

Chapter 83 - Unscutable

Brad POV

He was showered and dressed for dinner, standing in his walk-in wardrobe. Smiling down at the words Piper Harper Drake. Even Benson was happy inside him, sitting up all attention as they looked at those words. He'd not even been looking for it. He had simply come up after lunch to change his pants and shoes. He had noted they had some mud on them from that bike ride with Brandon.

Had been kicking his shoes around looking for a matching pair, he actually didn't like wearing shoes at all. He much preferred to be barefooted at all times, but his father insisted on him wearing them, something to do with looking respectable, but he still hated it. That's why he just tossed his shoes in the corner of his walk in uncaring.

He'd kicked a few around this afternoon and stopped as he'd seen something written there, never even really paid attention normally, but since Piper had told him that her name was in his room, his eyes were open and on everything. He had pushed the shirts that hung above the shoes aside to let more light in and see what it was, and joy had filled him. He hadn't been able to stop smiling all afternoon. Still bloody couldn't stop smiling.

He was going to give Drake to her. She would be a Drake, not a Whitlock, in the human world. He understood she and Brandon had to keep it for reasons to do with their bloodline and keeping track of it. But he would give her what she'd always wanted, his last name.

All his clothes were still pushed aside and his shoes had been shoved away as well now. So he could clearly see it. Made him happy just looking at it. She'd always wanted him, that was likely why she'd stayed so very long, hoping he would scent her out one day.

Brad had spent the entire afternoon organizing dinner. Had actually gone and bugged Izzy herself, put himself right in front of her and Fade. A bit of a risk, but he was too darn happy to care about any attitude he got from either of them. Hadn't gotten any, in fact she'd just smiled at him and shaken her head.

Had found out Piper's favorite foods and flowers, what she actually liked to drink. Izzy had told him practically everything he had wanted to know, then

had stared at him for a long moment and sighed softly, then said “You hurt her and Fade will have a piece of you.”

“I’m not going to.” is all Brad had said “I love her Izzy, like Eddie does you.”

She’d smiled right at him, “Good.” then had told him what he wanted to know. Voluents, stuffed with chicken, broccoli and cheese sauce, liked to eat roasted duck with baked or steamed vegetables. Her favorite dessert was Caramel mud cake, as for alcohol, she didn’t drink much but would occasionally have an espresso martini. But thought that it was very unlikely Piper would drink at all. Usually, she just had a glass of iced water with her meals.

Izzy had been very forthcoming and he’d been very happy with her, for helping him. They seemed to be getting along, which was good and would be in the long run too. He needed to establish a good rapport with her and fade. He was still hoping that somewhere down the line she’d want to be a pack member. He also knew that so did Eddie.

Had found his head chef and set a menu with the woman for his private dining room, a place he’d never really needed to use before now. Mostly just his father and Lilly used it.

Had ordered her favorite flowers, Dahlia’s in all manner of colours that he could get, and as many as he could get his hands on. He had checked that dining room himself before going up to shower and change.

Had smiled at the room. It was filled with flowers in vases all along the walls, the table was set for two with a round glass bowl in the middle and three floating candles in it, he’d had the table set with the Pack colours; Black, Royal Blue and Gold.

Now he was ready, dressed in a soft grey suit with a navy blue shirt, his hair was neatly styled and he was clean shaven, wanted to make a good impression and show her, he intended to look good for her ‘Preening.’ Benson had snorted at him amused. And yes he was.

Was not at all expecting anything from Piper this evening, just wanted to have a nice dinner and spend time with her, was hoping, with the way things were going, the way she had leaned back into him today, allowing him to kiss her, and not be offended or upset by it, that their bond was growing bit by bit.

There was no rush. She had accepted being here, being his Mate and future Luna, was not going to rush her, but he did want to start planning if she was up for it.

Brad checked his appearance once more time in the mirror and then took in a deep breath and let it slow. Heard Benson snort fully amused at him, 'Think you'd never gone to dinner before?' he chortled at his own human.

'Shh, never done something so important.' Brad shot right back at Benson, 'you need this to go well, as much as I do.'

