A Human’s Love, An Alpha’s Union

by AngelsofGlory666

Summary

In a world where Peter Hale lived to create a pack—mayhem ensued and werewolves dominated humans. When Derek killed Peter the powers shifted and he became the new alpha. The only way to ensure peace between werewolves and humans is for Derek to marry the Sheriff; Stiles Stilinski.

Notes

This story is being reposted along with some of my other works. I deleted all my stories in a moment of anger because of a hurtful comment. It was one of the worst and cruelest...

I'm getting angry again remembering it. Moving on, I received a message from a reader after having deleted everything. They reminded me of why I started writing. They felt for my stories the way I felt for fan fiction. I realized I shouldn't hurt others just because of one stupid jerk. So, sorry to my readers. I don't usually get like this but... yeah, never had a comment like that ass's before. Sorry, still angry. It will take some time to work through that anger.

Anyways, I will slowly post my stories back up on AO3. It might take a month or so, but I'll finish eventually.
Chaos

Many things have changed over the past sixteen years. Our story beginning in Beacon Hills California; on the Hale property. There was a massive fire wiping the manor and family out, the only survivors being Laura, Derek, and their Uncle Peter Hale. Laura and Derek, because they were absent, Peter out of luck.

Peter was placed in an intensive care unit, living in a catatonic state. What people did not know—would not realize until several years later was—Peter Hale wasn’t quite human.

Slowly, cell by cell, Peter healed. The abnormality within, the mystery that was ingrained within the Hale family gene, their secret, his inner wolf rose for the occasion and healed him. His wolf brought him back to the lucidity of this world. When he did…when he’d been healed—he murdered the alpha Laura Hale, and by doing so, became alpha.

He continued a lengthy killing spree, murdering all those responsible for the fire that brought about the death of his family…his pack. Along the way, he made a new pack, a pack that would grow to be stronger than and superior to any other pack.

Werewolves upon werewolves sprouted from Beacon Hills, until the number of them and humans evened out.

Among the many turned were high school students, the youth, full of energy and willing to comply with the powerful alpha. It became known werewolves existed, as many of the newly turned lost themselves to bloodlust on the full moon and bled innocence.

Stiles Stilinski watched as many of his fellow class mates transformed into beasts of the night; Scott McCall, Jackson Whittemore, Lydia Martin, Isaac Lahey, Erica Reyes, Vernon Boyd, and many more.

Peter’s bloodlust, his thirst for chaos and power, and his hunger for vengeance were not slaked when he finally executed Kate Argent, the arsonist responsible for the fire. He had finally achieved his goal-

Peter’s bloodlust, his thirst for chaos and power, and his hunger for vengeance were not slaked when he finally executed Kate Argent, the arsonist responsible for the fire. He finally achieved his goal. Though he had continued murdering those responsible for the death of his family, and yet it did not appease him. He loved the strength of being an alpha, of dominating everyone around him, and putting the fear of the Mother Moon into the hearts of those who got in his way, it was an aphrodisiac — so he took over Beacon Hills.

News spread of the werewolves residing in Beacon Hills, yet no one believed it true. They thought it a rumor crafted by foolish teenagers. Though they would soon see it true. The truth being that such creatures existed within their blinded world.

It only got worse as time went on. Some werewolves became apathetic, while others felt the pack had grown far too large for one city. These wolves left in search of new land to start their own packs. Some were so dominant and powerful before being bitten, and after, they shifted into the full form of a wolf when in their true primal animal state. These wolves held the capability of becoming alphas and so, leaving gave them that opportunity.

Five years later, all of America was swarming with werewolves. They made up 3/4th the
population. Another five years, and the wolves traveled across Europe, dominating and taking over cities. The world finally accepted the truth, believed in the mystic creatures that proved to be so evidently real, and there was nothing they could do. The wolves made sure of such. They’d turned those in power; congressmen, ambassadors, chancellors, and presidents. No werewolf would harm their own kind, and so the human race was forced into submission, having to accept that their world was forever changed.

The alphas took domain over cities; the strongest of leaders would control the district. Still, all followed under one ruler, the descendant of their creator, Peter Hale.

Scott never wanted this. He’d been forcibly turned. He never had a choice—no one did. He didn't want to remain under Peter's rule. However, Peter valued Scott more than the rest, because he was the first to be turned and unlike the others who cowered before him, Scott remained strong. Refusing to kill his own pack which entailed his friends and girlfriend, this earned the alpha's respect. This didn’t mean Peter never put Scott in his place when need be.

Scott wanted Peter dead, but killing a man with such power was nearly impossible. All those turned worshiped and feared their alpha; no one would dare to betray him. So Scott was forced to wait and plan for the day he could gain freedom and be rid of Peter Hale.

That day came when Peter's nephew, Derek, approached him with the proposition of forming an allegiance in an attempt to overthrow Peter, then killing him for his crimes. Scott never even thought to hesitate or questioned the man’s motives; he jumped at the chance to rid the world of Peter Hale.

For so many years Derek remained in silence following his uncle’s commands, because he knew that he alone wouldn't have the strength to defeat the alpha. The pack which resided in Beacon Hills ranked in the hundreds. Only after closely watching Scott, did he find a comrade he could trust to overthrow the demented Peter Hale.

Scott sequentially gained assistance from his high school sweetheart, Allison Argent and her family of hunters—the ones still alive. Peter killed Kate for her trespasses, then all the remaining females of the family, yet stayed clear of Allison when Scott wouldn't allow the alpha near her.

Peter didn’t trust the women, knowing the Argents’ leaders were always female. The men followed the women’s orders, and so, it was only logical he murder them before they could launch an attack.

Chris Argent was ready and prepared to take vengeance for the loss of his wife. Scott still needed more assistance in the task and convinced Jackson and Lydia to join the cause.

Jackson had grown tired of being the middle man, the alpha's bitch - as he referred to himself - following orders. He desperately desired to be his own person, not some dog at his master’s beck and call. He was powerful, yet restrained by the orders of the alpha.

Lydia loathed Peter Hale; he attacked and bit her. He never gave her the choice, making her a werewolf without consent and by doing so, almost killing her in the process. The moment she woke from her lengthy coma, he’d been there and took her as his own—forcibly claimed her as his mate. She wanted him dead and burned to ash.

Scott lastly called onto Stiles for his assistance.

Soon after Jackson was turned, Stiles was approached by the alpha. Unlike the rest who were forcibly turned, Peter asked Stiles. He’d made the dangers of the shift clear, the possibility of death, yet, also his desire to possess him and claim him as his own. Stiles could not lie; the
temptation of gaining power was provocative. Only… he’d felt revolted at the offer of being claimed by Peter and the consequences of losing his humanity. He declined and was amazed when all Peter did was scratch his car and bend the keys.

In all retrospect, Stiles had been foolish to believe that was all Peter would do at his rejection. That night, he woke to pounding at his front door. Opening it, he found the somber gazes of his father's fellow officers and collapsed as they relayed the painful message of his well beloved father's sudden death.

Ten years later and Stiles was now the Sheriff of Beacon Hills, intent on stopping Peter. Only, every time he attempted to take Peter on, the alpha laughed at his attempts and only ever wounding him. Now, however, there was a team organized, all wishing to make Peter pay for what he'd done to them.

Once they chose the time, day, and place in which to attack, they didn’t hesitate. They entered the renovated Hale manor where Peter slept one night. They knew late at night was the best time to attack, for the many minions who followed the alpha would have left for rest and Peter would be alone.

Peter had heard them approaching in the dead of night and was ready. There had been a fight and there was much bloodshed. Lydia lay unconscious with a broken neck and blood flowing from her mouth, yet everyone knew she would live. Unlike humans, such an attack on werewolves was not life threatening. It only took time to heal.

Jackson soon followed with a snapped spine and lay motionless near Lydia. Chris Argent was sent flying out the living room window and spun down the entry of the home bloody, wounded and in no shape to make any sudden movements.

When Peter made to attack Allison, large canines snapping and breathing heavily through his snout, Scott stepped in followed by Derek. The two betas sparred with the alpha, landing hard blows and receiving them in kind. Their fight spilled into the front of the home and at one point, the two betas managed to wrestle the alpha to the ground only for the large jawed beast to snap onto Scott's neck where he gnawed it to shredded flesh.

Allison shot an arrow into the beast’s side. It roared in anger, releasing the whining beta Scott who stumbled away. Bucking like an enraged bull, the alpha managed to throw Derek off his back and darted towards Allison.

Stiles anticipating this oncoming attack shoved, the frozen in fright, Allison out of the way at the last moment.

Scott cried out in panic, desperately holding his mangled neck together, while Allison crawled over to her bow she'd dropped mid-fall.

Stiles shouted in agony when bloodied fangs dug into his shoulder with force. The power of the alpha’s clenched jaw yanked back and forth and about, growling vehemently.

An enraged roar sounded as Derek dove forward and tackled the alpha off Stiles and they began rolling on the earth, both fighting for the upper hand.

The alpha won out in the end and slammed Derek to the ground, pinning him with his large paws, leaning near the beta’s face. Jaw slackened, dripping with a mixture of bloods, fangs prominent and threatening.
"Allison!"

All eyes turned to the figure. There standing shakily leaning against the frame of the door was Lydia, bloodied, yet her wounds seeming to have healed during the short time she’d been down for the count.

In one hand she held a glass bottle, full of unknown contents. Without hesitation, she threw it in the direction of the beast. It shattered against his shoulder, the liquid spraying everywhere, drenching within his fur.

The alpha glanced at himself in a baffled manner, he met his mate’s gaze with annoyance, tilting his head threateningly and growled with warning.

Lydia pursed her lips and raised a scarlet hand, demonstrating her respect for her alpha with an irate bird, "Love like ours is a never-ending flame."

Lydia glanced once more to Allison, dipping her head in a motion that clearly spoke volumes.

Allison retrieved an arrow from her holster and aimed for the beast, a second later the arrow thrumming through her fingers, passing the lengthy distance separating her from the alpha, and striking the beast’s arm. Within seconds sparks dispersed and flames ignited, consuming the alpha.

Derek rolled away as the alpha flayed, yowling in pain, body jerking sporadically, head thrashing in spamming agony.

The flames consumed the beast and once the fire dulled the alpha collapsed on its back, burned and bloody. Derek strode to the alpha and only there in the cold of night, under the moons light, did the alpha Peter Hale die. Derek swiping his claws across, the mad with power beast’s neck, ridded the world of the evils of one man.

Mr. Argent found the strength in him to crawl close to his daughter. Scott lay near Allison's legs, rolled on his side to take in the sight before them. An unstable Jackson emerged from the home and leaned against the other side of the frame of the door, a look of satisfaction filling his eye.

Derek rose to his feet, taking in each one of their gazes, before lingering on Stiles who struggled to sit up, a hand pressed tight against his left shoulder damp with blood.

Derek's body felt consumed by electric currents of energy. His eyes stung with warmth and by the look of shock forming in the others’ gazes, he knew the truth was known to them.

"I'm the alpha now,"
Stiles never realized that if a werewolf killed an alpha they’d become one themself. But now that he thought it through, and after witnessing an event unfold before his very own eyes, he found it made perfect sense. He’d seen documentaries about pack mentality. When the strongest wolf—the alpha was challenged by another, they fought for dominance, and if the other wolf beat the leader—they became the new alpha. So those same concepts proved to be factual for werewolves. Who would have thought? Not Stiles.

Stiles worried himself over the knowledge that Beacon Hills had a new alpha to contend with. He knew next to nothing about Derek Hale. Sure he knew the stories/gossip around town and could easily read the man’s files at the police station, which he had, but that told him nothing about what this new alpha’s intentions were.

What did Derek Hale want from Beacon Hills? Would he become another Peter Hale? Would he be worse? What would happen next?

He constantly fretted that Derek would become power-hungry, just as his uncle had. But that wasn’t at all what occurred.

Three months came and went and no one heard from Derek, no one even saw a werewolf—except for Jackson, Lydia, and Scott, that was. It was as if all the other werewolves disappeared. The town felt deserted. Only a hundred or so humans remained within the small city. The crime rate fell. There were no more reports concerning werewolves attacking humans, no more injuries created by crazed macho minions starting troubles, riots, and mayhem. Just silence… Peace.

After Peter Hale was murdered, Derek ran into the woods, and the rest were left with the knowledge of having a new alpha.

Jackson and Lydia used one another for support and left together, not acknowledging the rest. Allison was torn between tending to Scott and her father.

Stiles was wounded, but able enough to move around unlike Mr. Argent. He offered his assistance and the four of them went to the hospital together. Mr. Argent suffered from large lacerations and a broken arm, but nothing a few weeks of tending to couldn’t cure. Scott received several stitches to his neck, and two weeks later the scars were gone—his wolf side slowly healed the late alpha’s inflicted wounds. Jackson and Lydia’s bones had been snapped. Unlike Scott, they did not suffer any open wound from the alpha, and therefore their wolf side kicked in immediately and healed them.

Stiles had been terrified that the bite inflicted onto him by the alpha would turn him. He’d collapsed soon after the nurses forced him onto the gurney and gauzed the profusely bleeding wounds.

When he woke a week later, he’d had nasty lacerations that would turn into glaring scars, but he felt the same, he was still human. The wounds hadn’t healed. For some reason he hadn’t been turned by the alpha’s bite. Maybe he was the one in a million human who carried immunity for a werewolf bite.

One night, after a long day at work, Stiles entered the empty home—the home he’d been raised in
by his beloved parents. No sooner had he sat himself on the living room couch, preparing to crash, far too exhausted to make it to his room—did the doorbell ring.

Grumbling irritably, Stiles begrudgingly stood and answered it. He was completely mystified when he found Derek Hale standing beyond it.

The werewolf stood unnervingly before him, shifting from one foot to the other, hands shoved deep in his trademark leather jacket, bright eyes downcast, so unlike his familiar glower-pout-sneer.

"Whaaa—" Stiles was completely thrown off kilter. He certainly was not expecting any visitors, especially Derek Hale—the new alpha of Beacon Hills.

"May I come in?" Derek peered up momentarily to greet the response of the Sheriff.

Stiles opened his mouth, reply stuck firmly in his throat. Shutting his mouth, he dipped his head in submission and stepped to the side, allowing the other to enter.

The two wandered into the living room, Stiles taking his preferred seat. Now settled, he calculatively observed the alpha known as Derek Hale restlessly pace the living room before plunking down in the farthest chair. Stiles was reminded of dogs circling an area of space, searching the best spot to rest, before making themselves comfortable, and suppressed a smile.

"So...Why have you come to see me?" Stiles began.

Why should Stiles dillydally when an assertive front was always desired upon facing another species, one that was in charge of his city… one that could easily kill him… shit.

Derek pursed his lips with agitation and Stiles felt a spike of fear, praying he didn't just displease the alpha. He had a gun on him, but he wasn't that dense. It wouldn't do much harm to a werewolf without first being laced with wolfsbane.

"Stop that!" Derek snapped crossly.

Stiles jumped in his seat at the exclamation, "What?"

"That. I’m not here to hurt you, or whatever the hell it is you think I will do that is causing you to reek of fear. I’m here on business."

Stiles felt immediately at ease when the reassurance of his security was given. Wait...

"Business?"

Derek finally raised his head away from the ground and met Stiles’ gaze. "Yes; a proposition of sorts. One that will ensure the peace between werewolves and humans. One that will allow them to coexist."

Stiles remained unvoiced, not sure what to say to that.

Derek took Stiles’ silence as a request he continue and so he did.

"As you know, my uncle controlled all the werewolves he turned and subsequently the wolves they turned."

Stiles nodded his comprehension of what everyone knew.

"You also know that many authoritative diplomats were turned to ensure werewolves remained
"Yes," Stiles verbalized, seeing as Derek wasn't looking at him anymore and was staring at Stiles' hands.

"I became their alpha when I killed my uncle. For the last three months, I've been meeting with every other alpha made by my uncle to demonstrate my dominance and power."

Stiles' brows knitted together with a pensive stare, "What does that mean?"

"It means we battled. It's customary...tradition," Derek elaborated.

"Did you win?" Stiles had always been just a little too curious for his own good.

Derek sent a wry glare before staring at the man's hands yet again.

"Okay, sour wolf is Rambo," Stiles quipped with a sly grin.

A heavy huff left Derek's parted lips and closely resembled a shortle—if he leaned in close and concentrated hard enough.

"I've set out a strict regimen with firm guidelines. Each alpha is to give up claim of their district and give power back to the cities in which they inhabit. They are to find a human counterpart and merge as coexisting comrades. This way, their drive for power will be managed and restrained by their counterparts."

Stiles could feel the tension of his brows connecting as he struggled to obtain clarity in Derek's speech.

"I don't understand," Stiles admitted honestly.

Derek made a noise deep in his chest that closely resembled that of a whine as he shot from his seat and paced the room agitatedly.

"It means; every alpha must find a worthy and high-ranking individual within their city. This individual must have a position of power and leadership to equal that of an alpha. They must merge—marry—and are to be claimed as the alpha's mate," Derek hissed perturbed.

