. He did cover it very quickly, it was there a flicker of something akin to sadness, she thought. Something in him needed this.

Piper did not think it was just his wanting to have dinner with her either, and this was what had made her nod her head and say yes to that family dinner. The minute that she did, he simply stepped aside and opened her door for her, to go back inside her room once more.

He did not attempt to come in and see Brandon either, it was weird. Something was definitely off. “You don’t need to dress up, Piper. Just come as you are, you and Brandon.” at her nod he closed the door and was gone.

Piper sat down way more confused, then out in the hallway, ‘don’t like it.’ Harper stated, sounded a bit annoyed. So it wasn’t just her, even Harper felt something was off. It took a full minute to shake it off. If he wanted her to know, surely he would tell her outright. He did seem pretty straight forward in voicing what he wanted. Realised she had no idea what time dinner would be, he’d not said. Probably coming and picking them up was all.

“Mum?”

“I don’t know,” she answered honestly. “Annabella wants to talk to me again.” It was all she knew.

“I like her.” Brandon smiled up at her.

“Mm, she does seem nice.” Piper nodded “Your dad, wants us to have dinner with him.”

“okay.” He nodded.

“His whole family,” Piper added.

“Oh...whose that?”

“Um, I guess his parents, sister and brothers, any cousins you might have, he didn’t really say, just stated a family dinner...” looked right at him “Brandon, it will be a room full of Alpha wolves, is Aspen going to be okay with that?” needed to see how he felt about this.

Watched him seem to discuss it with his wolf, then nod his head “Should be, he seems to understand which wolves are his kin.”

“Alright.” she nodded, a good start to him getting along with other Alpha wolves.

Brad did come to collect them at 6. He’d changed into jeans and a tee-shirt himself, and Piper wondered as she looked at him, if he should buy something in a bigger size, that shirt was a neat fit and hugged all the curves of his chest

and abdominal muscles, even noticed she could see his v-line with that shirt on.

Heard the man clear his throat and when she looked at him questioningly, there was a fully amused smile right on his face, internally chastised herself and shook her own head, realising she had been staring right at his body, ogling him, she supposed. Certainly had taken a good look at him and he knew it.

Heard his amused chuckle a moment later when she glared at him, he knew she'd been looking at all his muscles, caught in the act, she'd not really even known she was doing it until he'd cleared his voice and smiled right at her. Seemed happy she was ogling him.

"Everyone is going casual. I'm hoping it will help ease Aspen's tension a little."

"Alright." Piper nodded and said nothing more.

They walked into the private dining room and everyone was already there. It seemed they were the last to arrive. Bradley introduced everyone by name. Benjamin and Lilly, his father and stepmother, Hendrix, his brother and then his Mate Robyn and their two daughters, Levi and Blake. Then there was Megan and her Mate, Simon. She was Lilly's daughter to her previous Mate, and their three children also all girls; Hilda, Nadine and Lee-Anne. And then Hadley, his sister.

Piper realised that he had not only introduced them but in ranked order, a bit weird seeing as it was a family dinner. It was a lot to take in. Apparently, his other brother was off on holiday with his Mate at her old pack. So they would get that introduction when he came back.

Piper sat where Brad pulled a chair out for her, still no sign of Izzy, likely Fade and Timber were still getting acquainted out in the woods. Brandon sat between her and Benjamin. He was still smiling at the boy, and heard Bradley actually tell his father to let up a bit as he sat down himself.

Everyone was dressed in jeans and tee-shirts or sweaters, and there was a lot of chatter going on around the table. Among his family members, it seemed that they all got along well. She was pretty quiet, used to it just being her and Brandon with Izzy every other day, it was very noisy in here. With them laughing and getting along.

There were some questions directed at her and Brandon alike, mostly it seemed about what they liked to do, when not at work or in school where Brandon was concerned. Brandon answered questions, like she did, but didn't offer anything extra, as neither did she.