Headed out of his suite and across the hall to knock on Piper's door, he was still smiling when she opened the door. Brad had no idea how three little words could make him so happy.

"Evening Piper," He said softly. She looked beautiful in a soft cream knit dress, it was long almost to her knees, with one side slightly pulled up, it showed him a bit of her leg. Had long sleeves and a scooped neck line. Her long hair was pulled up into a loose braid with a few loose tendrils curled around her lovely face. She was wearing soft pink lipstick that sparkled a little in the light, and was wearing natural make-up. He didn't think she needed any. Had mostly seen her without it actually, since being here in the pack.

"You look beautiful." Brad told her, as he held out his hand to her, in it a single dark pink Dahlia.

"Thank you." Piper smiled up at him, though she looked a little shy to him, but took the flower and smelled it even. "You look nice yourself."

"Thank you." He liked that she was a little shy, it was adorable, eased his nerves a little, slipped his hand into her free one, when she stepped out of the room and into the hall, closing the door behind her.

Walked her down the stairs, and to his private dining room. It was down the hall from the pack's ballroom on the ground floor. There was an omega standing outside the room dressed in pack colours. A she-wolf named Kate, opened the door for them to step into the room. "Alpha, Luna." She greeted them.

Brad nodded to her and ushered Piper inside, watched her stop and look around the room as the door closed behind them. It was a nice room with soft

green walls and white marble tiles, had a crystal chandelier and held only one table, for two. Very private and intimate, as his private dining should be.

Saw her touch a few of the flowers in the vases around the room, before turning and looking up at him, was smiling at him. There were a dozen bunches of her favorite flowers here in this room. He smiled at her.

“Izzy!” she shook her head slightly but was still smiling.

Brad nodded “Yes.” he admitted, who else could he have gone to for information about her?

“They’re lovely.”

Brad allowed her hand to slip from his, as he stood behind the chair she would sit in when she was ready. Watched her walk around the room, stopped and smelled a bunch of flowers . He already had soft classical piano music playing inside the room, background noise. Brad pulled out the chair for her and she sat down.

“You did all of this?” Piper asked quietly.

“I did.” He smiled, as she looked up at him. “You made me so happy today.” he chuckled “I can’t stop smiling, Piper.”

“I didn’t do anything.”

Brad sat himself down opposite her. “Yes you did. You snuck into my room. Wrote your name as it should be, Mrs Drake.”

“Brad, that was a long time ago.”

“I know,” he nodded at her, “I’m never going to remove it.” he smiled and watched as she shook her head at him, seemed somewhat amused he thought. “Can I ask, how often you were in my suite?” He really was curious about that.

Saw her look away and bite her lip, either nervous or embarrassed to tell him.

“It’s alright Piper, I’m not upset about it. Just curious. It occurred to me, you could go anywhere back then and no-one would have known you were there.”

Piper nodded “I have been nearly everywhere,” she acknowledged.

“My suite?” he prompted, really did want to know.

“A lot.”

“Mm, can you be a bit more detailed.” he smiled at her.

Their entree arrived and he saw her look right at him, he just laughed softly, she knew it was once again Izzy’s doing. He was hoping that everything was to her liking tonight. This dinner was tailored to her tastes.

The door to the room closed and she looked at him, took a breath in. “Nearly every time you left the pack after I scented you out, the first night only though.” she answered his question.

He wanted to ask why, but didn’t. Caught something in the inflection of her words ‘only though’ let it go, he knew why, without her voicing it. Didn’t actually need to talk about that, didn’t think she would, and unless Piper herself brought it up, he would leave the painful past as that, the past.

“Did you sleep in my bed? Or just wander around in there?”

“Mm, that depended on how I was feeling at the time. Mostly I just touched your things. Not that you ever knew.”

“I did not.” Brad nodded, like the word mostly, meant she had slept in his bed. It was adorable to know this. “Why down by my shoes, of all places.” he chuckled, he still hadn’t worked that one out.

Saw her smile right at him, loved when she smiled right at him, just for him.