Stiles froze at the implication being so evidently given to him... He must have heard wrong... There must be another person Derek wanted to proposition... but.... Derek had come to his home late at night, spoke of business and propositions, and was now delivering the news of such gravity.

"Are you...asking me..." Stiles spoke evenly, deliberating the weight of such truth.

Derek met Stiles' gaze. "Beacon Hills is a small town...and there are only two people to choose from. Mayor Blight who is already married, and in her fifties..." Derek shuddered at the idea, before strengthening his gaze to the deadly silent man before him. "Or you, Sheriff of Beacon Hills; a leader with power, and responsibility of protecting the city. You are the best option for my counterpart," Derek finished with consideration.

Stiles swallowed thickly. Was he really being propositioned into being Derek Hale's counterpart...his husband? He couldn't lie to himself. Derek was sex on legs—solid, musclarly lean, well-built legs.

Stiles knew he was homosexual since the day he'd accidentally seen Lydia naked. She'd gone a bit,
‘coo coo for cocoa puffs’ when bitten, and he and Scott found her wandering the woods bare as the day she was born.

He first thought, ‘wow so that’s what a girl looks like’, but soon realized he wasn't responding physically in the way he should. When Scott formally introduced him to Derek, he'd felt instantaneously drawn to him, but knew it was crazy to get attached to someone like him.

People like Derek did not fancy or date people like Stiles. Derek was a 10; a hard 10. If there was a number higher, he would be it. Stiles, was a 5.6 on a good day...a really fuck-tastically good day.

Besides, Stiles was positive Derek was straight. Stories about Derek's past relationship with the late Kate Argent had not gone unnoticed by Stiles. The only reason Derek wanted him was because there was no one else. Stiles felt sick to his stomach at the realization, he was an inconvenience, a last option.

"If I say no?" Stiles breathed softly, fighting the urge to vomit.

Derek tensed at this, stared at him hard, but Stiles' gaze was fixed on the coffee table before him.

"I'm the first who must follow the regiment. The rest will follow my lead. If I do not do so, neither will all the other alphas, and they will rebel, viewing me as weak, unable to claim a human. They might even begin hurting humans as they did before Peter's death."

Stiles paled at this, "So in other words; I accept or the treaty breaks and mayhem ensues once more?"

Derek grimaced, yet gave a nod of assent.

Stiles dipped his head low, succumbing to the only option he could make without hating himself in the process. "I guess it's goodbye Sheriff Stilinski and hello Sheriff Stilinski-Hale," Stiles tried jesting, but it fell short of reaching his spirits.

Everything felt so business-like, and it was—but it wasn't in a way. This was a union of souls, of a love to be blossomed and nurtured. Only...they weren't in love, not even in like. Derek was straight and Stiles wasn't. How the hell was this going to work?

"You could get down on one knee you know...for tradition's sake," Stiles mumbled under his breath.

Stiles noticed Derek from the corner of his eye stride towards him and he raised his eyes to meet the stoic wolf’s gaze. One edge of Derek’s mouth twitched as if refraining from scowling. Stiles’ lips parted to begin questioning what it was the alpha wanted from him, his skin itching for space, fearing the wolf would snap and turn into a snarling beast at any moment. The color drained from Stiles’ face, his skin crawled with nerves when Derek fell onto one knee before him, the side of his leg brushing ever so slightly against his curved inward one.

"What are you doing?" Stiles yelped in surprise, rising to stand, but stilled when a pair of hands pressed against his thighs, keeping him seated and in place.

Derek's eyes were narrow slits, lips pursed, jaw flexing with barely controlled displeasure. "You said you wanted this."

Stiles strangled out a sound between a whine and a sob, not meaning for this to be the case, he didn't even think Derek could hear, but then again he was a werewolf—of course he would hear!
Derek tilted his head to the side, his body relaxing and face softening to one of console. "What's wrong?"

Stiles wanted to cry; slapping away Derek's touch he stood to his feet and staggered away from the alpha.

"Everything is wrong! Just… leave—please. I'm tired and I have to work early in the morning. We can talk tomorrow," Stiles rushed out, relieved when Derek stood and neared the foyer.

"Alright. Tomorrow," Derek relentingly affirmed, and Stiles backed away further, anything to rid himself of this humiliating truth.

The moment Derek stepped out into the porch, Stiles slammed the door shut, bolting it locked and staggered in his rush to get to his room. He tripped on the stairs several times in his haste. The moment he entered his bedroom he fell against the mattress, grabbed the nearest pillow and screamed into it.

“What the fucking hell was that!”

Stiles wanted to die.
Over My Head

Stiles woke the next morning groggy and agitated. It felt as if he hadn’t slept a wink, and it was all due to the surprise visit from Derek Hale. Stiles tried, he really did try, but his mind kept turning with the proposition given to him by the alpha. Marriage… Marriage to the alpha? Marriage to Derek always fucking brooding Hale?

What the hell?

Stiles was not sure how to take the alpha’s proposition. He couldn’t very well turn the alpha down, doing so would cause mayhem. Did he really want to be responsible for all the other alphas rebelling and taking back claim over their territory, and potentially harming humanity further? No, absolutely not.

On the other hand…could he really marry a stranger, an alpha that held the innate animalistic and feral tendencies for bloodlust and violence?

Stiles mulled over his options which were few and unchangeable. Derek stated the only two options available; accept his proposal or condemn the world to destruction. There was still another option…he could run…leave Beacon Hills and hope a fellow officer took over his position as the Sheriff and wish him the best of luck marrying the alpha.

However, the third option wasn’t very likely. Stiles wasn’t a runner, never ran from his obligations, and he had a duty to protect the citizens of Beacon Hills. His father…his father stood his ground and protected the citizens until the very end. Stiles became Sheriff because he wanted, needed to do the same. It took him some time, but he worked his way up to the top and took the position of Sheriff. The officers who once worked alongside his father were always willing to assist him, wishing to see him make his father proud. They respected him for his drive, for his will to remain strong and see to the citizens of Beacon Hills safety.

So no, running was not an option.

Stiles wasn’t sure how he made his way to work without crashing once, head completely clouded in thoughts revolving around the mystifying proposition given. Had Derek really just asked Stiles to marry him? Had Derek really knelt on one knee?

What the hell, man?

Stiles wasn’t keen on joining his men out answering emergency calls about the city. Instead, he took to wandering about the precinct in a daze, barely comprehending the requests and queries. After some time, he took to sulking in his office, away from the questioning stares, the hushed whispers pertaining to his peculiar behavior.

When the clock struck twelve, Stiles thought it best to skulk away from the precinct and get lunch out in town. He wished to be far away from the calculating gazes of his detectives.

As he crept away from the cluster of officers discussing matters of law—not wishing for them to spot him and interrogate him for his unusual behavior—he slammed directly into a wall. He yelped in surprise as the wall grew arms and hands. The vice grip of the wall’s hands grasped at his biceps keeping him upright when he began to fall back.

Raising his gaze, Stiles met pale hazel depths and inhaled sharply. The wall he collided into wasn’t a wall at all, it was solid as brick, yet warm and soft, and it was Derek Hale.
“Bloody murder, what are you doing here?” Stiles hissed; the room went silent and with a glance to his side, he could see the others had taken notice of the newly made alpha’s presence.

Derek glowered angrily at Stiles, his grip intensifying. “Stop that damn it. You’re doing it again.”

Stiles choked out a noise that closely resembled a sob, “What?”

Derek rolled his eyes, lips thin and tight within a scowl. “Fear, can smell it all over you. I could smell it a mile away. Now, I’m drowning in it.”

As if to prove his point, the alpha’s nose wrinkled, his scowl turning to a grimace as he shook his head slightly, trying to rid the scent.

Stiles couldn’t help it if he was shit-scared. The alpha gave him a proposition late at night the night before, and he’d come to realize he’d have to accept his proposal willing or not, to ensure peace. So of course he’d be scared raw!

Stiles clenched his eyes tight, breathed in shakily and struggled to repress a whimper that in spite of his attempt came forth in a sharp whine.

Immediately, Derek’s grip loosened, his thumbs brushed over the soreness of his arms and he leaned in close, his heated breath ghosting over his forehead. Opening his eyes startled, Stiles found Derek observing him closely, eyes having softened, face relaxed and pensive.

“What is it? Have I hurt you?”

Stiles’ stomach flopped as heat rose to his face.

“Let me go,” Stiles groused, thrashing in the alpha’s hold and was staggered at just how quickly he released him.

Sparing another glance to his men, Stiles felt all the more flustered at their calculating gazes. He turned tail and sped the remaining distance that led him out of the precinct and to the parking lot, taking note of Derek’s midnight Camaro.

“What are you doing here?” Stiles demanded, spinning to face the alpha with annoyance.

Derek raised a brow unimpressed with Stiles’ attempt at demanding fury and authoritativeness. Nevertheless, with a deep exhale he explained himself, “I’ve come to discuss the proposition in further light.”

“What?” Stiles protested petulantly.

The ends of Derek’s lips quirked up in a faint smirk and he dipped his head in assent.

Sighing heavily, knowing that sooner or later the two would have to have this conversation, Stiles decided it might as well be now. Rip the Band-Aid off, as people liked to say.

“Fine…it’s my lunch break anyways. Why don’t we talk about this over some food?” Stiles suggested.

Derek paused for a moment before nodding in agreement. He swept past the Sheriff to open the passenger side of his Camaro, glancing at Stiles expectantly.

“Uh—I can drive myself, thank you,” Stiles turned to head in the direction of his car but stilled at the warning sound of a snarling beast.
“On second thought, why not?” Stiles chirped highly, speedily sliding into the car and slipping on his belt.

The drive was met with uncomfortable silence, all on Stiles’ part. Derek stopped several long moments later in front of an Irish restaurant/bar. Stiles never took the time to try it out, always busy or something.

The restaurant was spacious. A bar was placed on one end and took up the whole length of that side of the room, whereas the other side was set for dining. There were many shelves full of alcoholic beverages; wooden tables were placed in parallel rows on the other end of the bar. A bowl of peanuts was set out on each table, along with coasters and laminated menus. On each of the four corners of the room were placed flat screen televisions, and all played the current college football match.

Besides the barman drying glasses behind the counter and a single waitress wiping recently vacated tables, there were four individuals situated at the bar stools drinking quietly in peace.

Stiles took a seat in one of the tables in the far corner of the room, under the mute television and Derek sat himself opposite of him. After Stiles received his order of fish and chips with a large glass of soda, Derek watched him play with his fry, before speaking.

“I explained why I need you to agree to this marriage, but I understand if you have questions you would like me to answer,” Derek remained silent awaiting Stiles to question him further, knowing that in the time after their first initial conversation, the Sheriff must have developed some need for enlightenment.

“Why does it have to be marriage? Why not…I don’t know…a treaty or some type of agreed upon cooperation between humans and werewolves?” Stiles pleaded, wishing there was another way.

Derek remained soundless, features attentive and circumspectly aware of the options which did not involve marriage. “If I believed such an option to be effective I would have chosen to do such, but I didn’t because it isn’t. A treaty or collaboration of the two species would never work in the end. Humans and werewolves are fickle and are driven by power. Sooner or later, one would want to dominate and control and the other would retaliate. Alphas have always been power hungry, love dominating and I fear it would be in the fault of werewolves most often than not.”

“That still doesn’t explain why marriage,” Stiles added, pointing a fry accusingly at the alpha before him and was surprised when Derek smirked with overconfident amusement.

“Marriage in binding.”

“Technically it isn’t. There is always divorcing,” Stiles mentioned as a mater-of-fact, chewing on his spiced fry.

“Yes, true, marriage isn’t binding, but a wolves mating matrimony is.”

“A wolves mating whatchacallit?” Stiles set his half eaten fry down and stared uncomprehendingly at the alpha.

“A wolves mating matrimony; a werewolf marriage. It is done so rarely that many have never heard of such. My family and few other packs have ever done the bonding ritual. It’s a process in which an alpha male or female chooses to mate. However, unlike other mating rituals between wolves, this is unending. Once mated by this ritual, the alpha is bound to their mate. They can never break the bond and the alpha must submit to their mate if it is desired by the other. It is
unheard of and unthinkable for an alpha to submit to another, but this bond will give the alpha’s mate equal power. This is why I chose the wolves mating matrimony. The alpha can never fall out of line, and the human mate can control the power hungry alpha,” Derek met his gaze with consideration and contemplation.

“So…if we do the wolves mating matrimony…I could control you?” Stiles felt a sudden nervousness take root within him. He would be able to control the alpha, be assured that Derek never strayed, never became another Peter Hale.

Derek dipped his head in conformance, before meeting the astonished human’s gaze with warning. “But don’t think this means the alpha isn’t still the dominate one in the bond. If a mate tries to abuse their power…the alpha’s inner wolf will take full control and put their mate in their place.”

Stiles wasn’t paying much mind to Derek’s words now, images of Derek on his knees, hands up in an imitation of curled paws, and doughy eyes, was currently playing out. Stiles smirked evilly. Stiles wasn’t going to be Derek’s bitch. Derek was going to be Stiles’ bitch. A whining, whimpering, panting, eagerly-with-his-tail-wagging, bitch.

A rumbling from deep within the alpha’s chest sounded, sensing Stiles wasn’t paying attention and fully intended to abuse such a bond. Stiles jumped at the animalist growling that erupted from Derek and glanced over to the other patrons who took notice, envying them as they shifted further away from the alpha.

“So…uh…will the alphas stop turning humans?” Stiles changed the topic, not liking the sudden moodiness of the wolf.

“I’ve made it clear they are not to do so,” Derek muttered gruffly, eying Stiles with suspicion.

“Will…will you turn me?” Stiles felt chills take hold of him at Derek’s silence, face suddenly devoid of emotion.

Stiles was bitten before when Peter attacked him, but still, maybe it was different when attacked and when intentionally turned. Maybe the alpha had pheromones or a certain saliva changing substance that needed to be present for a human to be changed.

“Do you want me to turn you?” Derek finally broke the silence with such power—and possibly proving Stiles’ notion as truth, for Derek was implying he could when he’d been present to witness Peter bite him.

Stiles didn’t hesitate in reply. Having witnessed the good and the bad of being turned and knew his answer would never change. “No.”

“Good,” Derek’s features unmistakably relaxed, almost relieved at this and Stiles wasn’t sure why. Did Derek think him incompetent to be turned? Why did he even care?

“What will happen to the pack in Beacon Hills?”

“Some will continue to reside here while others have chosen to leave and start their lives over. There were many forcibly turned who were driven by fear to stay and follow my uncle. Now that I’ve freed them, they wish to have a fresh start.”

“Why aren’t you driven to control them like your uncle?”

Derek stilled, gazing at his clasped hands over the table with deliberation.
“I guess I don’t feel desperate to have a family…a pack…not like my uncle.”

“How can you control so many? Aren’t you worried they’ll break away from your rule?”

Derek seemed amused by this, “Werewolves are driven by power, yes, but they also know how to respect those with power. I’ve proven myself worthy to be their true alpha. They will not betray me.”

Derek sounded so confident. Maybe he had reason to be if he was able to defeat so many alphas and gain their respect. Maybe wolves’ loyalties ran deep, deeper than the drive for power and dominance.

“What if the alpha is already mated?”

“Alphas don’t usually mate with just one individual, unless they preformed the wolves mating matrimony, which most do not. There was only one individual mated with such a ritual that I came across. Their mate’s father happened to be a member of the Supreme Court. This individual fit the regiment by association and I found him to be quite just in his beliefs.”

“So now all these alphas must find a worthy mate?” Stiles responded in rhetorical contemplation which Derek didn’t seem to feel inclined to answer.

“What will be expected of me in this marriage…this bond?” Stiles continued, feeling his heart jump a beat with dread and anticipation; it was a confusion of emotions and he wasn’t sure what he wanted Derek’s response to be.

Derek’s ears twitched. His nose crinkled as if scenting the air and Stiles knew he could smell his anxiety.

“Nothing of an intimate nature, marriage in name and a life lived as one. I will need to scent and mark you as mine during the wolves mating matrimony. Once that is complete we will remain partners, but not in heart.”

Stiles’ bowed his head low. What had he been expecting? Did he actually believe Derek would want to marry him, just to marry him?

“What if I meet someone else?” Stiles peered through the fringe of lashes and tensed when hazel eyes flashed scarlet in one instant. A second later they adverted to calming green with flecks of brown and blue.

“You can’t,” Derek deadpanned. Suddenly realizing the deadliness of his tone, he cleared his throat and adjusted in his seat.

“What I mean to say is…you can’t be with another once the bond is made. When it’s made, my inner wolf will acknowledge you as its one and only. I will have claimed you and it will be a true bond of mates for life. If you were to be scented by another…to have been with another…” Derek stilled, body tensing, shoulders broadened, eyes gleamed as they transitioned madder and remained so.

“Oh shit… Shit!” Stiles cried, jumping in his seat, glancing over his shoulder when he heard doors slam and realizing with dread the patrons and workers fled at the sight of an enraged alpha.

