

Chapter 7 - Unscentable

Bradley POV

Bradley was standing inside Piper Harper's store 'Goddess Gowns.' He wondered if she'd named the store after their moon goddess, or if it was one of the human world things, where women were promoting themselves and being encouraged to believe they were goddess's themselves and should be treated as such.

He knew the human world could be very cruel and savage just like the wolfen world could. Although once Mated off she-wolve's were generally treated as precious by their Mates, not often did one suffer abuse after Marking and Mating, it did happen occasionally, but nowhere as often as in the human world.

Unlike in the human world, where men would beat their wives, abuse and demoralise them, killing them even, cheat profusely, the wolfen world was much nicer to their females. Bradley was curious about the stores name, but mostly he was curious about why she was out here alone and with her scent masked.

He stood staring at Izzy who was wearing a tag that read Assistant Manager. She was about 5 foot 7, had blonde shoulder-length hair, that had been straitened and was tucked back behind one ear. Her lips were set in a thin line as her dark brown eyes glared right at him. She had already told him on the phone that Piper Harper was not there. And now had told him to his face that same statement.

She appeared more than annoyed by his presence in the store. The moment he had stepped inside the store and her eyes had fallen on him, she had frowned right at him, her smile and friendly demeanour had disappeared in an instant. There were two other women currently working in the store as well and both of them had smiled right at him.

There were four different bridal parties in the store right this minute as well, with brides trying on dresses, he'd pulled her away from her actual job and this Izzy was showing him just how unhappy she was with him about it.

Though he had gotten smiles from the other employees and most of the blushing brides and their family and friends with them, they were all human

and his good looks drew their undivided attention. He however, was not interested in any of them. No human girl had ever drawn his attention.

There was nothing in this store that interested him, well, nothing but finding Piper Harper, that was, who for all intensive purposes passed herself off as a human instead of a she-wolf. A lone she-wolf out here in the middle of the human world at that.

They could not find a pack affiliation to her company anywhere, and all werewolves did have one. It was the wolfen law. That all pack companies, or businesses in the human world, no matter how big or how small, were registered. So he was curious about that as well. Usually there was a tiny wolfen pack crest on the company logo that indicated a wolfen store.

But not this store, not on the website either. And none of the staff wore a pack pin, from what he recalled yesterday neither had Piper Harper, which was very odd; a pack pin was usually required. He was curious about that as well.

Bradley knew she was a wolf, had gotten that from the low growl she had emitted yesterday, aimed right at him, though that to now confused him, completely, why they had growled at him. He'd been angry and irritated but had not actually posed a physical threat to them. There was no call for it at all.

Yes he'd come in hot headed and ticked off, spoiling for a fight, though only a verbal one, not an actual physical fight, and had been taken aback by her reaction to him, completely surprised by the white wolf eyes that had suddenly peered back at him, though he had not initially realised they were wolfs eyes, not until that growl had come from her, then he'd known what she was.

If she had not growled right at him, he'd likely still not know what she was at all.

If, as Hadley said, she'd responded to him like a Mate and the more and more he thought about it, he had to agree with his little sister, she had. Though why her wolf would growl at him and Benson if they were her Mate, they did not understand that at all.

Found a hand in his face and fingers were being snapped right at him, he'd allowed his thoughts to wander too far for too long it seemed. "Hey, like I said, Piper isn't here. You're interrupting business." Izzy's words were clipped and she sounded very annoyed with him, that he'd not believed her the first time, or that he'd zoned out on her. He wasn't entirely sure.

“Where is she? If not here?” he commented, trying to keep all irritation out of his voice.

“Gone away for the long weekend. And just for your information,” she stated a little on the sarcastic side, “she won’t be working from this store for several weeks.” stood staring at him pointedly, as if she had finished with him, that she would not be telling him anything else, almost as if to say get out.

Bradley stared right back at her. She did not intimidate him, no human ever could. He could well imagine that expression and her demeanour would scare off quite a few human’s but not him. Asked about making an appointment to see her when she got back, instead of leaving.