Though when the boy had stated his favourite place was the Swiss Alps because it was really good for snowboarding, that stopped near everyone in the room and suddenly the questions were firing at the boy about where he'd been for holidays.

Brandon seemed to come more alive at that point. He did enjoy telling them about all the places he had been, all over the world, smiled right up at her at one point and said "Mum takes me wherever I want to go." and she'd just smiled right down at him, she did do that. If he asked, she took him. Wanted him to have everything, never miss out on a single thing he wanted.

They were all shocked bar Brad, about all the places he had been, which told her that that man had indeed been inside of her house. Likely seen all their family photos. She let him talk to whoever and about whatever it was good to see him and Aspen so comfortable in the room.

Piper herself was thrown a few questions about her business and about how well it was doing. How she'd managed to build such a large company for herself. She'd just shrugged it off. Her designs, even here in the pack when she'd been here, had been popular, stated it was just luck in all likelihood.

Megan comment that 'maybe it was the Goddess's way of compensating her for all she'd had to go through.'

Piper just stared at the woman. She doubted that very much, so didn't say anything at all about it. She didn't like that they all seemed to know what had happened between her and Bradley, that was private business, why did everyone here seem to know about it, annoyed her that they had been told, more than a little.

Bradley brought up Piper opening a new store here in Helena, that he'd offered the foyer of Drake Industries and all eyes turned upon her suddenly. "I haven't made a decision." she stated calmly, "Though Izzy does like the location." and the woman did.

It was Benjamin, his father that brought up their pack movers who'd been arrested and that the van was still currently impounded in Portland. He looked

right at her as though he expected her to fix that, “Not my problem.” she shook her head, and it was not as far as she believed.

“Piper please.” It was Brad now. She turned to look at him. “call and rescind your claim that my men were breaking into your house.”

“Why? Isn’t that just what they did? I did not agree to them packing and moving my things. I certainly don’t recall giving you or them a key to my house. So I believe that is considered breaking and entering, also packed some of my things into that truck without permission. That is theft, is it not?” He was a lawyer, he would know.

She was staring right at him, was still annoyed with the way he had just gone to her home, had decided to pack it up for himself and move her without her permission.

“You are my Mate, Piper. So it’s not. I was simply helping you to move home.”

“Really?” She leaned back in her chair and stared hard at him “I’m still a rogue currently. I was also at the time, so you, Bradley, have no actual claim on any of my things.”

Saw him frown right at her “I have laid my claim on you Piper.”

“Oh, I’m well aware of the fact, that I do not recall that either.” She snapped.

“Children.” it was Benjamin. “no fighting at the table.”

Piper ignored the man “and if you think just because you claim to me, I’m about to go handing everything I own over to you. My hard-earned companies, my car, my house or my money. You’d be dead wrong. I earned a good living as a rogue. That money will not be going into your bank account or into this packs funds either. You have no right to it, regardless of your claim on me.”

He was frowning right at her now and deeply, so “I have never asked you to,” he commented, “and I’m not going to either. This pack has plenty of money.”

“Good,” Piper stated, she was not about to hand over thirty to fifty percent of her net worth to this man, just because he was there Mate and an Alpha. She didn’t even know if he knew what her actual net worth was. He might very well have looked it up, he might not care at all. Though from the questions and

comments she had heard it was likely they all did know she was worth a considerable sum.

Heard the man sigh and just stopped talking, it seemed he wanted to let it go for now, that was likely something they were going to have to come back too. Though it did seem he was unhappy about her response to his moving van. Well, he shouldn't have been so bloody arrogant as to believe he could just up and move her any time he liked.

Dinner went for a good hour and a half and she was over it, by the time they all started to file out. Had fallen silent and just didn't want to talk anymore. Was not used to this kind of thing, was used to dinner being small and quiet, or alone for that matter. Brad did seem to realise this and called a halt to dinner himself.

