

## Unwilling 24

### Chapter 24

I didn't even know what I did, I wasn't even sure if she would accept the cookies as my last gift. When she opened her mouth I expected her to reject me before I could even finish the cookies. Not that she would give me a timeline to convince her. Sitting at her kitchen table chatting, and seeing her enjoying the cookies I made her was amazing. It was enough, but I noticed her eyes drifting to the boxes full of books every few seconds. And I realized I could do something to make her happen. More so when she told me she didn't have the means yet to buy herself bookshelves. On my way here I saw an IKEA and I was so happy she finally agreed.

As she was putting away some stuff I quickly mindlink Gerald offering him a month-long vacation. So that he can take Jessa on a mate-moon with the royal jet. If he gets Jessa to tell him what bookcases Ayla likes, he can let me know. Minutes later I get a few TikToks with a message stating that is what she wants. They're all the same IKEA bookcases and some small cabinets. Made to look like built-in bookcases with some crown molding and some additional wood. Gerald definitely deserved his holiday. While driving to IKEA I can not hide the groovy smile from my face. Ayla seems happy too, maybe I can

even get her to go out for dinner with me.

We arrive at the Ikea and I can't help hoping that the people looking at us see us as a couple. It's a stupid thing to hope but to me, this feels like a date. If only I could I would hold her hand, k\*ss her, and wrap my arms around her waist. But I know that would be too much, too soon. Instead, I just walk next to her, she clearly enjoys just walking around looking at all the displays. Everything she picks up and smiles at before putting it down with a wistful sigh. I get it and put it in my cart. It takes her a little while to notice.

"Griffin what are you doing?" she hisses at me.

Dillion was right she is a firecracker and I love it. I would never want a meek and docile mate. We need to be equal partners like my parents are. Like my grandparents are and it is the only way to be good rulers. You can't be equal partners if one does not have an opinion or doesn't dare to give it.

"It's the same as the bookcases, Ayla, just let me spoil you. Let me make you happy!" I carefully say, not to give anything away to all the humans surrounding us.

"You should be happy your boyfriend, is so loving Sweetheart. You can be independent, and still, let the

man who loves you spoil you every once in a while” An elderly woman who walks past us with her husband tells us.

I could k\*ss that woman, both for thinking I am Ayla’s boyfriend. And for convincing my stubborn mate to accept my gifts. She smiles and nods, telling the woman I am trying to make up for making a huge mistake. The elderly man now tells me to be prepared to drain my account. I could never do so in the IKEA, but I won’t tell him that. There is no need for me to brag, instead, I wrap my arm around her waist and k\*ss her cheek. After telling the man she is worth it. Reveling in the fact that she didn’t pull away. She just smells and tells the couple she will make me pay before we go our separate ways.

“You enjoyed that didn’t you?” She asks me chuckling.

So I’m honest and agree I did. I enjoy everything about this outing. She does not stop looking at things, and I don’t stop putting everything I think she might like or enjoy into my cart.

“Okay Big Spender, let me buy you a snack then. I am dying for some Swedish meatballs, If it was up to me I would buy her lunch too. With Ayla, I already know she wouldn’t want that. And with me still wanting to buy her so much stuff. I cannot risk offending her or making her unhappy. I need to keep in mind that she is already putting so much trust in me. I went from being seconds away from being

rejected. To being able to get her a bunch of gifts and buy her bookcases. That is enough for me to muster a genuine smile as place the cart in the waiting area and tell her to lead the way.

It feels oddly satisfying, to have my mate buy me food. It feels like she cares too. Or at least enjoy all of this enough to do something kind for me. During eating we're chatting again and it just feels good.

We're already able to talk like we have known each other for years. Then it is time to finally get the bookcases. She seems surprised at the amount of bookcases I am getting. Or the fact I know exactly which ones to get. Same with the smaller cabinets. I don't want to ruin the surprise yet. On one hand, I wish I could tell her just to see her smile. Because even with the very few times I had seen it. I was already addicted to it. Still, I figured surprising her would be even better.

And it was, all from the confused look on her face when I drove us to a nearby hardware store, to the look of disbelief on her face when I asked her to pick out some crown molding and a can of paint. To her whispered?

“How did you figure out exactly what bookshelves I wanted”

To the genuine chuckle, shaking her head when I told her all about Gerald and Jessa's mate-moon. But

the best of it all was how she jumped in my arms thanking me for everything when she realized what I was getting her. Sure she immediately stiffened, like jumping into my arms was a mistake. I could see the regret of letting her guard down so soon etched into her beautiful face as she took a shy step back. For me, it had been worth it though, for the obvious reason of how good it felt to have her in my arms. Of feeling the sparks of the matebond warming my heart b\*dy and soul. And for the hope it gave me. It had been only one afternoon and she had already warmed up to me.

At some point today it had looked utterly hopeless. To the point where she had already started to reject me. As happy as I was with the 13th chance. I knew it was a small one and she hadn't sounded very happy to give me said chance. So her opening up to me so much now made my day. This must have been the most money I have ever spent on anything other than I car or anything for our kingdom ever. It was simultaneously the best money I had ever spent.

When I was younger I hated it when Dad told me I should be able to cook and clean. And do woodwork and home improvement. As I pup I figured we had staff so to me they were unnecessary skills. Adding more workload to my already overflowing schedule. When I got back home I needed to thank him. Because at some point after carrying all the newly bought stuff inside her home, I noticed Ayla was

about to mindlink someone just as we sat down with the coffee her Grandmother made us. Feeling brave, feeling sure of the day we just had I asked her if something was wrong. She told me there wasn't. the firecracker was gone as she told me she was about to mindlink her Great Uncle Nicolas. He had almost promised her he would help build the bookcases. There was no way I would try and come between Ayla and any relative. Neither was I going to assume as she-wolf she would not be able to do some woodwork. All I considered was what a great opportunity this was to spend more time with her.

“If he needs a hand, I can stay a little longer to help build the bookcases,” I told her.

She was about to agree but stopped herself wondering if a Crown Prince like me could even build anything. I reassured her that I did telling her about the time her dad had me fix the door I ripped off its hinges. Which meant I had to tell her who had pissed me off that badly and how she did it.

“Griffin, last chance are you sure she isn't a better fit for you?” She asked me in a pained voice. And I knew the only way to stop her from overthinking was telling her the truth.