To which Izzy declined him right away. This made him frown. The woman didn’t even check a diary or on the computer for Piper’s schedule, to see when she would be available next.

“I’ll wait, find a time in her schedule.” he offered, though he could feel his patience starting to wear thin at this woman’s attitude.

Watched as she pursed her lips and folded her arms across her chest, she said nothing for a full minute before telling him “I can’t do that. Piper is solidly booked for the next 6 months and is not currently taking on new clients at this time.”

“Right.” he’d stated, he did not believe her at all. It was pretty clear that Piper Harper was avoiding him, and had instructed her Assistant Manager to block him and his attempts to see her. He did not like it.

If she was as Hadley said, his Mate. She was now actively avoiding him, turned his eyes to the woman’s office up in the loft space, and then her studio. Both the doors were closed and the lights were out. But that didn’t actually mean she wasn’t up there and he was obviously not going to smell her, if she was still masking her scent, seemed to always be doing that.

“She’s not up there.” Izzy’s tone was cold and rude now.

“I’d like to see for myself.” Bradley turned his eyes on the woman. He was not going to take no for an answer. She seemed to get the message.

“Fine, go and check for yourself.” she shrugged and waved a hand towards the stairs.

Bradley did just that. Opened her office door first, it was unlocked, did not step inside the room, had the feeling that Izzy was watching him from downstairs, like a hawk just waiting for him to step out of sight, so she could call the human police on him, report he'd done something like steal or break something in Pipers office. She was like a bloody bouncer, he thought.

Piper's office was quite spacious, a single large glass and steel desk on the left side of the room, with a white leather chair behind it. On the wall behind her desk were framed prints of models wearing her designs, he presumed.

There was a glass sliding door that he knew led out onto a balcony, also knew from yesterday that there was a table and chair set out there, for sitting and drinking coffee, he supposed, there was a coffee cup on her desk.

To the right of the room were awards on shelves above a comfortable looking white leather lounge that matched her office chair, and there was a glass and steel coffee table not unlike her desk.

A small stack of magazines were fanned on that table and under it on a shelf he noted were a few children's books, both for reading and colouring in, along with a selection of high quality texters and pencils and odd thing to have in one's office, he thought absently. Closed the door and moved to her studio.

The Studio was also unlocked, if she was away shouldn't they both be locked up? Perhaps Izzy had access to them both for some reason. There was a design desk to the right with many pencils and tools in containers along the back of it. A stool with a black seat on roller wheels, several design pads on a shelf and a bin and a shredder to the left of the desk.

There was a tall wing backed chair in a soft pink colour, sitting next to the mannequin with the dress she had been working on yesterday when he was here. Behind that and all the way around the room stood reams of material; silk, satin, lace, all in varying shades of white to ivory, silvers to black and soft pinks even.

There were shelves on the left-hand wall filled with clear boxes of buttons, ribbons, zippers, beads and all sorts of other things. He stepped back out of the door way and closed the door.

It did not look like she had been here, not that he would be able to tell, but not even Izzy's scent lingered in either of the rooms, which meant she'd not been up here at all either today. So it was likely that Izzy had been telling him the

truth, Piper was not here, had not been here. Could very well actually be away for the weekend.

Bradley contemplated leaving her a note, for when she got back and his number at the pack, to ask her to call him, could leave her his direct number for his Alpha office or his mobile even for that matter, but after only a moments thought, with her reaction to him and how her assistant manager was with him, he didn't think she would use it.

Headed back down the stairs, Bradley didn't understand this she-wolf, why, if she was the girl that had fled his pack, had uttered her rejection without him knowing, why she'd done it in the first place? Why did she still hide herself from him? Did she really not want to be his Mate? And if so, why not just tell him to his face? That was how it was supposed to be done, it was unlikely to work at all without it being face to face.