Annabella was waiting in Brad's office along with Cooper. They seemed to be just chatting casually. Brad picked Brandon up, the boy was fine with being picked up constantly by the man, "I'll be just out in the foyer." he said, looking right at Annabella. "I won't go far."

"Good." was all the woman said in return as he stepped out of his own office after Cooper did, and closed the door, she turned and looked right at Annabella.

"What is all this about?"

"Bradley didn't tell you? Why you were summoned?"

"No, just stated you had some questions for me. To answer them honestly."

"I don't think you would lie to me, Piper. But I am quite surprised he didn't give you the run down, most men would."

Piper shrugged. "Guess I'm allowed to formulate my own opinions."

"That is a good thing. Come and sit down."

Piper did, sat and looked right at the woman, her great grandmother, she'd been told, didn't look anything like her at all. It took a full minute before Annabella spoke "How was Brandon conceived?" She asked.

Piper frowned at that woman, that was a stupid question. "Same as every other child out there."

"Not what I meant. Did you consent to having sex? is what I actually meant."

Piper stared at the woman now, she did not want to think about that night. "What happened between Bradley and I, is our business."

"You'd think that...but with what you are, we need to make sure that it wasn't against your will."

Leaned back in her chair and stared at her now, "Why is that important?"

"Whitlock laws, and the contract between this pack and our pack. There were rules around your mother Jewel and any female children she had. I'm just looking to see if the contract was breached."

"You're here to punish him, in other words."

She saw Annabella sigh and shake her head. "Not me. It will be Timothy who does that. Alpha to Alpha. That's what the contract states."

Now that gained her attention and not just hers, she felt Harper sit right up and tilt her head, "What exactly is the punishment?" she asked.

"Did you consent, Piper, or did he just take what he wanted from you?"

Piper's eyes narrowed on Annabella, this was why he wanted a family dinner, she realised. Bradley had no idea how she felt about that night. And if she was to claim he'd taken what he wanted from her, he was going to be punished. Felt Harper snarl at that thought "The punishment?" she questioned again.

"Answer my question first, then I'll answer yours."

Piper stared hard at the woman, as Annabella stared right back at her, she was trying to read her. That might be difficult for the woman. She looked impassive most of the time, as she was now, in fact, had very good control of how to not show her emotions, if she so chose to, had learned to do that a long time ago.

"I crawled into his bed. If you must know."

“I don’t care about that. Did you consent or not?”

“He was my Mate, he did not hurt me,” Piper told her.

“Doesn’t mean you said yes, Piper. Just means the bond took over and you enjoyed it. Did you consent?”

She was pushing really hard for whether or not Piper gave consent. She actually did not recall doing so. Just felt his hands on her and then he’d been all over her. She’d not said no, but didn’t recall saying yes either. There was an Alpha here to punish and Alpha if she said no.

‘Alpha Duel.’ Harper informed her, sounded very angry all of a sudden as she came to the realisation.

‘That’s’ Piper halted as she considered it ‘to the death.’

As much as she wasn’t actively seeking to attach herself to Bradley at this moment in time. Harper was not at all liking the idea of an Alpha on Alpha duel. In fact, it was ticking her off. Piper realised she could feel Harper’s anger notching upwards.

Looked at Annabella. “He was my Mate. I was leaving this pack. Couldn’t take the pain of him not knowing who I was anymore.” that was all the complete truth. “I crawled naked into his bed, wanted one moment with a man I craved, but would not recognise me. I got that moment, enjoyed it, said please and actually begged him not to stop. Then I left, rejected him while he slept, and then ran away and rejected his pack. Harper and I were dying and staying here was no longer an option for us.”

Saw Annabella really looking at her for a long time. “I’m not lying,” Piper commented, though only one part of it was a lie, it was unlikely that Annabella would detect it.

“So you went to him?”

“I did. Right into his room, into his very bed.”

“That’s not what Timothy said.”

Piper raised an eyebrow at the woman. “Isn’t it? I was there, was he?”