“Because they were always a piled up mess in the corner, you’d never see it there.”

“I never did.”

“What’s with your messy shoes anyway? I never did understand that. Your entire walk in is neat and orderly, colour coded even light to dark. Yet your shoes are just tossed in there in a messy heap.”

“I hate shoes.” Brad shrugged.

“That’s it?”

“Mm, it is.”

“You never even let the omega that cleans your room, tidy them?”

“Nope. I kick them off or just chuck them in there.” he shrugged “She knows better, than to neaten my shoes...you’re not going to want to do that are you?” he suddenly asked as he recalled how her wardrobe had everything in its place, even held shoe racks with neatly lined up shoes on it.

Saw her raise an eyebrow at him, likely his tone.

“I like kicking them about some days.” he elaborated for her.

Heard heard laugh and watched her shake her head, seemed very amused. “No, they’re your shoes. Kick away.”

That was actually a bit of a relief. “Good,” Brad nodded, “sounds stupid I know, I just like it that way.”

“Your weird little fetish, everyone has something I guess.” she was still amused.

“I guess we all do. What is your one little weird fetish?” he asked right back.

“Hmm, I don’t know. Maybe needing everything in its place.”

Brad had noted that while in her house, everything had seemed to have its place, it had been orderly to say the least, even Brandon’s room, though filled to the brim with things he liked was orderly.

“I noticed you own quite a few cocktail gowns and evening dresses. Do you attend lots of functions, or go out dancing perhaps?”

“Evening gowns are a must have, for my bridal shows and cocktail dresses for the after-parties. I know quite a few wealthy designers and other humans. Get a few invites to gala’s and fund raisers.”

Dinner arrived and she smiled at the roast duck put in front of her.

“Really?” It interested him. “Do you have anything coming up that I could escort you too?”

“Perhaps, Izzy would know dates, she books everything for me and just reminds me a week prior, usually makes sure to keep my calendar open so I can attend.”

“Would you let me escort you to the next Gala or party you attend?”

Saw her look at him now, “I don’t even know if you’d let me attend one.”

“Why wouldn’t I?” Brad frowned at her.

“It’s not going to be here in Montana, is why!”

“Oh, well, if I’m going with you, I don’t see why not,” Brad answered her. He would love to walk into one of her human world events with her on his arm.

“Really...I have an opening coming up in 3 weeks, in Sydney.”

“No.” He shook his head “and not because it’s far away from the pack. Because of the vampires, they could retain my and my units' scents, and link that back to the attack. I don’t think it would be safe is all.” saw her nod her head, she seemed to understand his reasoning.

“So my bridal shows?”

“You can still hold those and attend those. I’d like to go with you, especially if it’s out of the country.”

“So then you’re not going to stop me from accepting invites to Italy, France or New York?”

“No, Piper. I travel a bit myself. If I can’t go with you, I’ll have a detail go with you...I don’t want to stop your life, just be a part of it.”

“Good.” she smiled at him, seemed somewhat relieved. He realized and visually saw her relax a little more in her chair. Must have been worried he was going to stop her from doing all the things she normally would do, in her line of business. Brad did not want to do that, she’d flourished out there in the human world and he wanted her to now flourish in the wolfen world too.

Once they were Marked and Mated and had that big fancy human world wedding, both worlds would know who she was, and she could promote her designs to she-wolves too. He was certain they would love her designs as much as the humans did.

Knew her designs had sold well when she'd been here inside the pack before. Renee had said as much. His own step-sister, Megan, had worn one of her dresses when she'd met her Mate. West and T.J's Mate's had also worn Piper Harper Luna gowns.

'Do you only design wedding dresses now? I know it wasn't all you did previously, when you lived here before.'

'It's all I have time for nowadays. Gone are the days of evening dresses and cocktail dresses. I doodle sometimes, to clear my mind mostly, but not often.'

'You might have more time for that now, with Izzy being a partner.'

'I doubt it. Always in demand and my books are always nearly booked out. You said you travel a bit?'