Derek’s nostrils flared, scrunching up as perspiration materialized along Stiles’ forehead and his fear doubled. The alphas jaw hung low, teeth sharpening and thickening in size—an animalistic snarl sounded and the room thrummed with the vibrations.
“Stop it!” Stiles yelped with terror, reaching for his holster where his gun was clasped and knew it was virtually harmless to the werewolf, but still needing to try something.

Derek’s scarlet gaze flashed, scrutinizing his trembling form and growled once more in warning. Stiles cowered, drew back in his seat and began whimpering, his eyes clenching shut, hands pressing against his ears trying to drown out the growling of the beast before him.

He’d angered Derek. He hadn’t meant to. He was only wondering! It wasn’t like he had plans on finding someone. He wasn’t even interested in anyone. He’d never dated anyone either. So it wasn’t like he had any romantic affiliation with anyone.

Stiles let out a blood curdling scream when hands grasped his arms. He effectively lost his man card—if he still had one.

“Sorry. I’m sorry. I didn’t…shit. Just…don’t…talk about…just don’t. I won’t be able to control myself. I’ve already propositioned you—and my wolf has accepted you—if you—with someone—don’t. Just…don’t. I wouldn’t be able to stop myself. My wolf will kill whomever… and it will punish you, unbearably so… so don’t.” Derek whispered low, voice raw, grating and rough, as if struggling to remain human, to speak and to comprehend language.

Stiles peeked through the folds of his hands that went to cover his face the moment Derek touched him and found a near human Derek. His eyes were still flashing red, yet light—pale, with flecks of green and blue.

“Okay. Okayokayokayokay. I won’t…with anyone…” Stiles shrunk further into his chair as those scarlet eyes took him in shrewdly, deliberating his truthfulness. “I swear it! I won’t even look at another.”

Derek exhaled a breath neither knew he’d been holding, the alpha’s eyes shifting back to hazel then. “As long as we’re clear on that.”

Stiles choked out a strangled and breathy laugh, wavering between a relieved shout and a feared sob. He would remain a virgin for life.

*Hello Virgin Mary, do you have space on that pedestal for one more?*

There was no way in hell Stiles was going to date anyone with a deranged and bloodthirsty alpha as his husband.

Derek released Stiles of his hold and took his seat once more. The two sat in deafening silence, the ticking of the restaurant clock a constant, delicate twittering. They remained still, glancing to one another, at the table, then back again

“Does…does this mean…you too? That you won’t…with anyone?” Stiles breathed unsteadily.

“No, I won’t, not ever,” Derek never hesitated, didn’t fluctuate, and remained firm and certain.

Silence once more ensued. Derek took to gazing over Stiles, while Stiles ate his meal with trembling hands and shivering body, pretending not to notice.

When they reached the precinct, Derek opened the door for Stiles who barely muttered out a ‘later’, stumbling unnervingly to the station. He paid his questioning men no mind when he slipped into his office, shut the door behind himself and slid to the ground. Leaning against the door, Stiles rubbed his head effectively with nerve-racking fear.
He felt on edge, as if at any moment the alpha would come back and rip him in two for even suggesting having an open marriage. He was to marry the alpha, bond with him and become his mate. Yet, it wouldn’t be a marriage of love, only convenience and duty. He would never be able to love, to find someone to spend his life with. He would be forced to be Derek’s husband, but not really his husband, his mate who wasn’t quite his mate. He was going to live the remainder of his life a virgin married spinster.

“Holy shit…”
“Stiles, are you alright? You haven’t eaten at all,” Scott noted worriedly as he sat beside his wife, Allison, on their living room couch.

Stiles remained still, leaning against the back of the couch, his right shoulder brushing Allison’s leg as he turned to stare at the two McCalls eyeing him worryingly. He never turned down food, especially extra cheese pizza.

“Aw leave Stiles alone. He can’t help but be a spaz,” Jackson remarked with a mouth full of pizza, lying on a chair his knees hooked over the arm rest of one side whilst his back leaned over the other end. Once he finished his insult he placed his attention back on the film they were currently watching.

“Oh shut up Jackson. No one cares what you have to say.” Lydia let out a noise between a snarl and a gag of disgust.

Lydia was resting on the other end of the couch, shuffled her bare feet so they pressed against Stiles’ back in a silent gesture of encouragement. Over the years, Stiles and Lydia grew close and in many ways Lydia was like a substitute mother. Although, she tended to scream and hit Stiles repeatedly when he said such aloud. She was too young to be a mother, much less a figurative one, or so she would vehemently argue.

“Are you alright?” Allison questioned once more, for her husband and her worries were one in the same.

Stiles swallowed deeply. In a home with three werewolves who could detect a lie just by hearing a human heartbeat was enough to still Stiles’ speech. He couldn’t lie. He could…but it would prove disastrous. They would pick up on the lie right away.

Lydia would begin cross-examining him, much like the lawyer she was. If Stiles broke under the pressure and confessed to being propositioned by the recently returned alpha of Beacon Hills, Allison would console and advise him, much like the therapist she became. Scott would lose himself to anger, demanding Stiles to refuse Derek’s offer. But then Allison would logically deliberate the consequences of the two choices given to Stiles and state that the one in which Stiles chose was the best outcome. Scott would stubbornly refute logic and storm off, most likely to confront Derek and get himself killed in the process. Jackson would have remained silent through the whole ordeal before cursing a, ‘son of a bitch’ and then attempt to catch Scott, to either talk sense into him or help ensure Derek didn’t kill him.

Knowing all of this Stiles opted for another approach. Smiling brightly Stiles took the plate of pizza he’d set on the coffee table he inhaled sharply with closed eyes and then opened his eyes once more to eye it with much love.

“Oh sweet pizza, crafted by the divine heavens, speak to me. Tell me the secrets that brought you into my life,” Stiles felt a heated blush consume as Lydia giggled amusedly.

“What an idiot. Everyone shut up and watch the movie,” Jackson snapped, placing his attention once more on the film.

Glancing through his peripheral he saw Allison smiling cheek to cheek and Scott muttering something about Stiles being a complete ignoramus—all playful and with no malicious intent.
Lifting a slice to his mouth, Stiles chomped a large piece, growling—intimidating his fellow werewolves as the cheesy goodness strung a lengthy strip from the slice to his mouth and he lapped up the drooping cheese.

Lydia once more chortled with amusement followed by Allison and Scott. Even Jackson seemed amused by Stiles’ attempt.

“Dude you sound more like a puppy whining,”

“Heeey!” Stiles whined intentionally.

“Truth dude. Now, everyone shut up!” Jackson exclaimed and everyone finally did so.

Stiles continued to eat his pizza, his tense form calming significantly, having not been discovered by the werewolves and the always observant Allison. The movie came to an end and Jackson and Lydia left together and no matter that in high school the two had an off-and-on again relationship, they felt nothing more than friendship now.

In all truth, Jackson recently and recurrently was spotted around town with Danny. The two seemed closer than before and Scott mentioned to Allison and Stiles one night as they exited the cinema and took note of the two having dinner at a Jazz café, they smelled of the other. Danny was human and smelled far more like Jackson—a werewolf’s scent was stronger than a human’s so this wasn’t the point of interest—but it’s still exceedingly difficult for a human to scent a werewolf, or so Scott explained to Stiles and Allison. Therefore, since the two were scented equally, they were mated. Jackson never told the group of friends, but they all knew. Jackson was private on certain parts of his life, and he was a right ass most times, but other times he really showed some admirable qualities. So they all thought it best to allow Jackson to tell them when he was ready and he still hadn’t.

After Peter, Lydia hadn’t dated, nor has shown any interest in dating anyone. She’d been forced to mate with the alpha Peter and was possessed like property for ten years. It was understandable she wasn’t ready for any relationship.

Stiles stayed a while longer after the two left to assist Allison and Scott with clean up. They conversed a great while after they finished tidying up. When Allison offered to make them tea, Stiles declined. It was getting late and he needed to turn in early for a 6:00AM work shift. Scott walked Stiles out to his beaten down jeep where the two exchanged their goodbyes.

When Stiles finally reached his home he laggard towards the front door, dropping his keys twice in exhaustion before finally managing to keep a hold of them long enough to unlock the door. He didn’t bother to light the dark home in his accent up the stairs and to his room. Within the hallway he began discarding his clothes; he lived alone and although he wasn’t one for mess—being a Virgo, and known for his nitpicky and clean freak persona—when he found himself too tired to care, he allowed himself to indulge.

He made a mental note to gather his clothes in the morning and effectively kicked his shoes off before sliding his pants down. He was left in nothing but his cerulean briefs when he entered his room.

Sighing deeply, exhaustion overcoming him, he wandered to the open window with curiosity. He never left his window open when he left home, only every night before bed. So why was it wide open now?
“Stiles.” Came the call of his name within the darkness of his room.

The scream that escaped him was a manly scream—really—who the hell was he kidding. He screamed like a girly-man, plain and simple, with flailing arms and jumping about on the tip of his toes, spinning in the direction of the voice. The familiarly-shaped darkened form and scarlet glinting orbs made his pounding heart still.

“For fuck’s sake, Derek, are you trying to give me a heart attack!” Stiles exclaimed, voice trembling with the aftershocks of terror that coursed through his very core the moment Derek decided to speak.

The darkened figure’s eyes deepened and the scarlet transitioning and resembled murky crimson with flecks of orange, they reminded Stiles of molten lava. The alpha’s gaze scanned his form with unwavering intensity that the hairs on the back of Stiles’ neck rose whilst chills ran along his spine.

When the stillness of the room was broken by deep animalistic rumblings, Stiles broke from his thoughts and suddenly realized he was near stark naked in front of Derek fucking-gorgeous Hale.

“Don’t look!” Stiles shouted one arm crossing over his chest covering his rosebuds, his other hand splayed out near his crotch, as if this would help salvage what dignity he had in him.

Despite Stiles’ request or attempt to shield his body, Derek’s gaze remained ever fixed on him. The rumbling projecting from the alpha’s broad chest graveled and rose in intensity causing the windows to vibrate with the grating vocals.

Stiles whined helplessly, his ocular vision within the darkness cleared enough to pinpoint his shower robe hanging off his desk chair and he desperately reached out for it. Only at that very moment the alpha growled irritably and snapped slackened jaws, closely resembling a furious bark.

Stiles hopped back a foot from his desk and rose his hands up in the air, imitating the many criminals he’d arrested in his life. Stiles may be many things; he may be annoying to those who knew him best—hell to anyone who knew him he tended to ramble and talk unrelentingly and never follow orders, but one thing was for certain—that if an alpha didn’t want him to do something there was no way in hell he would disobey. He valued life.


When he stood near centimeters, his hot breath gusted against his face and he slanted over him and Stiles whimpered helplessly. The alpha sniffed loudly, raucously, nose chafing against Stiles’ forehead in its path to the other’s nose, where he brushed his alongside the human’s. Stiles let out a noise between a squawk and gasp. The rumblings from deep within Derek’s chest thrummed against Stiles’ own.

“Sti—les,” Derek rumbled; voice course, animalistic, sounding restrained, pained almost.

“Der—whaaa—Hey!” Stiles yelped in surprise as Derek nudged his nose with his own and lapped at it affectionately.

When Stiles tried to pull back, face hot, breathless with embarrassment, Derek roared with warning and Stiles placed his face back in Derek’s personal space. The moment he did so, his mouth fell ajar at the whining, sharp baying which ensued. Derek’s tongue lapped frenziedly upon his face, tongue laving along his nose, his lips, the outside of his mouth, before once more forcefully nosing against Stiles’ own.

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his nose, nestling him warmly—much like the canines at the precinct enjoyed doing to their
trainers.

Derek was lapping all over his face now, his warm breath chilling his damp features in the process. Stiles was so close to Derek that he could smell his masculine cologne that practically oozed sex and swagger. He could smell traces of Derek, just Derek, beyond the cologne. He smelled… potent like warm spice—hazelnut and cinnamon. There was also something sweet, mouthwatering, appetizingly fragrant and pleasing to the senses. Fresh and crisp—mint and cloying vanilla, he was almost overcome by the sweetest and most sensory electrifying scents. But it was wrong, wrong for Stiles to want to keep near and smell Derek’s scent, to further analyze it, especially in light of Derek Hale licking his face.

This was so wrong. It felt strange, downright dirty—filthy—oh so filthy. Stiles quaked when Derek’s tongue curved a path along the expanse of his jaw line and suckled at each one of his beauty marks sprinkling the side of his face and the tendon of his neck. Dirty…filthy…so…right.

No Stiles, don’t give into this thieving, de-virginizing wolf in sheep’s clothing.

“Wolfie,” a breathy exhale slipped from his mouth. Stiles cried ‘wolf!’, imagining farmers with pitchforks and odium chasing the bad—filthily crafty deviant wolf away from the innocent shepherdess Sti-lisa.

Stiles shook the mental image away and lips parted, panting harshly when Derek’s tongue lapped over his mouth for what seemed to be the umpteenth time, never slipping into the wide and welcoming cavern. It was as if Derek forgot human customs of kissing and was loving his face, kissing him the way wolves did, and fuck if that didn’t make Stiles squirm.

“Be—d,” Derek yapped.

“What?” Stiles stammered befuddled. The alpha made little sense.

“B—b—bed,” Derek pressed with great effort to vocalize and it came out in a howl of frustration, but at Stiles or his inability to speak clearly, Stiles wasn’t sure.

“Bed? As in…bed! With you…and…me,” Stiles nearly choked on his words, trembling harshly at the idea. Just exactly what was Derek planning that entailed the bed?

“Jesus! No!” Stiles really did begin to sob because at that moment Derek lost his patience and his much-loved human teeth lengthened into thick fangs of canines. A moment later Derek’s rough hands seized him, lifting him bridal style, and carried him to the bed.

“No! I’m not ready for this! You thieving, barbaric brute, you shall not have my virginity! Not like this. It’s going to hurt! You’re probably going to go all wolfy on me and rip me apart! No, bad wolf! Very, very, very bad wolf!” Stiles tried to remain calm, collected, and firm… He slapped Derek in desperation to be free and all he received was a death glare, bearing of fangs and a threatening snarl.

Derek threw him against the bed and he bounced on the mattress several times, peered up at the looming scarlet orbs of the alpha, and whined pleadingly. Derek showed no mercy and Stiles trembled as the alpha removed his clothes with ease; his clawed fingers snagging against the fabric of his own clothing and slicing at it effortlessly.

Stiles scrambled to the other side of the bed in an attempt to get the hell off, gazing hopefully to the open door: his escape. He’d reached the end of the bed and was about to make a run for it
when a cool hand grasped his ankle, claws gliding along his skin in forewarning.

Stiles collapsed heavily onto the bed, arms stretched wide, giving up, giving in. The fight was over before it even started. Even if he managed to get off the bed and make a run for it, the alpha would easily be able to capture him and it probably wasn’t a good thing to run away. He might trigger some animalistic gene that brought the wolf out in full form to kill him…or something.

Derek’s hand that was clasping his ankle rose to brush up his leg, caressing his calve, before continued its path up. All the while, Stiles felt the length of Derek’s body loom over him, his other arm pressing into the mattress near his head as he lowered himself. Stiles panted heavily in terror when Derek laid his body completely against him and gasped at the feel of a thick hardness that pressed against the crease of his briefs.

“Derek…” Stiles swallowed thickly, trembling, eyes rolling back with the feel of the alpha against him. Derek was bear skinned, completely in his primal state.

A tongue slipped out to suckle the flesh at the nape of his neck while the hand caressing Stiles’ body rose up his side along the length of his arm and planted itself on top of his own. Derek’s other hand soon did the same and his fingers weaved through Stiles’, the pads of his fingers brushing the inside of his palms.

Derek’s legs flattened against the mattress, his crotch pressed tightly against Stiles’ buttocks, while the inner parts of his limbs brushed the outer parts of Stiles’. His tongue continued to lap at his flesh, prodding the slight muscles of his upper back before raising and tilting his head to nip at the side of his neck.

Stiles moaned at the ministrations, especially when Derek began to pitch his whole body against his. Pressing him deep into the mattress, the bed rocked with the motion, skin grating against skin, crotch grinding against his buttock and effectively pressing his awakening arousal into the stiff mattress. The wooden headboard thudded against the wall with each languid punishing grind of their bodies.

“Derek.” Stiles moaned again in need, completely lost in the sensations.

Fangs grazed his flesh, never quite biting, as if the alpha knew just how hard to press without breaking skin, so delightfully gratifying.

“Fuck,” Stiles whimpered when Derek’s grinding became forceful.

Stiles rocked his hips against Derek’s hardness then back into the mattress and buried his head into the foot of the bed, biting the sheet to hold in a cry of bliss. Derek seemed enthralled and pleased at the noises which escaped cotton lined sheets and growled with satisfaction.

Derek’s left hand released Stiles’ own to grasp the waistband of the human’s briefs causing Stiles to stiffen at the action.

“Nooo, please. I don’t want it to hurt,” Stiles mumbled, sweat lining his body. Derek’s tongue rolled up to the shell of his ear and twirled about the hole, yanking the briefs down and off. He wasted no time and once again continued grinding their bodies together.