Annabella sighed “So your stating you consented to everything that happened that night between you and Bradley.”

“Yes.” Piper stated flatly.

“Alright.” Annabella nodded “I’ll accept that, seeing as I don’t sense any fear or hatred where the man is concerned. If I had, I wouldn’t believe you and would have your own Alpha come in here and Order you to tell the truth.”

“The punishment?”

“You’re not so stupid, a duel to the death Piper. Like you and your wolf thought.” she’d not missed her and Harper’s brief comments to each other.

“I want to see that contract,” she stated, and now she did, needed to know what else was in it.

“We will not change it, Piper. Make amendments for Brandon, but no changes will be made for you or any Whitlock girls you and Bradley produce in the future, or Brandon for that matter. It is not negotiable.”

“I want to see it.” Piper restated.

“Bradley will give it to you, I’m sure, and considering Brandon will be the next Alpha, he’ll also need to see it at some point before he takes over, though when he is much older. To know what falls right on his shoulders.” the woman stood up. “Good night Piper.”

Piper stood and followed the woman out of the room. Not only was Bradley standing out there, so was his whole Unit, Eddie was back or had been recalled. Not sure which, likely the latter due to the seriousness of the situation. His father was also standing next to him along with Alpha Timothy. They were all waiting for the outcome of this little meeting. It seemed all of them knew about it.

“All is well.” Annabella told Timothy, and Piper saw the man actually looked relieved. Obviously, he didn’t want to Alpha Duel Bradley to the death, anymore that Bradley likely wanted to himself. He also looked relieved, as did his father and the entire Alpha Unit.

She was in no way relieved, she had no idea who would win that Duel, looked from one to the other, more than annoyed, and then turned and stalked away.

No wonder a family dinner was so important to him. It could very well have been his last one.

They were going to punch that man right in his stupidly handsome face one day. He could have warned her as to what the consequences were, or what the hell she was walking into or setting him up for. The punishment at least.

Though why he hadn't? Maybe he to wanted an actual answer to that question. He'd taken her pretty damned quick that night. Perhaps what he'd felt in Sydney when he touched her, had happened that night and he'd lost all control. When she thought about it now, he did seem insatiable to her, so it was likely.

Stalked into her room and banged the door shut, scared both Izzy and Brandon. It seemed "I'm gonna punch him in that smug face of his one day." She muttered and flopped down on the couch.

"What'd he do?" Izzy asked, sounding concerned.

"Nothing." Piper sighed and he actually hadn't this time, he'd actually done nothing, had sent her into that meeting with no intention of influencing her at all. Wanted her to just tell the truth and let the chips fall where they may.

She could actually feel Harper was still ticked off, her own Mate had Marked and claimed her, but had left out that he might very well be in an Alpha Duel and die this very night, which would have meant he could have been taken away from her.

'Mine.' Harper snarled all aggression inside her mind.

Piper blinked at that 'Harper?'

She could feel rage starting to pour off of her wolf "Izzy." she stated could feel Harper stalking furiously inside her mind. "Get Brandon out of here now."

"What?" it was both Izzy and Brandon.

"Do it, Harper is losing it."

"Mum?"

"Go Brandon. Please." She asked as she felt waves of fury roll off of her wolf as Harper tried to push forward. Saw Fade on the surface looked right at her,

then just snatched up Brandon and left the room in a flash. Her wolf seemed to understand what was about to happen.

Piper had only ever felt this much rage from her wolf once before, when they had been cornered between Eddie and Bradley and they had been trying to touch her, when she'd not wanted to be touched at all. This, however, was something else.

Felt Harper rip to the surface and shove her all the way back into her own mind, then just roared all her fury and aggression into the room, kicked the coffee table and it went flying across the room and shattered against the wall "how dare he." she snarled and the couch was up ended and the curtains were ripped off the windows and tossed about the room.