How could he even acknowledge her as his Mate or accept her rejection if he had no idea who she was at all? It was very confusing for him. To all of them who knew about it. He was also not some mean nasty Alpha, felt he was actually a fair and approachable man. Strict yes, but no-one in his pack feared him as far as he knew.

The one to confirm for him, what his pack Doctor Samuel, had told him he believed was going on, that the pain he was suffering that night, was that it looked as though he was suffering from a rejection, of a Mate Bond being torn from him, but was incomplete. Had been Eddie, his Gamma.

Apparently, Eddie had felt her pain at the point of rejection, when she had uttered it or something like that. While Cooper and Harry had been getting him to the pack's hospital, not knowing what was wrong with him. They had all thought that someone had bloody well poisoned him. He to had thought that initially. The girl in his bed had been scent-masked so it was possible.

But no, Eddie had not followed his Alpha in pain, had bolted off on a mission of his own that night, trying to get to the girl, but he had not been able to scent the girl out. Had only been able to track her pain, as her Gamma he was attached to her, with that Luna to Gamma bond.

Eddie had also felt her sever from him, when she'd rejected the pack, and had known right away what it had meant, that she had gone rogue and bolted away from the pack. Though that had not deterred the man at all, he'd even

gone out into rogue territory on his own to hunt her down and try and bring her back.

Had found the border patrol man, who'd reported to Cooper, seeing he was out of action at the time, about a girl who had just gone rogue, had severed herself from the pack right before his very eyes and had then just run away. Eddie had come back empty handed that night.

They all knew females didn't do well, out in rogue territory, Eddie had not been able to scent the girl, and the poor description he'd gotten off the patrol man had not helped him either. The description had been 'about yay high, of thin build' Eddie had guessed 5 foot 8 from the height of the man's hand, and she'd had 'brown messy hair and brown eyes'. That was it, there were no distinguishing features, not even what her wolf looked like, though they'd found out upon further questioning of said patroller, the next day she'd not shifted into her wolf, had run off in human form.

Bradley pulled himself from his thoughts. Piper Harper had brown hair and brown eyes and was about the right height too. He looked at Izzy as he reached the bottom of the stairs and sighed, frustrated by the whole thing.

"Satisfied?" she'd shot right at him, which only made him frown at her attitude.

"I need to speak with her." Bradley held out his business card, saw the woman look at it briefly, but did not attempt to take it from him. Sighed again a little on the heavy side this time, "I understand, that I upset her yesterday. I would like to apologise for that." he placed his card on the counter she was standing behind and tapped it "Give it to her." he stated, staring right at her. Then headed out of the store.

Bradley's wolf's hearing picked up the sound of his business card hitting the bin and her softly muttered words "never going to happen ass-hole." right before the door closed shut.

He had let it go, was very unhappy about it, but had to let it go. Hoped the woman would change her mind and fish that card out and tell Piper he wanted to apologise. It was also likely that this Izzy and Piper were friends and he had seen the pain Piper was in yesterday, could well imagine her state when she returned to the store, after he had left with Hadley.

It was completely possible that Piper had told her Assistant Manager that she actually knew him and didn't want to see him ever again. He didn't know, but it did seem that way to him right this minute.

Headed off to the waiting car down the street, Cooper was sitting behind the wheel. Bradley had not wanted to scare her off with his whole unit stalking into her store, behind him. So he had opted to go in on his own. She'd already run off once, hell twice now. In all likelihood. Got in the car. "Not there, gone away for the long weekend apparently." he answered his Beta's unspoken question.

"Do you believe that?"

"I honestly don't know. But she is definitely not there. I can tell you Izzy, her Store Manager," he shook his head "Doesn't like me at all, I tried being nice to her, didn't lose my temper. It made no difference. Wouldn't even make me an appointment to see her...apparently her books are closed for the next 6 months. Also won't be working from this store for weeks." he was more than frustrated right now, he realised.

"She's bolted, in other words." Cooper sighed.

"I don't know." Bradley stared out the window. "Might not be able to catch her now."