Stiles sighed in relief when the wolf laid no siege on his sacred place, his left hand reaching behind him blindly and took hold of Derek’s that rested at his side, interlacing their fingers once more, their palms facing each other as they rocked.

They continued rocking against one another for long moments in time and Stiles wasn’t sure how
much more of this he could take. He was delirious with need, of want, of pleasure. He began rambling in the hope that Derek could still understand speech.

“Fuck, need this, please Derek. I can’t—I can’t—” Stiles whimpered earnestly, thrusting harshly against the bed. Stiles noticed that as he whimpered, Derek seemed to relent; it must be a wolf thing.

Derek growled breathily, his thrusting of hips strengthening. Pearls of sticky fluid peppered Stiles’ buttocks from where Derek’s pre-come marked him and he didn’t care—he enjoyed it; loved being soiled and body dripping with Derek’s essence, it was turning him on, painfully so.

“Yes. Just like that. Please, God, please, keep—Fuck!” Stiles cursed, moaning lewdly and jerking his hips back and forth. He slammed into Derek’s hardness before pounding the mattress, coming with a shout of ecstasy.

Derek’s movements increased, his grip on Stiles’ hands strengthened and he came, yowling his orgasm, clammy release spattering his buttocks, ropes and ropes of come—so much, so thick, inhumanly possible.

Stiles chafed his cheek against the foot of the bed, wheezing with satisfaction, body tremulous with the aftershocks of orgasm. He whined displeased when Derek released his grasp of his hands and sat up and away. He’d become so accustomed to having his weight on him, heated flesh against his own, he felt bereaved and cold without it.

When Derek began rubbing his release into Stiles’ buttocks, his eyes widened in astonishment and bewilderment. Stiles wasn’t a sex freak—being a virgin—but he heard things about sex techniques. This, however, wasn’t one of them. He’d never heard of people rubbing their spunk on their partner’s body.

“Derek,” Stiles rasped when long slender fingers parted his buttocks to layer his inner most private of areas with seed, deep into the crevasses. The pad of Derek’s index finger brushing his entrance, pressing just a fraction against it, and sinking several droplets of release within the reddened virginal opening.

The semen was slimy, thick, and velvety. Somehow it was able to coat Stiles’ whole rear, legs, back, shoulders, neck, and arms.

Stiles couldn’t help but wonder if werewolves carried an abnormal amount of mutant-like sperm. If this were the case, it would be easily explained as humans and werewolves were not of the same species.

Derek hummed over him as if he were satisfied with his work, sniffing noisily before a sticky hand grasped his shoulder and turned him over. Stiles stared up at Derek in complete wonder. Derek looked human again, his eyes a calming hazel, canines gone and replaced by human incisors.

“Derek?” Stiles vocalized shakily, unsure what the hell just happened.

Derek smirked with approval, leaned over and lapped at his lips, effectively stealing the rest of his words. He shifted off Stiles and repositioned himself onto the side and grasped at Stiles’ farthest hip, effectively rolling him onto his side to face him. Without so much as an explanation, Derek held him close and shut his eyes.

Stiles ogled him incredulously, raising a hand and poking Derek’s relaxed cheek, but gained not one response. The bastard didn’t even open his eyes to acknowledge him. He began to shift to make
himself comfortable when Derek abruptly tightened his hold and growled in his half-sleep state.

**WTF!**

Stiles’ brows furrowed in a frown as he poked Derek once more, harsh, and yelped with surprise when Derek snapped his teeth and took hold of his index finger, his eyes open and gleaming red.

“Don’t give me the, ‘fuck off and sleep’ look. We need to talk about what the hell just happened,” Stiles demanded resolute.

Derek’s eyes narrowed, scarlet orbs deepening, “Phuck oph unhd shleep,”

Stiles glared back, but when Derek’s teeth pressed unkindly against his finger and his incisors lengthened, he gave in…again.


Derek smiled arrogantly, relaxed his jaw, released Stiles’ finger and buried his head into the junction of Stiles’ neck. The alpha fell asleep almost instantly. Each time Stiles attempted to disengage from the wolf’s hold, the alpha growled and would compress Stiles clad against his chest. The last time he tried Derek shifted and wrapped a thickly muscular leg around his waist until Stiles was cocooned in the alpha’s arms and legs and their intimates were pressed together in the most personal and brain short circuiting of ways.

Stiles thought he’d never fall asleep after what he knew to be hours passed and he still remained wide awake. The moonlight from out the window dimmed as it lowered and the sky lightened. Over that time Stiles was wholly dumbfounded when the clammy cum of Derek’s spunk seeped into his skin, causing his flesh to feel slick and smooth, much like it did when applying lotion. It was as if Derek’s release was absorbed into his pores and vanished from existence—or from sight.

The room smelled different too. It didn’t smell like the apple cinnamon air freshener he used, but something else. Something woody, wild and crisp—almost like damp forest in the early morning.

Derek yapped in his sleep, his hips squirmed while his mouth tickled his neck when nuzzling, and he made high pitched broken barks. Stiles wondered if Derek was dreaming about chasing rabbits or squirrels in the forest and couldn’t help but laugh at the thought. Only as soon as he did, he frowned.

What had he done? Did he really just…with Derek? He hated the guy, with his all brooding, rude remarks, and bad attitude. But he had to admit, he was damn sexy.

**Ookay, time for bed. No more thinking about sour-wolf.**

Stiles attempted to turn away from Derek, roll around and face the other direction, but the wolf growled ruthlessly in his sleep. Stiles cursed him to hell and back as he rested his head against the alpha’s shoulder and tried to make himself comfortable.
The Pushy Brute

When Stiles woke up he was alone in bed, the alpha gone, and he damned the wolf several more times as he readied himself for work. At the precinct his men questioned him on why the alpha was back and what he wanted from Stiles. During the time he spent avoiding his men, he figured out a good enough reason for such an occurrence. He explained, although he knew not where Derek had spent the last few months after becoming alpha, that Derek came to discuss matters concerning Beacon Hills; he planning to live in town once more to keep the peace. Stiles also threw in that he promised not to turn humans like his uncle and to keep his pack under control.

Although, Derek never said such using so many words, from what they discussed over the last few days, Stiles was inclined to believe so.

The day went on as usual; he spent most of his morning in his office and then was called in on a highway accident, to the high school where a gang related fight broke out, then to the mall where some women tried to rob a designer store.

When Stiles finally arrived back at the precinct, he stilled his ascent up the stairs at the sight before him. There, on the top of the staircase, was Derek Hale, clad in his trademark leather coat, hands fist at his side, glaring with furious intent.

Stiles whined helplessly. The devil himself found him once more and appeared livid.

“What the hell did I do?” Stiles sobbed meekly, turning tail and attempting to get back into his Jeep and the hell away from the menacing wolf.

“Stiles!” Derek snapped, descending the stairs with purpose, irritation tugging at the ends of his lips, his pursed lips frozen in a cold scowl.

“No habla ingles!” Stiles hollered over his shoulder, barely taking in the cloud of darkness swiftly approaching and winced at his horrid articulations of Spanish. His high school instructor, Mrs. Delgado, would have had a world altering conniption at his thick American accent.

“Stiles,” Derek warned, stern, not at all pleased.

“No! Go away! Can’t I have one day without you trying to eat me!” Stiles complained immaturely, knowing he sounded like a complete adolescent but not quite caring at the moment.

Derek grasped a hold of his arm just as he reached his Jeep and slammed him against the door of his vehicle. Stiles groaned at the soreness that claimed him by the violent brutes rage.

“What the fuck?” Stiles grumbled, rubbing at the back of his sore head with his free hand and met Derek’s glower with annoyance.

“You showered,” Derek hissed, leaning close to sniff obscenely and growled agitatedly, shifting from one foot to the other—almost antsy if Stiles had to classify the wolf’s behavior—so not him.

“What? Of course I showered. I shower every morning and there was no way in hell I was going to skip today of all days after you…” Stiles’ words fell away at the recollection and blushed madly.

“You weren’t supposed to,” Derek grunted antagonistically and Stiles was completely thrown off his axel by the maliciousness in the alpha’s words.
“Why the hell not?”

“Because.”

“Because...?” Stiles was losing his patience with the alpha.

“I scented you last night. It’s a part of the wolves mating matrimony. Because you showered, my scent isn’t as potent.” Derek griped, pressing a hand against Stiles’ chest effectively, pinning him to the car before dipping his head at the crook of his neck to nuzzle sporadically and with fierceness.

“What the hell, Derek. Not here! People will see,” Stiles gasped suddenly when the alpha's tongue mouthed his neck and he pressed his body brutally against Stiles' own, a hand moving to rub along the slighter’s head of hair, as if to rub his scent on him.

“I don’t care,” Derek grated, feral-like even.

“But I do,”

“The town will find out sooner or later,”

“Yes, but I want it to be on my terms and later if achievable.”

“It’s alright,” Derek murmured distractedly, his hand planted against Stiles’ chest, gripping the clasp of the law enforcement coat; he unzipped it with intent, wrapped an arm around Stiles’ lower waist and reeled the slighter in close.

“Fuck, Derek,” Stiles moaned between contentment and protest.

“I need to mark you now. If I don’t, the wolf will come out,” Derek huffed, already beginning to unbutton Stiles’ uniform, revealing peaches and cream flesh.

“Are you serious? Really, like right now, and here?” Stiles hissed in disbelief.

Derek rumbled in answer, peering up with scarlet orbs.

“Fuck... Hold on,” Stiles bumbled, his hand shifting in his pocket, fishing for his keys. Once he retrieved them he hastily flicked through them, grasping a hold of the car key.

Stiles heaved Derek back with a great amount of effort on his part and swiftly placed the key into the keyhole. He cried out in alarm as arms tightened the expanse of his torso and a mouth suckled his flushed neck.

“Open the door, now. Or I’ll scent you here,”

“I’m trying,” Stiles whined, swiveling his hips back and against the hardness of Derek’s arousal, in need himself—

WTF?

“Now,” Derek snarled and Stiles thanked the gods who were shining upon him, the hallelujahs being sung in praise from the garrison of angels, when the door unlocked and clanged open.

He attempted to reclaim the key from the door of the car but Derek barked in remonstration and jostled the blundering Stiles inside. The poor lad landed awkwardly against the gearshift and his face splat along the leather seat, legs strewn about attempting to reclaim balance and equilibrium.
Derek smacked the ass before him that was wiggling and swaying in an attempt to reposition himself. Stiles belted stridently, body tensed, back arched and head rising with astonishment. The blow came swift and stung glaringly, but Stiles was positive he shouldn’t find it as arousing as he did.

“Back seat,” Derek grated hoarsely and Stiles’ awakening libido became ever prominent.

Derek leapt into the vehicle and Stiles tumbled over the drivers end with the wolf aligning himself to layer his body over his own. Stiles squawked when Derek shoved him insistently and Stiles clamored face first into the back seat of the car.

“You brute!” Stiles snipped helplessly, endeavoring to right his tangled about limbs, upturned.

The door banged shut behind Derek and the alpha maneuvered into the backseat whilst with clawed hands reached out for Stiles and assisted him to situate himself.

Derek grasped the edges of his uniform and with an effortless tug, shredded the uniform apart, leaving the human still in his coat. Stiles promptly removed his own coat—grumbling about the rude wolfie ruining a perfectly good and necessary article of his uniform—before Derek could tear the coat off too.

“Don’t shower for three days,” Derek explained as he unfastened the slighter man’s pants. He tugged at them and dove-grey briefs, slipping them down persistently, until they clasped over ankles.

“Three days! Are you kidding me?” Stiles exclaimed in disbelief and received a fierce sneer in reply.

“Fucking three days it is,” Stiles barked much like an upset puppy—and he didn’t give a damn whilst he ignored the flash of awareness in madder orbs.

Derek shifted to straddle Stiles’ waist and pushed him back against the seat to lie completely on his back. With hurried movements Derek unfastened his pants and slipped them and his black boxer-briefs below his package.

Stiles moaned at the sight of him, never having seen but felt him. Derek was huge, hung, porno worthy.

“Fuck me,” Stiles cursed, more in the, ‘I’m screwed’, than the, ‘Screw me’, but only realizing now how it sounded and what he intended for it to sound like.

Derek growled, baring his canines, eyes darkening in lust, and Stiles trembled under so much power. Derek’s began to work his achingly hard arousal, quick jerks and tugs, as if attempting to skip the foreplay and drawn out of pleasure and get to the release, needing to mark Stiles. Scent him as he said before.

Derek came with a vibrating snarl of a roar and the Jeep shook with the vibrations. Stiles bit his lip fretfully, praying to the gods no one would see them. Derek’s release coated the expanse of his chest and this time Derek didn’t waste a moment in lathering his body completely in the spunk; his chest, arms, hands, fingers, hips, legs, face, ears (much to Stiles’ protest and Derek’s growling), and mouth.

“Taste,” Derek demanded and shoved his release-coated fingers in Stiles’ face.

Stiles eyed it warily and inhaled sharply of the woody scent now filling his car. He lapped up the
liquid experimentally. It tasted bitter and sweet, cloying his senses, his mind overcome by all the fascinating flavors; strong and salty like potent lemon, sweet and filling like sugary plums and something else, something singular and Stiles could only categorize it as Derek—Derek’s essence, dominating overpowering fragrance of musk.

“Fuck. Derek,” Stiles whimpered as Derek stroked his spunk against his highly aroused length and jerked him off, just as quickly and with as much intent as he’d done to himself.

“Come... Come now,” Derek urged in a breathy demand, eyeing him with hunger.

Stiles felt so hot, the windows of the Jeep fogged, steamed by their rising temperatures. His hips drove up, trying to meet Derek’s stroke for thrust, but the alpha’s hips restrained him.

“Derek… Oh Derek. Feels so fucking good,” Stiles’ body thrashed, limbs kicking the back seat door and the driver’s chair in a jumbled continuous stomping. Stiles’ hands grasped his own head, crazed with gratification, arching, and crying in bliss.

“That’s it.” Derek encouraged as Stiles came, his come shooting out and coating his body full of additional spunk.

“Derek,” Stiles’ whimpered, trembling, hands snatching to grasp the alpha’s forearms, holding tight, sitting up half way in his arch as the last of his release was milked out of him. His mouth was widely slackened, broken breaths gushing out in stuttering strangled whines.

“Aaa—oooh!” Stiles moaned merrily, smiling dreamily, completely lost in the bliss of release.

Derek met Stiles’ smile with a tilt of his head, calculating. He swiped much of the human’s come layering his body and drank his essence, as if it were the nectar of life and hummed contentedly, much like he’d done the night before.

Derek laved his palms, fingers, and between the folds of each digit clean—indulgently satisfied, it was evident in his eyes—much like a cat having caught his canary. When the substance was consumed he tucked himself into his jeans, and zipped and fastened them. Sniffing audibly, Derek peered below at the wheezing, sweaty and spunk coated Stiles with approval.

“You mind explaining what happened last night and today?” Stiles implored, leaning heavily against his elbows to better support his head and stare unwaveringly at the smug brute.

“I came to your home to begin the wolves mating matrimony. I intended to explain the process which would entail scenting you with my release and to discuss it thoroughly, but you were bare… and my wolf kicked in.”

“What ever happened to not being intimate?”

Derek scowled. “This isn’t anything intimate, it’s part of the mating ritual. It’s scenting. It must be done as well as claiming you.”

“You could have given me some warning.” Stiles snipped. So he misinterpreted Derek’s explanations. Apparently they would be intimate and Derek would claim him—

“What do you mean by claiming exactly?” Stiles quizzed, needing to affirm they were on the same wavelength; he hadn’t expected the alpha to react as he did.

Derek’s gaze faltered as he stared over his shoulder and to the seat cushion. As Derek continued to avoid his gaze, Stiles’ features reddened further, his heart speeding in the knowledge of what
“Oh…”

“It will be after we legally marry and only when you accept my wolf.” Derek attempted to comfort him; it did little to appease him.

Stiles would become Derek’s mate in every sense of the word. He’d…with Derek…

“I want a long engagement,” Stiles blurted; there was no way in hell he would marry Derek so the alpha could rip him in half—not anytime soon.

He made a mental note to ask Allison for wolfsbane laced bullets as a honeymoon gift. Once he gained the courage to tell her and the rest of his pack of friends he was inadvertently engaged to Derek Hale.

“As long as we marry before January,” Derek breathed heavily, raising a hand to rub over his face with a disapproving grumble leaving his lips. It was September.

“Why so soon? Why not wait till, I don’t know…next year… or the year after—I like that. That sounds much better,” Stiles pitched.

Derek glowered and Stiles pouted. “You don’t want to ruin my only wedding do you? I’ve been planning my wedding for years. Don’t you wish to please your fiancé?” Stiles threw Derek a coy smile.

Derek’s eyes flashed red in a threatening manner. “December we marry. That is final. The balance of peace is held within our union. The sooner we complete our wolves mating matrimony and marriage the sooner all the others will follow. You want peace don’t you?” Derek baited, knowing Stiles couldn’t disagree.

Stiles’ lips thinned, eyes narrowed so close they twitched with tension. “December is perfect,” Derek exhaled heavily, shoulders relaxed, and he gave a curt nod of conformance.