Her fury didn't last all that long, got it all out in less than 5 minutes, just an explosion of pure rage it seemed, and then she was just done, stood standing in the middle of the room glaring right at the door to the hallway, though no longer in a fury, was still ticked off.

'Don't go out there.' Piper tried to calm her wolf. 'Stay put, we're okay.'

'Mad at Mate.' She snarled

'I can see that, I even understand why.' and she did.

Bradley kept telling them he and Benson wanted them, but knew that there was a possibility he was going to die very quickly and hadn't said a damned thing. Benson had Marked her with the possibility that he could be ripped away from her at any given moment. It was inconsiderate of her wolfs feelings.

'Punish him.' Harper snarled.

'How do you want to do that? It might hurt Brandon in doing so. Is attached to the man now.' might not have been a problem if the boy didn't care about his father, likely Piper would just let her go out there and beat the living hell out of him for his stupidity.

Heard Harper snarl again and then just receded and stalked off to the back of her mind, still mad at her Mate. Yes, Piper was more than annoyed and a little angry. But not outraged by it. Brad had not tried to sway her into telling

Annabella she'd consented, he'd let her just tell the truth. Not that she had stated the whole truth.

Everything that night had happened so fast, she'd not even had the chance to say no, he was her Mate, and he'd wanted her, it was all she and Harper had ever really wanted, sighed who the bloody hell knew. Looked at the state of the room and shook her head, bloody men, they were all impossible.

Walked over and righted the couch, couldn't do much about the coffee tables shattered glass all over the room, or the torn and ripped curtains. Harper had all her claws out during that moment of rage.

Saw the door open slowly and found Eddie stepping in, looked cautious to her. He looked at the room as he closed the door, looked right at her questioningly.

"Harper in a fury."

"Oh, I got that from Izzy and Fade, both screaming it at me, down our Mate Bond link."

Her eyes moved to Edward's neck, there was a large filigree here on his neck, had a slight bluish tinge. She noted, the size of the mark indicated that they had Marked and Mated in wolf form.

"I don't think it's a good idea to put them near Harper right this minute, she is out for punishment, furious at her Mates."

Edwards' eyes lit right up and that smile was huge all of a sudden "At her Mates, huh?"

"Shut it Edward, I can't deal with that right now as well."

"Alright, can you deal with a few omeag's to help clean up this mess?"

"No, I can do it myself, don't bring them afterhours. That's not fair to them."

"They'll come Piper, you're the Luna."

"I don't want them to work just because I had a tantrum. Well, Harper did. Just get me a dust pan and broom."

"Alright." He nodded "Your still mad."

“Yes she is.” Piper nodded “Leave it alone, it’ll pass on its own or she’ll...” Piper left it unsaid, it would be clear to Edward the Gamma that if Harper wanted a piece of her Mate she would do so and be uncaring as to who saw it or how he felt about it.

Watched him leave the room, sighed, Harper was lying down inside her mind, but her tail was flicking furiously from side to side, she couldn’t punish Brad or his wolf without upsetting Brandon in all likelihood, and this was also spilling annoyance into her wolf’s mood as well.

Chapter 70 - Unscutable

Brad POV

Bradley watched as Annabella and Piper came out of his office. Relief flooded through his entire body at Annabella’s words “All is well.” though from the impassive look he and Timothy alike got from Piper, he knew she was well and truly controlling her facial expression, just shook her head and then walked away. Couldn’t read how she was actually feeling.

Saw Timothy nod at him, the man himself seemed very relieved, they had known each other for a long time, before he was the Alpha even. They had helped each other out, done business together, seen their wolves go to each others packs after full moon mating balls.

Neither one of them actually wanted to Duel the other, to the death. It was likely that neither of them even knew who would win against the other. They’d never fought against each other before, not even sparred against each other at this point.

Bradley could feel the tension around him, and not just from his own father, but his entire Unit ease off. No-one wanted an Alpha Duel.

‘It’s not over Brad.’ Edward told him via the mind-link.