There was silence in the car for several minutes, "Maybe it's time to let go, Brad."

"Maybe," He answered softly. She had run off and rejected him for no apparent reason. He'd never accepted it. There had to be a reason and he wanted to know what it was. So did his Wolf, Benson for that matter. If they had a mate, they wanted to at least talk to her before accepting her rejection. Have her explain it to them. Maybe it was a misunderstanding or something.

His wolf was quiet right this minute, had been annoyed with the girls reaction yesterday, disrespected him had made him huff in annoyance, in fact. But then when Hadley had stated the girl had reacted like a Mate would, Benson had stalked off to the back of his mind and not come back, until they were in her store just now.

When Bradley thought about it, the woman's reaction to him; the way she had looked at Hadley touching him? The fact that Hadley had gone into the store for a Luna Gown, if of course, she was mated of to an Alpha.

It would likely seem to Piper that Hadley was his Mate, she had come here to Piper's store with Cooper, the pack Beta. Then he himself had turned up with Hadley, demanding that Piper make Hadley the dress she wanted. It probably did look like Hadley was his Mate.

They did not look anything alike. She had a mass of dark red curly hair to his brown, Hadley looked just like her mother, but had his father's dark blue eyes, whereas he looked like his father but had his mother's eyes. If this is what Piper did think, it would account for the pain that he saw in her, when she was looking at him, especially when she saw Hadley touching her as she had. Would have looked loving and familiar.

He knew as he looked out the window watching the streets roll by, that he was not ready to give up on her yet. If she had been in pain then it was likely that their Mate Bond was still intact and in effect, that rejection she had uttered had not held. She still felt it, not that he could. But that didn't really matter, he'd never known about it, only she had for some silly reason. If this Piper Harper was once one of his pack members, he had to find out how old she was? And come back and approach her as to why she had hid from him? Why she had rejected him? It didn't make sense to him at all.

Wondered if she'd seen him with Bianca and maybe that had been enough for her to reject him, didn't like it, or thought he would reject her, who knew? Only she did until he could hunt her down and get those answers.

Even now he barely recalled what the girl in his bed had looked like that night, but he had not forgotten how it had felt to touch her, she'd been hot, felt so damned hot to touch, it was like nothing he'd ever felt before, he'd not been able to control himself. Even Benson had pushed more stamina at him that night, to make it last longer, to enjoy it himself, his wolf never got involved in sex, just turned a blind eye to it mostly as they were not his Mate, but not that night.

Bradley had lost all control and mated the hell out of her, and now all he recalled was how tiny she was, very thin, not that, that had curbed his appetite where she was concerned, he did recall holding her down all dominant to continue mating her at the end, could only hope he'd not actually hurt the girl. Though it hadn't sounded as though he had, that did not mean he hadn't.

Bradley did recall it had been her first time, remembered that much, had loved the thought of being her first at the time too, he was now very disappointed in himself about how he'd not appreciated her more in his bed that night. Hated

his words to her. At the time he'd not thought anything of them, but after Eddie had explained what he'd felt.

How Bradley recalled how she felt to the touch, how much he had wanted her and lost all control, how Benson had gotten involved, and then what he doc had said. He knew those words were absolutely horrid and for her to hear them, would likely have been very painful to hear. He could not imagine how much those words he'd uttered would have hurt her.

He knew he would not have liked hearing them from his Mate, not if he'd known who she was and she knew nothing. If their roles had been reversed, it might very well have been the thing that caused the woman to utter that rejection.

"Let's go home, Coop." he sighed.

Bradley had nothing to confirm anything at this point. He likely needed more information, likely if she was constantly scent masked, he was actually going to have to lay his hands right on her, to see if she felt the same as the one in his bed that night. And getting that close to her could be difficult, very difficult.

She was currently away, so he had at least 3 days to try and figure out what to do, figure out if she was the same girl. Piper did fit the brief description but so did half the wolfen population for that matter. He sighed.