“Why did you let yourself in like some damn creeper?” Stiles recalled having found the alpha within his home late the night before.

“You weren’t home when I arrived and I thought I could start by scenting your den—living space—preferably bedroom since once the room was scented it would drench your own scent with mine.”

“How exactly do you scent rooms—you know what, don’t answer that. I don’t want to know,” Stiles shook his head at the thought of Derek wanking off in his room.

Derek’s lips pursed in a frown. “To scent a room I only need to touch. Humans are different, to mark a human you need them to perspire and rub spunk into their pours to greater the scenting process.”

“Oh…So now that I’m scented, we’re done with this?” Stiles gestured to the both of them with flaying wrists.

“No. We need to sleep together from now on, every night during this phase of the wolves mating matrimony. It is for us to become better bonded and I will need to touch you a lot of the time. I will be near you constantly during this phase of bonding and if someone happens to rub some of their
scent on you, I will need to overpower the scent with my own. It would be a lot easier for you if you tried not to make physical contact with anyone until I claim you. When you accept me as your mate we will then be legally married. After…I will have to claim and knot with you to truly scent you permanently and make you my mate.”

Stiles slammed back against the seat of the jeep and groaned with exasperation. “Why me?”

“Because you are the only other—”

“I know, I know, I know. It was a rhetorical question. You need not answer,”

Not only did Stiles just get off with Derek twice in less than twelve hours, but sooner or later he would have to be mated by the alpha, made into his bitch, so the mating ritual was complete. After, they would live as mates but without love involved.

“After you mate with me that will be the very last time?” Stiles questioned curiously.

“Yes. It’s only to fulfill the ritual and after which we will sleep in separate rooms,” Derek confirmed.

“Great,” Stiles griped, experimentally running a hand over his abdomen and felt only smooth skin, Derek’s release having seeped into him moments earlier.

“So does this mean no more…you know…scenting?”

“Yes. The scenting only needs to be done once but because you showered you washed some of the potency away. For the next three days it will absorb into your system and until we mate I will sleep with you and touch you enough of the time that your scent will remain with much of my own,” Derek elaborated.

Stiles exhaled heavily as Derek sat up off of him and Stiles awkwardly slipped back on his briefs and pants before zipping his coat up since his shirt lay in tatters on the floor. Derek opened the back door and soared those two feet in the air with agility, unparallel to any Stiles ever did see.

Oh whoopty freaken doo, two feet. What is wrong with me?

“I’ll see you tonight,” Derek bid in farewell.

Stiles felt used. Once Derek was satisfied with Stiles smelling of him or whatever, the bastard was off to do whatever the hell it was he did when away from Stiles. Probably brood…the bastard alpha was always brooding.

Fine, go ahead and leave me. You no good whining bitch—yeah, bitch—my bitch! Go brood in a corner!

Stiles couldn’t go back to the precinct without his shirt so he opted to drive back home to get a spare.

By the time he finished his shift and went homeward, it was late. When Stiles parked his jeep in front of his home he noticed Derek’s Camaro parked across the street, almost as if to alert him of the alpha’s presence, not wishing to frighten him.

As if the bastard cares.

Stiles entered his darkened home and the moment he opened his bedroom door he found the alpha
perched on the bed, wearing nothing but white boxer-briefs, reading one of his favorite comics, the room was dimly lit by his desk lamp.

Make yourself at home, why don’t you.

“Couldn’t wait for me to get home? Just had to scent my bed?” Stiles joked, dumbfounded when Derek glared. “Why so grumpy wolfie?”

“I had to, since someone changed the sheets,”

Stiles blushed at the memory. That morning he’d ripped off the soiled sheets and exchanged them for some clean ones. He was only pleased that this time there would be no funny business—not until they married. At least he wasn’t going to remain a virgin for life, just a spinster after marriage…he was so the bitch.

Damn…

Stiles went to the dresser to retrieve his pajamas.

“No. Only wear your undergarment. Skin contact is necessary,” Derek explained.

Not having the energy to argue Stiles did as he was told. He undressed in front of the alpha, aware of his gaze that scanned his frame with interest, and reminded himself this had to be done. He needed to carry out the wolves mating matrimony ritual, marry the alpha and then there would be peace for humans and werewolves. Once married and mated, they would live as roommates— weird, uncomfortable, roommates.

Having undressed into his briefs, he flipped the lamp light off and approached the bed. Derek set the comic to the side dresser and slid back to make room for Stiles, lifting the sheets from the foot of the bed and up for him. Stiles took the invitation and slipped under it, facing away from the alpha. Derek grumbled and tugged at his shoulder until Stiles faced him and wrapped his arms around his waist, holding him close.

“What’s with the facing each other thing, is that a part of the ritual?”

Derek didn’t reply at first and Stiles thought that he would remain silent indefinitely. But as Stiles got snug, using Derek’s bicep and shoulder as a hard warm pillow and began drifting to sleep, the alpha spoke softly. “No.”

Stiles smiled, pleased but not quite sure why before yawning lazily and falling asleep to the soothing caress of Derek’s hands on his back.
It was official. Stiles and Derek were performing the wolves mating matrimony ritual. For the last two weeks Derek came to his home and spent the night sleeping peacefully beside Stiles... For the last two weeks Derek *broke into* his home and spent the night sleeping peacefully beside a *haggard, restless* Stiles...

Each night was the same: Stiles arrived home after a long shift at work, lumbered up the stairs, not bothering to turn the lights on when he’d be sleeping soon enough. When he entered his room the window would be open wide, curtains clasped at the sides and the blue hue of the moon and the street light would illuminate the alpha laying in his bed in nothing but a pair of boxer-briefs.

And each night Stiles would attempt to dress himself in pajamas only for the alpha to snap his canines, growl, snarl or glare with luminous scarlet orbs. Stiles would whine, stomp his feet, make dramatic flourishes with his hands and bleat, ‘But why-ie-ie-ie-ie-ieee!’

Not really. The whining and arms gesticulations were accurate. The, ‘But why-ie-ie-ie-ie-ieee!’ was more or less done within his mind. Regardless, Derek would glower and Stiles would give in —not before pouting childishly and flashing beady eyes at the alpha. Derek never bothered responding to Stiles’ tantrums, he just turned onto his side, lifted the sheets and his arms for Stiles to plaster himself in.

Stiles would, with much grumbling of nonsense under his breath, slip under the sheets and pancake himself against the alpha; his human size portable heater. The damn wolf was hot as hell—both figuratively and literally. Sleeping next to Derek was like sleeping next to a hot blanket, smooth and temperate. It was great since it was mid-September and already chilly.

Stiles would try to talk the uncomfortable silence away and Derek would indulge for some time, before feeling sleep claim him and then he would growl at the human when he attempted to wake him for conversing. Stiles didn’t really care though; he’d persist until Derek spent another thirty minutes talking with him. When Derek fell asleep while Stiles yammered on or Derek’s sentences fell away to a deep exhale of slumber, Stiles finally relented and allowed the alpha to rest.

They talked about anything and everything that popped into the ADHD human’s brain.

Favorite Bands: Stiles liked The Beatles, Peter Gabriel, Rusted Root, and Michael Buble. Derek, responded with a snort and a, ‘Not into music.’

Favorite Movies: Stiles was adamant, Green Mile and Shawshank Redemption were the best films of all time. Derek grumbled with annoyance when Stiles started poking his cheek checking if he fell asleep when his eyes remained closed, body still and breathing even. He had to repeat himself, because apparently, Derek *had* fallen asleep. In the end, Derek agreed with him, although he hadn’t admitted it in so many words. More of a high pitch grunt and a drowsy tilt of his head. Arms tightened their hold on Stiles; Derek’s head would dip further into the crook of his neck, he moaned unenthusiastically at Stiles’ torturous methods of keeping him up.

Favorite Color: Stiles liked blue, but not sky blue, jean blue or windows vista blue. He liked deep blue, sapphire blue. It was an important distinction… that the alpha hadn’t agreed with. Derek whined agitatedly, kicking the back of Stiles’ calve with the heel of his foot groaning, ‘Who cares!’ So Stiles took that as Derek not having a particular preference to a color.
Pets: Stiles personally loved all animals, but preferred cats: strong, independent, crafty, and born leaders – just like Derek. Stiles added the last part with a half smile, teasing the alpha just to see if he was still up. He didn’t reply but Stiles felt the curve of his lips against his neck.

It was mostly Stiles who talked but he still managed to attain some vital information in the process. Like Derek’s favorite alcoholic beverage was an AMF and his preferred soda happened to be Stiles’—cheery soda. Derek loved omelets for breakfast and he wasn’t so much into deserts, but enjoyed lemon squares. He fancied mystery novels and suspense films much to Stiles’ surprise—for lo and behold they agreed on something for a second time. Derek wasn’t much of a night person which Stiles found hard to believe, what with him being a werewolf—shouldn’t they be out and about at night, hunting, traveling, energized? But maybe it was just Derek. But, Derek was a morning person, which would explain why he was always gone before Stiles woke.

So what if Stiles didn’t find out what Derek’s life goals were, what experiences influenced him into the person he became or whatever the hell else? Stiles knew enough to know what to make for breakfast—if ever the alpha stayed long enough for him to do so. He knew never to make the ticking noise one could with a tongue against the roof of one’s mouth—a pet peeve and he knew what films to rent. Why should Stiles care so much… wasn’t it important to know these things about the alpha? Because soon they would marry and mate and soon they would be living together—and Stiles wasn’t sure how the hell that was going to work itself out.

Stiles lived in his childhood home. He had many memories here with his nurturing mother and amusing father, Stiles never wanted to move away and certainly not into the Hale manor. Although the home was remodeled after the fire, that was still the home of the late Peter Hale.

The blood drained from Stiles’ features at the possibility of having to live in the home that sent chills to his very soul. Never did he want to return to that home again. Peter was dead, gone from this world, and he finally gained justice. Still…

“Derek,” Stiles demanded, sitting up—tried to at the very least when the slumbering alpha held him close and growled in his sleep as Stiles attempted to detangle from out of his arms.

“Wake up, wolfie.” Stiles insisted, poking the alpha’s cheek repeatedly and gaining a growl that rose in intensity.

Stiles’s eyes narrowed and using his thumb and index finger he clasped a hold of Derek’s earlobe and tugged. “Wolfie, up now.”

“Brazil. Okay? There. Sleep,” Derek hissed, snapping his teeth at air. He yanked his head away from Stiles’ grasp and buried his head into the pillow below him.

Stiles whimpered pleadingly and his stomach churned when the alpha tensed, body stiff and still, too still. Gradually, the alpha turned away from the pillow, bloodshot hazel depths meeting his stare.

“What is it Stiles,” Derek implored, voice hoarse, thick with sleep.

Stiles cleared his throat, shifted back to lie completely against the bed, his hands curled between their chests, eyes open, beseeching. “When we marry…where will we live?”

Derek blinked slowly, eyes vacant, sleep induced brain struggling to formulate coherency.

“What?”

“Well…You live at the Hale manor and I live here. We can’t be married and live separately. You
said it yourself that we will live as a married couple—without the love and all that jazz,”

Derek moaned, bags darkening the rim of the alpha’s half-lidded eyes. “You woke me up for this?”

“Derek. I’m serious,” Stiles prompted sternly.

“I don’t care where we live, mine, yours, the woods. I’ll live anywhere if you just let me sleep.”

“So if I said my home?”

“Yes, yes, yes. Wherever. Now, shut that big mouth of yours and let me sleep,” Derek groused, burying his face deep into the pillow, practically suffocating himself while attempting to reclaim his sleep.

The heavy anxiety momentarily burdening Stiles evaporated at once, his stomach fluttering at the new weightlessness until it spread to his chest. Derek had no intention of forcing him to spend the rest of his life in a home formerly associated with so much misery; the epiphany brought a peace so strong, that it slackened his tensed limbs, and allowing the blood to return to his ghostly face. Without the threat of being forced into anything like the claiming or making the marriage public, Stiles could breathe. He could somehow embrace calm lungfuls but body entangled and in bed with an alpha was still something so foreign. It was in that moment he realized how Derek rivaled the definition of ‘Alpha’, proving to be reasonable, lenient, and accommodating. Most importantly, he deviated from Peter’s cruel, twisted definition of alpha, a stifling fear of Stiles’ – until now.

Before Stiles could clearly think his actions through, he dipped low, and planted his lips at the corner of Derek’s peeking through the sheets. His skin was warm, rough with stubble, and his scent all the stronger. Stiles jerked back as soon as his lips met flesh and felt all the blood rush back to his face in that moment.

The atmosphere became tense, the air thinning, and the silence deafening. Derek’s previously relaxed frame hardened, the arms around him motionless yet holding enormous power, his own solid gargoyles—trapped in their hold.

“Uh…I—um…I’m sorry. I’m really sorry.” Stiles attempted atonement even as the alpha’s head rose further, pressing against the slighter and moving to lay his upper body against Stiles’.

Derek seemed to soften as one hand under Stiles’ back stroked his side while his other came to clasp itself over short hair and massage at the scalp.

“Tell me,” Derek requested below a whisper, his nose was centimeters from Stiles’ own, breath hot and moist against his mouth which was all so enthralling. “Where would your dream vacation be?”

Stiles heard Derek, but didn’t quite comprehend the meaning of speech right about now, when the alpha’s hands roamed so tenderly along his bare flesh, heating it much like flames, licking tendrils upon a receptive sensory. Stiles’ gaze focused purely on Derek’s lips, they were the lightest shade of cerise.

“Stiles,” Derek called, jarring him from his attentiveness, drawing his gaze away from twitching
lips and into welcoming hazel.

“Uh—huh?”

“Dream vacation.”

“Oh…” Stiles couldn’t think, once more drawn to the gravity of lips, pale, inviting, curved and thick, almost jutting out for his.

Derek, aware Stiles was not in the rightness of his mind, bobbed his head and doing so nosed the human’s. The slide of skin, the rustling of flesh ever constant, and a humming ensued from out of the alpha.

A stuttering mewl, unstable with gratification, ripped from Stiles’ body as he squirmed under the wolf’s weight. His hands clutched firm biceps, pawing them for greater purpose, perhaps to right his spinning mind. Derek nuzzled him with intent, noses nudging playfully as if coaxing Stiles’ as the sound of needy and sharp humming rose in pitch and rang in his ears.

Stiles’ breathing fluctuated; nails dug into flesh and received a choked bark when he broke through skin. Derek’s nuzzling became frenzied, nose gliding, prodding in urgency, sniffing eagerly. His tongue reappeared. Derek lapped affectionately along his lips, dragging from the tip of Stiles’ chin, up along smooth lips and to the tip of his nose, before replicating the action numerous amounts of times. He paused after every upward stoke of his tongue, met the human’s gaze to once more repeat the action, and nudged his nose with his. The sharp noises and humming in Derek’s chest rose, rolling over slackened jaws and excited breathing—almost pleadingly.

Stiles shut his eyes, moaned wantonly, completely losing himself to the sensations. He allowed himself to just feel, relent, give, sway into being. He wasn’t going to think about what this meant, why it was happening, he would just be within this moment. Just be, do, feel.

His hands timidly stirred with life, grazing the dips and curves of a solid physique, growing with confidence in the wake of touching. The pads of his fingers dipped into the junction of Derek’s neck, along the pulse and felt his irregular heartbeat. Derek’s nuzzling, licking and whining grew, eyes coursing red, staring alertly with blazing fire.

Tilting his head a fraction, Stiles’ jostled Derek’s nose, rearing back when a whimper broke free of the alpha and mouthed at it and then mewling pleasantly when Derek quaked against him. His fingers slithered between pointed ears and weaved in the alpha’s onyx mane.

Stiles experimentally thrust his tongue the moment Derek’s poked out and they met, brushed the opposite edge of the pallet, along the width and to the other end. Derek stilled, tongue retreating within his mouth.

Stiles feared he’d done something wrong, gone too far, displeased the alpha, and immediately released his hold on the other. Arms folded against his chest in a mangled mess when he turned away from scarlet orbs and attempted to roll over and away. He was trapped though. Derek’s arms were bordering his sides.

“I’m sorry. I shouldn’t have—Derek!” Stiles choked when all at once the alpha pounced, mouth hot and fervently sucking his neck. His arms glided urgently over Stiles’ chest, clasping his pectorals, pressing against them, palpating the heel of his hand rubbing against sensitive buds and setting them to flame.

Stiles felt his temperature rise, face, ears and neck burning; his mouth parted, allowing for short
piercing gasps to slip out of him. Derek growled, though this one was different, deep, thick and on edge.

“Derek?” Stiles breathily questioned, hands placed shakily on firm shoulder blades.

Derek couldn’t respond, only growled ever strident, fiercely, feral and animalistic—maybe that was Derek’s reply—telling him to shut up and go with it, and hell, Stiles was inclined to do so.

“Derek,” Stiles groaned when fingers curved at the center of his tender nipples and tweaked them, fiddling, sending waves of rapture.

Stiles became daring, spreading his legs wide open, inviting the alpha to take him. Derek whimpered in accord, rock-hard hips snapping into and along smooth playable ones, rocking back and forth, ripping moans out from the human.