Brad turned and frowned at the man, it was over, the conversation was done and all was well, there was not going to be a duel, everything was good.

‘Piper and Harper, may have looked fine. But they are not. Anger is welling off of them, they’re mad about something.’

Bradley sighed, he should have known that impassive look on Piper's face meant trouble was brewing. What exactly she was mad about he wasn't sure. She had been annoyed by the end of dinner, something there had set her off as well. Hadn't had the chance to find out what that had been either. From dinner straight to that meeting with Annabella.

Though from the comments he'd gotten at dinner, about wolves' earnings being rolled into the packs funds to help make it more prosperous; though he had decreased the amount to just fifteen percent, a few years ago. The major pack companies that his father and brothers still ran, the law firm and the construction business earned well. The pack was happy and secure, he'd actually wanted to drop that percentage right down to nothing. But this father wouldn't actually allow him to do so, there were pack laws and wolfen laws that had to be strictly followed and all wolves within packs must contribute.

Piper had earned herself one hell of a living outside of this pack, and that money was rightly hers and she wasn't willing to give it up, it seemed. Though once she actually became the Luna to the pack.

Was Mated by him, things were likely going to have to change, she was not going to like that, and Brad was not going to bring it up at this point. Needed to keep her happy and calm still. Though from Eddie's words that wasn't happening tonight.

It did not take long for Edward to bolt away from him and up the stairs, they were all still in the foyer when he shot off up to the stairs, at full wolf speed. Brad cursed under his breath. It had to be Piper, went after the man, found him standing right outside the Luna Suites door, practically leaning on the door, his eyes were closed, the suite Brad knew was sound proofed, the man was not listening, he was using all his Gamma ability to sense out what was going on in that room.

Brad could see Izzy with Brandon, down the hallway near Eddie and her room. The boy was holding on tight to her hand and looked upset, 'in a rage' came an unknown female voice inside his mind.

'Izzy?'

'Who else would it be?' She sounded annoyed.

It shocked him to hear her inside his mind. She'd not been initiated into the pack, though Annabella did state Fade could connect with anyone she so chose to, so he guessed Izzy could too.

'About what exactly?' He had no actual idea. Walked towards her, he was not going to get past Eddie, no one was and if she was in a rage, it wasn't advisable either. Eddie would also know when it stopped.

Brad could see that Brandon was also watching the door to their room. He didn't even attempt to reach out for Brad, didn't want his father, was happy enough with Izzy for support, it seemed. Got to sort this little pack of theirs out.

"She said she wanted to punch you in the face." Izzy looked right at him.

He raised an eyebrow at her. "Why?"

"I don't know, stated you did nothing. Then..." she shrugged "Asked me to get Brandon out of the room. Harper was losing it."

Brad frowned right at her, Harper was losing it? He did not know what to make of that. Now understood why Eddie was glued to the door, he was trying to sense out his Luna's mood, which of course, would be much easier if she was a pack member.

Brad stood with Izzy and Brandon, and waited like they did. Though it appeared to him that Piper had enough sense about her to get Brandon out of the room before her wolf lost it, was likely in a full rogue rage in there, over something he'd done.

Watched as Eddie opened the door slowly and looked inside, before actually stepping inside and closing the door behind him. Sighed she was likely calm enough, he supposed, connected himself to Eddie via a mind-link so that he could hear what was going on inside that room, needed to know himself.

Eddie didn't shove him away or block his attempt, didn't seem all that bothered by the slight intrusion, his need to know what was going on. Heard Piper state that Harper was mad, sighed to himself. He'd seen Harper in a fully ticked off all rogue aggression before, kicked Eddie good and proper, sounded to him like that had happened again, though why?

Didn't like hearing Piper state that she didn't want him or Benson anywhere near her at all, that Harper wanted to punish him. They hadn't even done anything wrong that he was aware of. But the words 'furious at her Mates' he had to hold back a smile. That meant Harper thought of not just Benson as her Mate, but Bradley too. That was a huge relief to both him and Benson.