'I do.' Brad nodded, 'for the construction side of the business, the whole unit goes generally. I leave Hendrix or my father in charge, usually only gone two or three days at a time. I do try to minimize being away from the pack, cram as much business into those days so I can get back where I am needed the most. Sometimes my father and Eddie's father go.' he shrugged 'Depends on the project. I'll keep you informed at all times, Piper. Though if you were here, I'd be leaving you in charge of the Pack, and Hendrix or my Father would only be here if something bad was to happen. Your war generals, I guess.' he smiled more to himself. He hadn't thought about that till that very minute. He could leave his Luna in charge.

Dessert arrived and she raised an eyebrow at him. 'Did you choose anything on the menu, that was to your liking?'

'I eat anything and everything. This dinner was about you Piper, and us getting to know each other. I wanted to show you I care about the things you like. Be able to give you those things as well, even if they are just small things.'

Brad stood when dessert was finished. 'There is something I would like from you.' He walked around the room and took her hand. 'If you will indulge me, dance with me.'

'Here?'

“Yes,” Brad nodded. There was room for slow dancing in here, and he was not about to step her out of her comfort zone and ask her to go clubbing. It was not his thing either, for that matter, too loud, too many people and unnecessary touching.

Piper stood and he walked her to the other end of the room. It was a cleared space for this very thing. Slipped his arms around her to slow dance to the piano music that was playing in the background. It took her almost a full minute to fully relax in his arms and slide her arms around him in return.

Leaned into him a little while later, he was more than happy to just stand there with her in his arms and sway to the music.

Brad could feel her heart rate was a little fast to start with, nervous he thought, smiled to himself, could be excited he thought, but wasn't going to break the mood and ask her. Felt it calm after awhile and then steady, even slowed down the longer they stood there. Her breathing too, he realized.

He heard Piper sigh softly at one point and smiled to himself again. His scent was affecting her, relaxing her against him, she was very comfortable leaning against him, content, he thought. He was happy about that. This was turning out to be a nice dinner. Left the wedding talk for another time, didn't want to spoil the mood.

Stood there and swayed gently with her in his arms, loved the feeling of holding her in his arms, her body all pressed up against his, so relaxed. Felt her head turn, looked down and saw her eyes were actually closed, so very relaxed. Watched her actively smell him, breathed in deeply and sighed softly, felt his own heart rate increase as she murmured the word “Mine.” right into the middle of his chest.

He could tell that she was nearly asleep against him, felt his own wolf purr inside his chest softly, very happy with her claiming of them “Piper.” he murmured softly.

“Mm.” was all he got in return as she turned her head and rested it back on his chest once more.

Smiled to himself and closed his eyes for a moment, wondering if she would recall claiming him in the morning. Leaned down and kissed the top of her head “Mine.” he murmured right back “Always.”

Slid his hands down her body slowly, trying not to wake her up, until he could pick her up, she settled right into his arms, leaned against his chest, one hand curled right into the material of his shirt. Mind-link to Kate outside the room to open the door for him.

She smiled at the sight of the two of them. He asked her to come upstairs and open the door for him as well. Took the stairs, a bit selfish in his reason, wanted to hold her that little bit longer. Got to the Alpha corridor and stood in the middle of the hallway.

A slight dilemma now. She had claimed him and he and Benson wanted to put her in their suite, their bed, but he also didn't want her waking up and freaking out over it either. "Luna suite." he told Kate and she opened the door for him. He stepped inside, heard the door close behind him, was a little surprised to see Piper's bed turned down, noted so was Brandon's for that matter. Kneeled down on the bed and put her in it.

Her fist was still curled in his shirt, he reached down and slipped her shoes off, left her dress on and tucked her in. leaned back to get up off the bed, only to have her hand curl even tighter into his shirt. It made him smile, she didn't want to let him go, it seemed.

Slipped his jacket off and shucked off his shoes, lay down on the bed next to her, he would stay until she let go, brushed some of her hair from her face and just watched her sleep. Smiled when she rolled in towards him and got that little bit closer, still had a hold of his shirt. So very adorable.