Stiles’ hands slid further, along shapely curves and fisted hips drawing them against his, hollering in bliss, sobbing with joy, groaning in near completion.

Derek was crazed, literally out of his mind and the noises he made, they weren’t human. They were noises one feared hearing in the darkness of night within the wilderness, for fear of a wild animal feasting on their body—as Derek was now, but in the most delightful of ways. He was eating him—eating at the salty perspiration layering his skin, sucking his tendon and pulse point—feeling, hearing the beat of his rapidly hammering heart.

Each time Derek jerked his sporadically propelling hips, Stiles was shoved up a fraction more on the bed, until with one particularly harsh pound his head slammed back into the headboard.

“Ow! Derek!” Stiles groaned in a mixture of pain and delight, one hand splayed out against the headboard above their heads, his other upturned and in an odd angle rested between the headboard and his head, cushioning the harsh plowing of hips.

Stiles soon forgot his frustration, mewling shamelessly, arching into the start of a climax.

“Derek, God, Derek,” Stiles breathed a prayer, tilting his head to the side of Derek’s mouth and lapping at it, dragging his tongue up to swirl the expanse of his nose, before snaking about the inside of his ear.

“Sti—” Derek attempted to speak, only his words fell apart in a desperate whine, followed immediately after by a strangled howl.

Stiles’ mouth fell open in a cry of bliss overcome with wave upon wave of ecstasy, Derek following almost instantly after. The two clung to each other in the aftershock, Derek humming in contentment while Stiles continuously mewled, tucking his head close to the crook of the alpha’s neck and clinging to him for dear life.

Derek’s deep resonating humming dulled, turned gentle as he nuzzled Stiles’ ear and lapped at it with affection. When he tried to move from off of the slighter, Stiles choked out a cry of protest and held him tighter, needing their closeness, feeling unnerved at having any distance. Derek relented, pressed his full weight against Stiles, allowing his arms to rest at his sides and dipped his head to lie comfortably against a flush shoulder.

“Derek,” Stiles puffed on tenterhooks, wishing to converse. Talking was good. It led to knowledge, like what the fuck just happened, why Derek and he… when the alpha clearly stated they didn’t need to do this anymore and why he allowed it to happen. Only, those questions and the godfearing answers were something Stiles wanted to stay far away from. So he stopped himself from
speaking anymore and just allowed himself this one moment of indulgence, running his hands over a toned back, sheeted in sweat. He permitted himself to moan pleasantly as Derek laved at his neck and nosed the tendon there, the alpha’s vibrating hum persistent. Stiles soon fell asleep in the warm and attending affections of the alpha, not once having any fear for his wellbeing, because for the first time ever, Stiles felt safe within the alpha’s arms.
Stiles was fucked. No…not just fucked. Spectacularly fucked? Yes, that was it! Stiles was spectacularly fucked, and it was allllllll Derek-fucking-Hale’s fault. The bastard…Okayokayokay, it wasn’t just Derek’s fault, it was also Mrs. Price’s fault too. The snooping, gossiping old hag! She just couldn’t keep her mouth shut. Always telling people the private business of others. If she wasn’t gossiping she’d be dead, most likely eaten by her five cats, the old widowed and wrinkled hag.

Okay, so Stiles was being a little mean…okay a lot, but he couldn’t help it.

The hag had taken notice of the most noticeable vehicle in Beacon Hills, Derek Hale’s Camaro parked just outside of his home every night. And every morning, just as the sun peeked up from the horizon, Derek-brooding-Hale would exit his home with satisfaction written across his face, or so that’s what Mrs. Price told everybody. So the news spread like wildfire.

That night, Derek spent most of it with his head buried under his respected pillow in Stiles’ bed, whining for the human to shut up and let him sleep. Stiles only grinned ear to ear, rolling partially against the alpha’s back, poking the nape of his neck with the pad of his index finger, and yapping away about his high school days. How he sucked at lacrosse but he and Scott joined it together, how he was so jealous when half his team had abilities he didn’t, but it made them champs. He went on to tell the alpha stories about his shenanigans as a youth and pleaded Derek tell him his. Derek, smacked a hand against Stiles’ face and pressed him to the pillow beside him, searching blindly for his mouth where he clasped his hand over, and growled, ‘Shut up,’ like that was going to work. Stiles spent almost an hour talking and trying to get information out of his fiancé. It was only natural he get to know him. Derek mostly just whined, growled, snarled, and poked his head out of the pillow to glower, which Stiles stuck his tongue out at.

Over the many nights the two slept together, Stiles learned much, though Derek said next to nothing. He took note that Derek was extremely attentive to his needs, when he was frightened Derek’s body tensed, when he was happy Derek remained in content silence, when he was upset Derek was unnerved.

Stiles first thought Derek’s tension and unnerved behavior was due to frustration and barely controlled rage, but he realized later that is was of nervousness and uneasiness. Why? Stiles wasn’t sure. When Stiles whimpered, Derek’s ears perked and he relented in whatever it was Stiles needed. When Stiles’ heart sped, Derek became alert, searchingly on edge and attempted to grasp the reason for such reactions.

So all of this prompted Stiles with a theory, because he was to be the alpha’s mate, maybe this meant his wellbeing came first and foremost. Therefore, Derek wouldn’t hurt him no matter how annoying he became, like now, poking his neck, bouncing against his back, nudging him to tell him of his childhood.

Still, it didn’t mean Derek was ever open. The man was like the Fort Knox with anything in regards to his family and past. Stiles could understand his unwillingness to talk about his family. He’d lost so many in such a horrible manner, but for Derek to refuse even telling him if he ever played any sports in high school was ridiculous. What harm could come of such information? Maybe he just didn’t feel inclined to tell Stiles anything about himself, regardless that they were to marry soon, because they wouldn’t be marrying in the sense that many did. There was no love.
With this thought, Stiles finally let up, removed himself from lying above the alpha and turned away to face the window. Derek growled under his breath, a hand grasping his shoulder and forcefully turned him over to face him. Their gazes met for long moments in time, and the alpha gave in with a, ‘football,’ before wrapping his arms and leg around the slighter and brought him close, falling asleep almost at once.

Stiles smiled, relieved to have gained some newfound information regarding his fiancé and happily joined the alpha in slumber.

The next morning as always, the alpha was gone, and Stiles prepared for work. When he entered the station he felt all eyes on him, far more than the norm. When out in the streets patrolling and answering emergency calls the citizens pointed, muttered amongst themselves, and gazed in skepticism.

Stiles looked over his shoulder many times to confirm if it was him that caught their gaze. When he attempted to approach them, they disbursed and found something of great importance to do, too busy to talk with him. Stiles was going mad by the end of the day. Even his fellow officers were avoiding him.

When Stiles prepared to take off and head home at the end of his shift he received a call from Lydia, requesting he come to her home. When he asked why, she didn’t say. Regardless, Stiles began the journey to the strawberry blond’s home, glancing every now and again to the radio clock.

It was 10:34PM, Derek was most probably laying in his bed, rolling in the sheets and rubbing his scent in the freshly turned bed spreads, grumbling at the smell of lavender detergent. Stiles grinned ear to ear at the knowledge only for that grin to part at the realization of what he was doing.

*Stop that!*

When Stiles reached the lawyer’s home and treaded the steps leading to her residence, he was surprised the door swung open before he rang the bell, and there standing before him with wide eyes were Lydia, Allison, Scott, and Jackson.

“Are you sleeping with Derek-fucking-Hale!” Scott bombarded the unawares Sheriff, and completely winded Stiles of air at the proclamation and its truth. Before the Sheriff could surmise an answer, the werewolf clasped the collar of his uniformed shirt and dragged him into the home followed by the others.

When Scott finally released him, Stiles fell back onto the living room couch by the force and the others crowded him. Eyes silently demanded he speak, yet all Stiles could mutter was a, “Uh—I—he—we—uh…”

“Stiles… is this true?” Allison spoke kindly, sliding through the cluster of werewolves towering the Sheriff and sat beside him. A hand clasped his with reassurance she was on his side.

Stiles didn’t know what to say. But his brain seemed to have a mind of its own. “How did you know?”

“So it is true!” Lydia exclaimed in a sharp breath of disapproval.

“What the hell man?” Jackson hissed his own sentiments at the absurdity.

“Yes—no—I mean…I…he…we…”
“Mrs. Price told Mrs. Lockhart that she’s noticed Derek’s Camaro parked outside of your home all night for the last few weeks. Mrs. Jones overheard them converse in the produce market. Mrs. Jones told her husband who told my father. My father came to Scott and I to confirm the validity. We hadn’t heard anything from you in the last several weeks, besides the short texting, so we called Lydia and Jackson who didn’t know either. So well... we called you here to confirm or deny,” Allison, clarified, voice unsteady as if feeling Stiles’ uneasiness and sympathizing for him. After all, there were three very annoyed werewolves salivating with fury before him, each with their own agendas.

“Are you that much of a twit that you would start sleeping with an alpha! Don’t you realize how possessive they become once they’ve formed an attachment? Do you not recall Peter and the way he treated me! That bastard killed any man who even looked my way and beat me within an inch of my life for it! What the hell is wrong with you! Did your mother drop you as an infant! I mean, really? Seriously?”

Stiles had never seen Lydia so distressed. He expected for his friends to be disappointed with him, angry even, but Lydia looked frayed—frightened for him. It unnerved Stiles, sent tingling trills of alarm.

Lydia wrung at her hands. They trembled at the force of her clasping, body shook, bright eyes shimmering with hardly contained tears.

“Lydia…” Stiles started, devastated, unsure how to calm her, relieve her of her anxiety.

“I don’t believe you!” Lydia shouted near a sob.

“What’s going on Stiles? Are you his mate?” Jackson spewed hotly.

Stiles was momentarily distracted when Allison stood from beside him and took a hold of Lydia’s hands, stilling them of ruthlessly clawing themselves, although the strawberry blonde’s form still trembled when Allison whispered words of a soothing nature.

“I—we—it’s complicated,” Stiles expressed erratically.

“How so? Tell us what’s going on?” Scott growled on edge.

Although Derek wasn’t like the malevolent late Peter, had not demonstrated any of the same cruelty and dictatorship, Derek was still an alpha. They didn’t know him well, barely even knew what his intentions were and what they entailed. All they knew was his family history, hardly anything that gave them any knowledge of what type of person he was or the alpha he’d become.

Of course his friends would worry for him and the intentions of the alpha.

“Stiles,” Scott insisted, features tensing with agitation.

The truth was best. He knew lying was no option and neither was distracting the rest from questioning him further, as he’d done before. He needed to tell the truth, but how?

“Stiles we only wish to understand what’s going on,” Allison spoke up, knowing the werewolves were running on emotions at the moment, too irrational and emotional to think clearly or comfort Stiles who seemed at the end of his rope.

“I—I—” Stiles stuttered, gazing completely helplessly to his friends and finding Allison to be the only one sympathetic. The others were glaring dubiously, scrutinizing, which didn’t help him open up.
“Stiles, please,” Allison persisted.

Stiles shut his eyes, took several deep breaths. He had to tell them.

“We’re engaged,” Stiles blurted, his words rolling off of his lips in one quick gush of air. He was allowing the truth to be known and hoped his friends could understand where he was coming from.

Silence followed. Stiles opened his eyes, slowly, a wince marring his face as if at any moment one of the three werewolves would lose it and attack him for his stupidity. Only he found four pairs of eyes gawking at him as if he’d grown another head.

“The fuck?” Jackson disgorged in a choking cough, entirely thrown off, not expecting such a declaration and Stiles wondered if he looked similar when Derek propositioned him.

Stiles broke, telling them everything: the night Derek came to his home to proposition him, their lunch when he explained everything in further detail, how their marriage was crucial in bringing peace to the human and werewolf race and that they were to be married this December. He’d glazed over the whole scenting, cuddling/sleeping together, and the one night they…when scenting wasn’t involved. Either way, the information he did reveal seemed to weigh the other’s down.

Allison and Lydia shared a chair together, leaning in on the other and towards Stiles, listening intently. Meanwhile, Jackson pressed against a wall, a hand clutching his forehead, appearing overwhelmed, whereas Scott paced the room, simmering in his thoughts, tensing by each second.

When Stiles finished speaking, the room was deadly silent minus the scuffing of Scott’s pacing.

The silence was swiftly broken with an outraged holler from Scott.

“I can’t believe him!” Scott shouted. “He has no right to force you to marry, to mate! You should have rejected him. You should have come to me the moment he left and told me. Why didn’t you come to me?” Scott’s anger seemed to decrease in his rant, into one of a troubled request.

Stiles hadn’t expected this, he never wanted to hurt Scott, it’s just…he didn’t want Scott to worry over him, to challenge the alpha and get hurt in the process. He didn’t want that. He feared Scott ever being hurt—and certainly for him. Ever since Stiles’ father passed away, Scott felt responsible for protecting him, to protect him from all dangers that came their way, even when Stiles rejected the doting and made it clear he was capable of protecting himself—most times, anyways.

He’d been there for Stiles’ every moment of everyday for the first few months after his father’s passing. He spent his nights over Stiles’, because every time Stiles slept he’d have nightmares, the memory of his father’s corpse. He’d allowed Stiles to cry and sit quietly beside him, a hand clasping his forearm with his voiceless support. So for Stiles to hide this, to not come to him, he knew…knew he felt betrayed.

“I—I’m sorry. I just…I didn’t want you to worry or challenge Derek. I just thought… if I didn’t say anything to the people closest to me, it wouldn’t be real.”

“But it is,” Scott snapped. “You will be married to Derek in three months.”

“I—I know,” Stiles concurred his understanding. “But I have to. I don’t have a choice.”

“Of course you have a choice!”

“No—no I don’t. I’m the Sheriff and one of the few human’s left. Out of all those humans, I’m the
only one who can equal Derek’s position, besides the mayor. I’ve already agreed and Derek’s wolf has accepted me. I can’t back out now,” Stiles couldn’t convey they’d already begun the wolves mating matrimony, and by Derek scenting him they were just about mated. Now he just needed to be claimed.

“To hell with this!” Scott snarled angrily, storming out of the living room and a moment later the entrance door swung open and thundered shut.

“Scott, wait!” Allison cried, but it was too late, her husband was gone.

“Son of a bitch!” Jackson grumbled, rushing after Scott.

Stiles sagged in his seat, Allison and Lydia moving to sit at either side of him, their hands grasping his own to still them of the trembling they began to do unbeknownst.

“Stiles… Oh Stiles,” Allison breathed, dipping his head to rest on his shoulder, almost placing mercy upon him and the only choice he could make in good conscience.

Only something felt wrong about it. Stiles didn’t want Allison’s pity. Maybe the day he’d been propositioned or even the day after, but now, having spent weeks with Derek, he didn’t feel so—powerless or desperate to get out of this union. Derek was actually pretty okay. Besides the whole growling, flashing scarlet orbs and sharp teeth, bit. He could be agreeable, kind and unbelievably indulgent to Stiles’ ranting where most would beat him to silence.

Lydia’s forehead pressed against his own before tilting and resting on his other shoulder. She shifted away slightly and tensed. “You already smell like him.”

Stiles cleared his throat, feeling heat rise to his face at the comment. Derek smelled wonderful and if Stiles smelled like him, he wouldn’t mind it so much. He’d taken comfort sleeping in the alpha’s arms and smelling his potent sweetness many nights, though never would he admit it aloud.

Stiles spent quite some time being held by the girls. They ran their hands over his own and up his shoulders, gave words of encouragement; ‘You can do this and know humanity is safe.’ Allison put at ease. ‘It’s only till after you’re bonded, then it’s like having a lifelong roommate. I’ll be here if you ever need me,’ Lydia mumbled, wrapping her arms tightly around the Sheriff in a reassuring hold.

Stiles felt their love and friendship, knew that no matter what he would have them on his side. If he should feel overwhelmed, the two would lend an ear, a hug, and tissues—which he’d never admit to needing that night—but he suspected Lydia had been cutting onions earlier, because his eyes stung just a bit.

Scott never came back, nor did Jackson. Allison fretted at the prolonged absence of her husband and left in search of the two. Lydia prepared them tea to soothe the tension created by the whole mess. They both drank the soothing warm remedy in silence, before Lydia finally broke it.

“If Derek…threatens or hurts you in anyway…” Lydia breathed unsteadily, shutting her eyes to compose herself. “You must tell me at once.”

Stiles’ features softened, setting his cup down to embrace Lydia. He held her tightly, moving with her as she inclined low and set her mug onto the coffee table, before meeting Stiles’ embrace completely.

“I’m sorry for what Peter did to you all those years.”
“I—I—just don’t want that to happen with you,” Lydia struggled to speak over her voiceless tears.

“I know...and I will come to you if ever that should happen, but Derek...he’s different,” Stiles attempted to put into words what he was coming to learn.

“Just because he’s not as malicious as Peter was…it doesn’t mean he doesn’t have those same instincts. He’s an alpha, no matter how he might try to remain good; bloodlust is a part of him and it will come out one day. Just be alert and never drop your guard,”

“I will do my best, but you know, ADHD and all tends to make paying attention difficult,” Stiles joked.