Heard and felt Eddie's amusement and happiness "At her Mate's huh?" and nearly chuckled himself when she told him to shut it. They were going to accept him and his wolf. This made him and Benson very happy. Though what had ticked her off?

'Eddie ask her what set Harper off?' Brad asked the man but got ignored, which made Brad frown. She was not calmed all the way down, he thought, and disconnected from the Gamma, he might need to use all his focus on her still.

Looked at Izzy and Brandon "Mum's going to be fine." he told the boy "calming down now."

"I don't understand." Brandon looked up at him.

"Neither do I yet." Brad answered him honestly "Eddie will find out. She just needs a few minutes."

"You should ask yourself. Shouldn't always rely on Eddie." Izzy muttered, up at him.

Brad wondered if that was all Izzy or a little of Fade in there, likely a bit of both he thought. They always seemed to have a bone to pick with him. Alpha defiance and that streak to protect Piper pushed through.

"I will, when she calms down Izzy."

"You know, I never once saw her mad, till you came along."

He looked right at her and sighed "It's complicated."

"I get it. Fade has explained it to me. Still you should talk to her yourself. It would be better and you'll not always be able to rely on Eddie. What if he's not here and she loses it?"

She had him on that one but there was nothing to do about it. "She doesn't want to see me in there right now, otherwise I would go in Izzy."

Saw Eddie come out of the room, look down the hall towards them, at Izzy and Brandon and then head off in the other direction, came back a few minutes later with a dustpan and broom.

"Eddie, I can have someone else do that." He told the man.

"Piper doesn't want that, stated it clearly, will clean up her own mess." He was only in the room for a minute before he came out again. "I would leave it for now Brad, she's still mad at you."

"What did I do?" he asked, and still had no idea.

Eddie shook his head, "Your guess is as good as mine." Then he hugged Izzy and smiled down at her. "Come on, let's go raid the kitchen, Brandon, what's your mum's favourite junk food?"

"Caramelised popcorn."

"Well, let's go see if we have some."

Brad sighed, the man was trying to sweeten her into calming down. "The theatre room will have the mixing's for that Eddie."

It seemed Piper liked caramel a lot. He watched the three of them go, walked down the hall and stared at her door. The only reason he wasn't pushing it open was because he'd heard her himself state they didn't want to be near him right now.

Stated he was their Mate, but also didn't want anything to do with him right this very minute. It had to be something to do with Annabella. Perhaps those questions were too invasive and she was upset about them. Brad knew that they would be and didn't warn her about what to expect.

Piper had asked him why the meeting and he'd not really answered the question, though only because he had not wanted her to think, that he was trying to get her to answer any of those questions in his favour.

Was leaning on the wall next to his own Suite's door when the three of them came back 20 minutes later, fully loaded up with junk food and milkshakes.

Eddie held the door open for them and waited for Izzy to put her stuff down and come back to take the other stuff from Eddie. He didn't go into the room himself.

Brad couldn't see Piper in there at all, though he knew she had not come out of the room, he'd not moved at all, just in case she did come out while there was no-one watching her.

Brad looked at Eddie when he closed the door. "In the shower," he commented, "I suggested a movie night. Just the three of them, might seem more like they are back home in Portland."

Brad nodded and said nothing, she'd only been here and awake for a day and a half. It was going better than he planned, but she could very well be overwhelmed and he'd not know it unless she actually told him so.

Saw Eddie smile right at him. "Just needs a bit more time, it will all be fine. Harper claimed you to Piper, Piper verbalised it. So just be patient."

"I am being." Brad sighed "Do you have any idea?"

The man shook his head, "Might want to talk to Annabella, she came out of your office mad,"

Brad nodded and headed off to find the woman in question. Likely be in the suite he'd allocated to them for their visit. That was where he found her a few minutes later. She smiled right up at him.