“Please do your best...you’re important to me,” Lydia whispered gently, tenderly.

After Lydia was turned and Stiles saw the way Peter treated her, he’d struggled to help her in any way he could. When he became Sheriff, he’d challenged Peter, took Lydia to his home, allowed her time to recuperate after the nasty beatings Peter lay on her in his possessive, jealous rage.

Each time Peter tried to enter his home and demand Stiles bring him Lydia he refused, and each time Peter left him still breathing baffled him. Peter wounded him, broke bones, gave nasty lacerations, but never did he try to kill him. Instead with flaring madder orbs he’d leave and cause havoc in Beacon Hills and the misfortunate humans who crossed his path. Eventually it got to the point where Lydia couldn’t tolerate the guilt or the misfortune of others in her place, and went back to Peter much to Stiles’ refuting.

Over those years they bonded. Stiles felt shame for Lydia’s misfortune of being mated to Peter, because if he’d accepted the alpha’s offer, Lydia would have never suffered. His guilt drove him to try everything to free her from Peter’s grasp, but the alpha was too powerful.

“I love you,” Stiles breathed contentedly, dipping his head into the strawberry blonde’s neck and inhaled the sweetness of lilacs, caramel and rosewood.

Stiles felt Lydia’s lips curve into a smile against his cheek, heard the soothing humming of her wolf and felt content within her arms. Now that Stiles was close to the red-haired beauty, he could smell the sweetness of her aroma and it reminded him so much of his mother's. Lydia was the closest woman in his life and she meant a great deal to him. She was a good friend, a confidant and mothering—caring for his wellbeing. He only wished there were more he could have done for her.

When Stiles and Lydia finished the pot of tea and the rest of the gang still had not returned, Stiles thought it best they get some rest. He requested that if they did return, Lydia should call him, but he highly doubted they would. Scott would most likely be far too irate, Jackson too frustrated, and Allison wired in trying to talk Scott down from his rage.

As Stiles drove home, the hood of his Jeep steamed over, so much so, mounts of smoke fogged the windshield, and Stiles was forced to pull over on the side of the road, pop the hood open and inspect the engine. Once the searing smoke cleared all Stiles saw was metal and more metal; he knew absolutely nothing about cars—well not nothing—just the basics. But certainly not enough to fix the Jeep in its current condition.

Retrieving his cell, he attempted to call the tow truck services, yet received the out of range distress signal, indicating that he was far too deep in the forested terrain. Lydia lived far out of the city, in a home the complete opposite direction of the Hale manor, but similarly disserted of civilization.
Stiles begrudgingly began his long journey down the deserted road in the dead of night, hands fisted into balls of warmth in his uniformed coat pockets. As he walked, he thought over the arguments, tears, and revelations that occurred and groaned feebly. What a mess. He’d have to find Scott tomorrow, once his wolf cooled enough to talk, and express just how sorry he was for keeping something this important from him.

Once an hour passed, Stiles tried his cell service again to receive the same siren of no signal and plodded aimlessly. It was a cold September night and Stiles’ face was freezing. His nose was numb and felt as if it would fall off at any moment, his face stinging in the frigid breeze. It was so late, 2:34AM, that the tow truck offices would have closed already and by the time Stiles made it into a cell phone radius, so would the taxi services.

Forty minutes passed and another check of his cell infuriated him into shouting at the sky for damning him.

“This fucking sucks!” Stiles whined, kicking at the pebbles before him in his path.

The air buzzed, first a whisper, then a vibrating hum—a car was coming Stiles’ way.

“Thank fuck!” Stiles exclaimed, delighted. The headlights blinded him as they neared but he didn’t mind as it meant a potential way out of the deserted, forest-consuming streets.

Stiles raised a hand to flag the driver and he felt hope flutter in his heart when the car pulled to a sudden halt. Removing the hand shielding his eyes from the blare of headlights when they turned off, Stiles felt his stomach swarm with butterflies at the familiar midnight Camaro before him.

“Thank God, Derek, I thought I’d be out here for hours…” Stiles stilled.

The driver’s door opened and slammed shut to reveal his savior—a pissed off, red eyed, fanged out, savior.

“Stiles,” Derek growled, voice raw, gravelly, far rougher than Stiles had ever heard before. “Get over here,” Derek demanded, pointing just before his feet.

“No! As if! Like I’m going anywhere near you when you’re all like—red eyes and fangy. I’m not that stupid!”

“Stiles,” Derek barked, striding towards him at an alarming pace, his breathing ragged. Stiles began jogging backwards which seemed to infuriate the alpha further.

“For the love of… Stiles!”

Stiles choked out a sob when Derek sprinted the distance between them in a matter of seconds. Stiles cowered, hunched over, and turned away from Derek, preparing himself for the maiming.

When it came he screamed like a school girl. Strong arms wrapped around his chest, over his arms, claws tore at his downy coat and caressed his flesh, and felt the hot breath of the alpha press into his neck. The growling from earlier rose as he held him, his nose tickling his neck as it nuzzled him and sniffed persistently. Another growl sounded, but far more threatening.

“Who were you with?”
“What?”

“What were you with?” Derek repeated cold and demanding.

“Uh, friends,” Stiles breathed shakily as a hot tongue lapped at his neck.

“You smell different. They touched you—a lot. They’re all over you,” Derek barked, and grazed his fangs against the flesh of his neck as punishment.

Stiles trembled at the sensation and leaned into the touch, closing his eyes, and breathed in Derek’s scent, heavily.

“They found out about us.”

“I told you not to touch anyone,” Derek graveled, hands moving to stroke his body, noising persistently.

“We were—all a bit emotional, and friends hug when comforting each other.”

“I don’t care. I don’t like it.”

“Well you’re going to have to get used to it,” Stiles grumbled lowly, tilting his head to the side, allowing the alpha to nip at his cold flesh and heat his once chilled form.

“Don’t piss me off. I spent hours sniffing you out, and when I find you—you smell like women,” Derek barked, sucking hard on Stiles’ pulse point and eliciting a gasp and shudder from the slighter.

“You’ve been looking for me? Why?” Stiles was stunned at this revealing information that seemed to warm his already heating body all the more.

“You didn’t return home during your usual time frame. I waited an hour longer. When you hadn’t retuned still, I began sniffing you out.”

Stiles swallowed thickly, twisted around to face the alpha, met crimson orbs, furious scowl, fanged canines and realized Derek wasn’t angry with him so much as he’d been worried. This sudden realization shouldn’t have made him feel at peace and elated, but it did. Derek cared about his wellbeing. He’d been worried about him. Derek-fucking-brooding-Hale had a heart. Who would have known?

Stiles grinned cheek to cheek, his hands clasping the back of the alpha’s leather coat to grab fistfuls. Leaning in, he nuzzled the alpha’s nose with his own. Derek stared at him oddly, but the deep scarlet of his eyes lightened ever so slowly as Stiles nuzzled his face and lapped at his nose.

“Next time call me,” Derek exhaled heavily, shoulders sagging of tension, bowing to nudge Stiles’ nose with his and nipped lightly and mischievously.

“I don’t have your number,” Stiles remarked truthfully.

“I’ll give it to you, later. Right now, I’m tired, and we should head back for some sleep,” Derek affirmed, sniffing the general area in which Stiles inhabited with reprieve.

“That should do for now,” Derek huffed, slightly miffed that Stiles smelled of others and yanked the Sheriff by his collar to the car. “Time for bed.”

*What is with all the werewolves yanking my collar?*
“Are you going to be all touchy feely the whole night?” Stiles stipulated incredulously when Derek drove back the way he came, one hand on the steering wheel the other running over Stiles’ head, face and neck.

Derek glanced over to him with a frown, wrapping an arm around the slighter man’s waist to haul him over the gearshift and against his side. He nuzzled Stiles’ fuzzed buzz cut and mouthed at his head, eyes still managing to remain on the road.

Stiles’ continuous blush spread across his face and reached his ears at the strange sensation of having his head lapped at. “Awww, come on! Stop that, we’re going to get in an accident!” Stiles complained, voice wavering.

Derek disregarded his observation, humming deep in his chest contentedly and his smile was evident when pressing against Stiles’ head mid lick.
Claimed

Stiles glared contemptuously at the alpha before him slipping on a pant sleeve one at a time, and rolled onto his belly, bending forwards over the foot of the bed to watch those hips sway slightly. When the alpha turned to stare at him he strengthened his glare, almost forgetting how angry he was with the wolf. Derek spent all night touching him, running his hands all over his body, nuzzling him, and the two never seemed to get any of the sleep Derek advised they needed. Now, Derek was preparing to leave him—with a glance at his clock Stiles noised a sound resembling a choke of disbelief.

“Where the hell are you going at 4:20AM?” Stiles reprimanded, for what he was unsure.

Derek breathed heavily, rolling the hem of his white t-shirt near the sleeves and slid the collar of the shirt over his head.

“Alpha business.”

“Alpha business?” Stiles parroted with a frown.

“Yes,” Derek assented, narrowed eyes.

“Like what?”

“Like none of your business.”

“Uh…I think it is my business, because you’re my fiancé and soon to be mate. I think that entails I gain the right.”

Derek stilled his movements, raised a brow in question. “Is that right?”

Stiles sat up, wrapping the bed sheets over his shoulders, suddenly feeling a chill, but remained determined. “Yup.”

Derek’s features remained void of emotion for long moments in time, only to abruptly alter, and the ends of his lips twitched as he was now smirking.

“I have to make some out of state calls to discuss the improvements of certain districts,” Derek conveyed, shrugging on his leather coat and sitting beside Stiles where he proceeded to strap his boots.

“Why don’t you make the calls here and I’ll prepare breakfast,” Stiles offered. “I could make a western omelet,” Stiles nudged Derek’s shoulder with his and leaned against him to smell the alpha’s wonderful scent.

“You should sleep.”

“I’m not tired.”

“You look it.”

“Well, I’m not. Just let me prepare breakfast while you make your calls and by the time you’re done, breakfast should be ready,” Stiles explained before he threw off the sheets and clambered out of the bed to snatch up his bathrobe and slip it on.
When he glanced over for the alpha’s answer, Derek stared at him calculatingly, as if attempting to determine the sudden change in the man before him. He gave a curt nod, stood, and hesitated from exiting the room.

“I’ll be outside,” Derek muttered, waving his cell in hand, and treaded out of the room.

When Stiles began preparing breakfast his stomach churned in knots of anxiousness. He knew he shouldn’t—that their nights spent in the other’s company and the alpha’s need to be near him wasn’t anything but a necessity to the bond of mating—but he was starting to accept his feelings for the man.

He was developing a small-minute-barely present man crush on the alpha. He liked Derek fucking brooding Hale. He liked that it didn’t take much to get a rise out of the alpha, that no matter how annoying he could be Derek wouldn’t lose his temper, loved the slight twitch of his lips when agitated or wishing to snap—but always managing to control the need. Derek wasn’t much of a talker, wasn’t open about himself, but Stiles was slowly worming his way into Derek’s brain, gathering all the information he could. Though the information pool was low at the moment, Stiles was ever persistent in finding out more.

The whole marriage and mating thing…Stiles still wasn’t settled on it and didn’t much want to think about it. If it were up to him, he’d wait till next summer, or a year later, just to better get to know Derek—but they were running out of time. And either way, if they married tomorrow or in a year’s time—they still had to marry—it wasn’t up for negotiation.

Soon Derek Hale would be Stiles’ husband, and it was best they get along. If they became friends, that would be wonderful. It was better than strangers forced to live as a couple. He rather liked the idea of that. Being Derek’s friend—being his husband in name and close companion—who just happened to think his ass was fascinating to look at when encased in tight forest green boxer-briefs this morning. How could that Adonis be for real—like really. Models didn’t have nearly as many muscles, or that natural olive complexion, and those eyes—Jesus!

Those hazel eyes were the most brilliant of hazel Stiles ever did see. Some days they looked cerulean with flecks of aurulent brunnaceous and chartreuse. Other days, they were chlorochrous, but sometimes—sometimes in the perfect lighting they appeared chrysochlorous and auburn tinged with glaucous.

When Stiles said he was developing a small-minute-barely present man crush on the alpha—he might have meant vastly-prominent-fucking elephant in the room man crush on the alpha.

Woolgathering, Stiles hissed in alarm when his knuckles grazed alongside the sizzling pan. Cursing his stupidity, Stiles sucked on his index knuckle (the worst inflicted) and peered out the kitchen window and into the darkness of early morning. Derek stood near the street, leaning on the hood of his car, his ears perking as he glanced towards the general direction of the home. Almost as if he heard his slew of cursing and sensed the human’s gaze on him. Only as soon as it occurred, the alpha looked away, shifting the phone at his ear, and preceded his conversation with whomever on the other end.

So, okay, Stiles had a crush on Derek Hale, but that didn’t change anything. He was still being forced into a loveless union. Just because he fancied looking at Derek’s ass didn’t mean marriage was acceptable. Derek might have thought him a smartass when he mentioned having planned his wedding for years just to postpone it, but in all truth Stiles had been planning his wedding for many years. He had a flash drive full of wedding plans, contact information, locations, music ideas, floral arrangements, color themes, and outfits in mind for members of the wedding party, and more, tucked away in the back of his closet in an old shoebox. He would never tell Derek that,
though Stiles always wanted a dream wedding. This, he guessed, made him fit into the clichéd gay man stereotype, but truly it was more than that.

Stiles recalled how his mother used to speak so merrily about the day she married his father, spoke of the romance and beauty of it all. Her description of the wedding, containing such detail and fondness, portrayed more than photographs. Stiles fell in love with the scenery she depicted and felt a need to have a wedding much like his mother’s. In fact, most of his wedding plans were based off of his parents. The same location, color theme, floral arrangements, centerpieces, etcetera, etcetera.

Stiles just wanted to find Mr. Right to have the perfect wedding with—instead he found Mr. Broody Wolfy, instead he would marry Derek Hale—but that didn’t mean he’d let his wedding plans go to waste. He’d be damned if Derek tried to rush him before January, if it meant his dream wedding honoring his parents true love would be ruined. Derek would just have to be patient.

The bitter, suffocating scent of smoke alerted Stiles his omelets were burning in his absentmindedness. He hurriedly slid the omelets onto two sets of plates, cringing at the unsightly darkened eggs.

“I’m finished,” Derek huffed, slipping his cell into his pocket and stepping to stand beside the human. His hip grazed Stiles’, arm shifting to bring him in close, and Derek nuzzled his head, scenting him. When he released him and stared at the plates before them, his nose crinkled by the scent of charred breakfast.

“I thought you could cook.”

“I can.”

“Then what is that?” Derek poked the offending substance with a finger and shook his head, nose crinkling further in an attempt to rid the scent.

“Omelet,” Stiles snipped, narrowed eyes, daring Derek to say something.

Derek gazed mildly surprised, the ends of his lips twitching into that of an endearing smile—an honest to God smile. No sneering, no hoity-toity-know-it-all-self-assured-alpha smile, no ‘I’m smiling at you not with you,’ smile, but a real, earth shattering, heartwarming smile.

“You’re such an idiot. You can’t even make a simple omelet,” Derek choked out a cough that closely resembled a snort of laughter.

“Heeey, it’s like five in the damn morning, sorry if my brain’s a bit fried, I haven’t slept,” Stiles whined, tugging at the hem of Derek’s coat in a silent plea the alpha stop his teasing, he didn’t much like it, no matter how beautiful Derek looked when smiling.

“I told you to sleep. Move, I’ll cook, you watch,” Derek shoved Stiles away from the stove lightly.

He re-oiled the pan and scrambled eggs. He cut mushrooms, bell peppers, bacon bits, red onions, and parsley, then mixed them in with the eggs, before pouring half the contents into the pan.

“The trick is to sprinkle the condiments in just before you flip the omelet closed,” Derek advised, sprinkling salt and pepper over the eggs and flipped it.

Stiles pouted, nudged Derek’s hips with his own, and stuck his tongue out when the alpha met his gaze.
“I knew that already. Let me do it!” Not bothering to hear Derek’s reply, he shoved him to the side, using far more power and malicious intent than the alpha had with him, surprised when Derek allowed him with not so much as a growl of protest.

Stiles set the already prepared omelet on one of the plates and beside his burned imitation of an omelet. He did as Derek, pouring the eggs and mixed items into the pan and scrutinized the eggs as they gradually cooked.

Stiles jumped, almost burning himself again when Derek moved to stand behind him. His arms wrapped around his waist, one daring hand slipping through the folds of Stiles’ robe and caressed the flesh of his abdomen and chest.

“Careful,” Derek breathed, tucking his head in the fold of Stiles’ neck and breathing him in, nipping his flesh affectionately.

“You spent all night and morning scenting me. I think I smell like you more than my friends by now,” Stiles grunted when the pads of Derek’s fingers brushed a nipple to hardness.

“Mmmm,” Derek didn’t even bother replying, the bastard.

“You really piss me off, you know that, wolfie?” Stiles grumbled, not sounding at all upset and leaned into Derek’s chest, placing the spatula on the counter. He raised one hand to run through dark tresses, while his other clutched the alpha’s hip to hold himself together.