"Come in, son."

Brad blinked at the word 'son', then realised that, on a technicality, she could actually call him that. She was related to Piper, and an Elder at that. Which meant once they were mated, he too would be related to this woman.

"Harper went into a full blown rage, after your meeting," He stated, didn't beat around the bush.

"Hmm," she nodded. "To be expected, it is the usual reaction from about sixty percent of she-wolves, after our conversation."

"What? Why?" Brad was frowning now.

“Why? I should think that would be obvious! But in your case...you didn’t warn her about the topic. Why not?”

“You wanted the truth. I was not going to sway her.” Brad answered honestly.

“Interesting. Most in your situation, do try to explain, including telling what the punishment is. Your Mate Bond will generally outweigh everything else and” she shrugged, “Make your Mate state, what needs to be heard, not what actually happens.”

“I didn’t do that.”

“I’m aware. Good for you son...From my point of view...not so much her wolfs. You could have died tonight and didn’t tell her this, didn’t pre-warn her.”

“You told her what the punishment was?”

“I didn’t need to, as soon as I told her Timothy would punish you. She and her wolf figured it out very quickly. As most do. Anger is the natural result of not being told about the consequences.”

“So she’s mad at me because?... I didn’t tell her, didn’t try to sway her?” He frowned.

“Mm, it’s a catch22, if you had warned her, she’d be mad at you for trying to get her to state what might not have happened. On one hand, they can understand why you said nothing, but on the other hand, if she’d stated she didn’t consent and you just took what you wanted from her, you’d have been Alpha Duelled to the death. They would or could have lost their Mate, before even getting to claim them.”

Bradley sighed. It seemed that no matter which way he approached this he would still be in the bad books with Piper and Harper. “ You could have warned me!”

“Why would I do that? You should have seen it coming. Especially with a Mate who is half claimed and a rogue.” shook her head at him, appeared she believe this.

He frowned right at her and Annabella simply stared right back at him, didn’t seem concerned at all. “Leave her be, its good rages over this, means they are willing to be your Luna. Though a warning for you Bradley. I’ve seen she-

wolves tear into their Mates for this very thing. Damned near killing their Mates in a fury over not being told about the consequences, I'd say the only thing saving your ass from a beating, is the fact that your Mate up there has a child's feelings to consider."

"Seen any Alpha Duels?"

"Yes once, Timothy's father." she nodded, "the man still lives, you realise."

"I do, and the she-wolf?"

"In our Pack, her Mate was killed. She'd already rejected him by then," shrugged it off "It happens on the rare occasion. But as we told you, most Whitlocks stay within our own pack."

"I heard."

"You look after my great granddaughter and my great great grandson now, won't you?"

"I will protect them at all cost Annabella. I promise you this."

She smiled right up at him "Good, good. Now I will be visiting regularly, likely come and see them when you hold Mating balls, an excuse to see them. I'll make myself a chaperone for the pack." she chuckled "I kind of like it here."

Brad smiled down at her. "Come and stay for a while, if you like."

"I might just do that." She nodded.

Brad made his way back to his office, a chaperone shook his head. Got the feeling that woman wanted to be here all the time, and he would let her. She was half arctic wolf herself and with Fade, being all Arctic wolf. It was highly likely she wanted to be closer to her own kind. Missed the arctic wolves, she'd said.

He would leave Piper and Harper alone for now, probably for the best, seeing that Harper wanted a piece of him, or to punish him, for not telling them about the possibility of that Duel. He'd not wanted to sway her, not wanted her to feel obligated to lie about that night and didn't want her to stress about the outcome of it either. Just wanted her to go in there and answer honestly.

Bradley was going to have to apologise for her being blindsided and then for not telling her why he'd chosen not to tell her beforehand. Explain it to her as best he could and hope that she could understand, though from what he had heard through his link to Eddie, it was all Harper that was mad, not Piper. Maybe one understood and the other didn't.