“You smell perfect,” Derek hummed happily, swiping his tongue in a long lick from his neck to his ear and bit the shell, growling while tugging it playful.

Stiles moaned, knees giving out and sliding back and down Derek’s form. The arms wrapped around him tightened and kept him upright.

“The omelet’s burning,” Derek noted absentmindedly and sniffed headily of Stiles.

Glancing over at the pan, Stiles studied the seemingly un-burnt contents, which actually had the beginnings of burning according to Derek. Removing the hand grasping the alpha’s hip, Stiles sagged further into Derek’s tight grasp. He struggled to pay enough attention to season the eggs, flip it, and place it on the other plate.

When he switched the burner off, he choked out a cry of surprise when Derek spun him and slammed his back into the center counter of the kitchen.

“Derek,” Stiles gasped when Derek’s hands clasped his buttocks and lifted him up, sitting him on the counter.

“What about breakfast?” Stiles panted, staring into smoldering hazel depths.

“I’m not hungry,” Derek rasped, bowing his head low to Stiles’ as if he were royalty. “Claim me. I want to be yours,” Derek whispered and Stiles stomach churned in knots.

“What?” Stiles puffed an exhale of surprise.

Derek tilted his head back and to his side, exposing his neck and Stiles was floored. Derek Hale was submitting to him—a human. A fucking alpha was submitting! What had the world come to? Stiles knew that for an alpha, submitting wasn’t even an option, alphas never surrendered and gave up power, especially to a human, but Stiles was different. Stiles was Derek’s fiancé, his soon to be mate.
Something about having such power—an alpha, Derek—submitting to him, turned him on, set his lower region aflame with arousal. Derek suddenly tensed, hands clutching his buttocks clenched, and Stiles groaned at the sensation of clawed fingers pinching through the cloth of his robe and piercing flesh.

“Stiles... You smell...shit—do it now,” Derek moaned. His hazel gaze shifted coccineous, his teeth lengthening to fangs that bit into the bottom of his lip and drew blood.

Stiles swallowed thickly, unsure what it was Derek wanted from him, so he attempted to recall what he researched over the years concerning pack mentality and mating rituals of wolves.

One hand rose to thread through Derek’s atrous mane and grasped a hand full of hair. Breathing shakily, Stiles tugged, hard, and Derek went down, lowered himself further, his neck stretching tensely, and the alpha whined. Truly and piercingly whined, like a bitch in heat.

“Stiles,” Derek whimpered, “Yes.”

Stiles bit his bottom lip with deliberation. He could wrestle Derek for dominance, pin him to the ground, paw him, rub his scent into him, there were so many things Stiles could do, but he was unsure which would entail claiming.

Exhaling heavily, Stiles decided to just try everything and see which one Derek approved with.

Stiles latched his teeth into Derek’s exposed neck and bit him, bit him as hard as he could, his blunt incisors digging through thin flesh, and felt it give way to the bitter tang of metallic liquid that flowed into his mouth and besieged his senses.

Derek jerked in his hold, his claws digging fully into his ass as sharp, yielding whining erupted. Stiles hastily drew back, wincing at the soreness of his ass, but far too worried about having hurt Derek. He felt as if he’d kicked a puppy and the poor thing was wounded and afraid.

“I’m sorry. God, I’m sorry. You said to...but I didn’t know what to do and... Derek,” Stiles pleaded.

Derek’s face buried into the thick cloth of his robe, panting heavily, the hot breath seeping through the cloth warmed his flesh underneath. Stiles grimaced at the wound he inflicted so evidently present now. He’d gone a little too far with the biting, thinking that since Derek was an alpha he wouldn’t mind; apparently even alphas could be harmed. He’d torn deep through the flesh and blood was pooling over the wound, dripping over the curves of muscle and soaking in the white shirt, forever to be stained.

A growling sounded moments later, growing in pitch, vibrating through the room. Stiles wasn’t afraid of Derek’s growling, finding more often than not, it was his wolf speaking and knew it wouldn’t hurt its future mate. Instead of trying to make a run for it, Stiles stroked at Derek’s tresses, petting him soothingly, while his other fisted the leather coat of his arm.

“Derek? Are you okay?”

Derek’s wolf hummed heavily, his body shifting against him, pressing closer, rubbing his head into his chest, burying himself there and sniffed loudly. Stiles exhaled, relieved Derek wasn’t perturbed. He seemed...at peace, just pressing himself near Stiles and allowing the other to hold him and pet his head of hair.

They remained like this for so long; Stiles took note when the sun rose and the darkened skies brightened. As the time passed, Stiles continued to inspect the alpha’s wound and felt calmness
settle in his core when it healed on its own accord.

No sooner did it heal, Derek straightened himself upright to meet Stiles’ gaze. His features were human, having shifted sometime during Stiles’ embracing of the werewolf.

“I’m sorry,” Stiles apologized to the humanized werewolf, finally able to understand language.

Derek released his hold of Stiles’ tender buttocks and took several steps back.

“No…you did everything right,” Derek confirmed, raising a hand to touch the place where Stiles bit him and shuddered. Stiles thought Derek’s eyes flashed red for one instant before he blinked. When they opened again they were hazel, predominantly shaded in specks of citrine.

The two stared at each other in silence, Stiles attempting to understand what it was that just occurred, while Derek was lost in thought. Stiles slowly watched Derek’s features tense and could have sworn his face heated a bit too much with a blossoming flush. Only he couldn’t quite decipher if the alpha was in fact blushing because he was suddenly heading for the entrance.

“I’ll see you tonight.”

“What about breakfast?” Stiles called, but the front door shut before he could receive a reply.

Stiles palmed his mouth, the tang of Derek’s blood still lingering on his receptive taste buds. The scent of the alpha consumed him, embedded in his skin and his clothes. He shut his eyes, heart pulsing rapidly at the sensations accosting him, feeling overwhelmed by the alpha’s presence, though he was not with him. His heart throbbed as the painful pulsing continued, pulsed achingly so.

“Derek,” Stiles whispered in the stillness of an empty home, images of the man fluttering about his mind. He was slowly drowning in all things Derek and knew it would only grow worse. He would be devoured by the feral beast, taken over completely, fall into the depth of Derek and lose himself.

This wasn’t a crush. Stiles was sifting through infinitely stronger feelings than that of a crush, which meant he was doomed.

Completely and utterly doomed, because such sentiments could only intensify as their inevitably developing bond strengthened. Whether they liked it or not, marriage was going to happen. And with marriage would come claiming, an event to terminate the touching, scenting, affection, and Stiles would mourn them. Married and mated, Derek’s personal attachment to him would remain fictional, while Stiles’ would continue to exist as painful and self-destructive. Unrequited.

That was why, truly and forevermore, Stiles was doomed.
Overwhelmed

Color Adjectives

Badious: Chestnut brown, sometimes tinged with red.
Madder: Red, or red-orange color.

If Stiles had to choose a word to describe how he felt at this very moment in time, it would be awkward—more than awkward—down right uncomfortable. Out of one’s own skin uncomfortable and leaning on painful. Stiles sat across from Scott, on neutral grounds—Rogers’ Burger House—their much loved childhood haunt.

Stiles was currently fiddling with his spoon, poking his spiced chili, and every now and again daring to glance upward and into stone cold badious eyes. Scott’s scowl would harden, his eyes narrowed further, and the edges of his lips twisted in the start of a snarl. Stiles would clear his throat and snap his gaze back to the uneaten chili.

Allison finally managed to catch up with Scott and Jackson, who were outside of the Hale manor, attempting to sniff out the alpha who at the time was preoccupied with sniffing out Stiles. She talked him down and away from confronting the alpha. The next day, she called Stiles and told them she thought it best the two meet and calmly talk things through. Stiles was quite willing; he didn’t want Scott to get himself hurt or worse, killed by the alpha.

So they met at Roger’s Burger House to have a heart to heart, only neither spoke, Stiles too nervous and unsure of himself, and Scott too snarly-beastie.

They sat there for long moments in time; Stiles’ chili having gone cold, his ice tea temperate, and still not one word was spoken. The patrons of the fast-food restaurant came and went, new citizens took to seating themselves in the booths near them, and still words were never exchanged. Stiles was about to call it quits and leave, because apparently Scott had not calmed enough for conversing, when all at once the stoic werewolf spoke.

“What the hell were you thinking!”

Stiles glanced around him, and met some fellow citizens’ stares, knowing they must have heard of the engagement, for as soon as their eyes met they looked on with fear and averted their gaze. Stiles was seriously going to have to address this whole debacle. He couldn’t have all of the human citizens of Beacon Hills fearing their own Sheriff. But now wasn’t the time to think about that—then again he suffered from ADHD—if his mind wasn’t constantly jumping from one thought to the other, he would be the average Joe. And who exactly was the average Joe? The first average Joe? It couldn’t have been the plumber or handyman? But who?

“Stiles!” Scott barked.

Stiles jumped at the call of his name, met Scott’s annoyed gaze, and was brought back to the present. He flashed a halfhearted smile, rubbed a hand at the back of his neck, and asked with a toothy grin, “What was that?”

Scott rolled his eyes, slammed his open palms against the table, causing the contents to shake by
the force. “What the hell were you thinking agreeing to marry Derek Hale!”

“Ooooh, _that_, right,” Stiles tried for endearingly quirky, Scott wasn’t amused.

Stiles sighed heavily, shoulders sagging, and placed his spoon against the tablecloth before him.

“I told you already. I must marry and mate with Derek to ensure peace between werewolves and humans.”

“You could have refused him, and he would have had to find someone else.”

“Who? There is no one else.”

“He could have gone to another district. Found someone equal to his status there.”

“You and I both know that is impossible.”

As if Stiles hadn’t already thought of that.

Districts were considered packs. The humans of each district were protected and ruled by the alpha of said district. Although Derek was the head alpha, to take a member of another alpha’s pack would be viewed as a hostile act and grounds for animosity. Stiles had seen such done over the years, one alpha taking a member of another district to mate with, kill, or toy with. When the alpha of said district found out, a challenge was made. The alphas would battle and the winner would claim both districts as their own, while the loser was exiled, and made a solitary werewolf.

“But that doesn’t mean you have to sacrifice so much. Don’t you realize what you’re giving up? Once you’ve married and preformed the alpha mating ritual, you will be his, forever. You can never leave him. You will never be able to find love, because you’ll have already bound yourself to the alpha.”

“I know.”

“And?” Scott burst aggravated, breathing deeply in an attempt to collect himself.

“I’ve decided to go through with it,” Stiles divulged evenly.

Scott’s features softened as if beaten with the truth, knowing no matter what he said, once Stiles’ mind was made up, there was little talking him out of whatever it was he’d decided on.

Planting his forehead into his fisted hands, Scott exhaled heavily.

“Why aren’t you more upset?” Scott murmured, dejected.

Stiles paused for a moment, surprised by his own willingness to marry and mate with Derek Hale. His features relaxed into thoughtfulness and understanding, always having known the answer.

“My father…” Stiles began; his voice was suddenly raw as memories flooded his mind. He missed him so very much.

Scott’s head rose at the mention of the late Sheriff. He stared across the table to the present Sheriff with open pools of a deliberating and calculating nature.

“Your father?”

Stiles smiled faintly and swallowed down the lump lodged in his throat.
“My father,” he affirmed with a tilt of his head, straightening in his seat, and clasped his hands together under the table as they quaked unbelievably so. He hated talking about his father. When he spoke of his father in the past tense it was an affirmation he’d lost him. Stiles was the only Stilinski left.

“He was… the only one who chose to defy Peter, the only one willing to instill order and have the werewolves answer for their crimes,” Stiles paused, bowed his head, unable to look into Scott’s sympathetic gaze and hold his tears in at the same time.

“He wanted order, justice, and peace. I’ve been struggling to do the same. Peter’s gone now, and Derek’s the alpha. If I were to marry him and become his mate, I could ensure peace between humans and werewolves, and finish my father’s wish, do more than he ever dreamed. His…” Stiles choked on his words, blinking rapidly to hold in tears, and stomped his foot to the ground to find his equilibrium and contain the sorrow within. “His death… would not have been in vain.”

When Stiles felt the gentle warmth of Scott’s hand grasp his forearm in voiceless support he broke. The tears overflowed and broke past his lids to cascade and smear his flushed features.

“Damn it!” Stiles wept his curse and abruptly rose. “I just remembered. I have to deliver a report to my men. We can talk later,” Stiles called over his shoulder in his rush to get away from Scott and his comfort.

“Stiles,” Scott sputtered, standing to his feet.

The prickle at the back of Stiles’ neck alerted him to the beta’s tracking gaze when he turned away. Rather quickly, he strode from the restaurant, fleeing the confrontation. By leaving the diner, Stiles felt as if he could also abandon the plaguing truth of a loved one’s death, something he dreaded telling Scott.

So, with a quick and resolute pace, he attempted to escape the burn in his heart on foot, although it did nothing more than dragging a ball and chain.

Stiles couldn’t remember how he got into his jeep or drove home. But he distinctly recalled slamming on the breaks of his recently repaired jeep, switching off the ignition, and rushing into his home. He could recall hearing the front door not quite close on itself when he ascended the stairs and rushed the remaining distance to his room.

Sitting himself onto the foot of the bed, Stiles fell apart, open piercing sobs erupting from tremulous salty lips, tasting the bitterness of tears. He bent low, crouched down and against his knees, raising the tips of his toes—pressing all his weight into them attempting to pin the quivering of his chest and the spasms of his heart.

Burying his head into the junction of his arms, he bit into his forearm to silence himself. Knowing as a man, he needed to remain strong, strong like his father had after the passing of his wife. But in all fairness, his father had always been the one to remain strong for Stiles, because Stiles needed the surety and stability in the storm of his own grief.

Except, Stiles was alone now, he had no one he needed to remain strong for, so he couldn’t fight back the loss. He was alone in this world without his father. He had friends, but no kin, no family of his own.

Scott and Allison still had one living and reliable parent, not to mention each other. Although Lydia’s parents bickered nonstop, she still had them. Jackson had his adoptive parents and what the group of friends suspected Danny.
Stiles had no one.

He hated crying, hated feeling helpless, hated when simply talking about his father brought out a destructive aching despondency. After his mother passed away, his father was all he had. His father was more than just his parent, he was his friend. When they felt at the brink of destruction after their loss, they leaned on the other, and were there to comfort each other.

Stiles feared for his father’s wellbeing far more so then he did before his mother’s passing. He said a silent prayer every morning before his father went to work, forced him to go to the doctors for a checkup every three months, made him take the day off when suffering the smallest of colds, and monitored his meals. He did all of these things to reassure himself his father would live a very long life. He couldn’t tolerate the idea of losing him.

Then Peter Hale propositioned Stiles, asked it of him to be his mate, and was rejected. Peter acted out, retaliated, and cruelly mutilated his father.

A heart wrenching howl erupted from out of Stiles’s salted lips, acute, wrecked, and waning on a moan. His teeth dug glaringly into his arm, attempting to focus on the physical pain rather than the emotional one plaguing his heart. He snapped his jaws closed, pressing brutishly, as hard as humanly possible and belted a muffled scream as his insides boiled over, tears distorted his vision, and blood gushed passed the thin fabric of his uniform and seeped into his mouth.

Leaning over further, Stiles slid off the bed and sank to the ground, knees drawn up to his chest, and he pushed himself harshly against the border of the bed. Unclamping his jaws, he tucked his head in the shadows his arms provided and silently whimpered, his tears lessening as he felt himself begin to regain his composer.

He sat there for he wasn’t sure how long, his tears came slower, less rushed and flooding, and his breathing calmed into shuddering exhales after every other breath. When he felt his body relax, exhausted from having remained lament for so long, his eyes drooped closed, only to open in his attempts to stay alert.

Exhaling heavily, eyes having shut only briefly, Stiles made out an onyx boot placed between his legs and through the twist of his arms. Raising his head drowsily, he was met by kind hazel eyes. Stiles unexpectedly felt like crying again. He bowed his head low, and whined helplessly, several tears trickling along his flushed features.

“Derek... please go,” Stiles whispered croakily, rubbing his damp cheeks harshly against his arms, the coarseness of his shirt chafing his flushed features glaringly.

Stiles stared at the booted foot flanked by his legs, praying the alpha would leave him to his misery, in need of grieving, and unable to do so when Derek stared at him like that. Like he cared, felt compassion, and concern for him. So much concern he thought he imagined the alpha appearing hurt and those expressive eyes glistening in the warm afternoon light.

When he felt the alpha shift, he thought for the first time in the short time he knew Derek, the alpha would listen to his request.

He didn’t…

Instead, the kind brute kneeled before him, bypassed his limp arms that cradled his own head, and nosed his ear, whining sharply, needing.

Stiles mewled a choked cry. The alpha’s sharp whining and the feel of a lukewarm tongue lapping
passed his ear and to his salted cheeks broke him further. Stiles unwound his arms from around his head, spread his legs further apart, grasped a hold of the collar of the alpha’s leather coat and yanked him down and against his body.

Derek lowered himself completely, bending himself to Stiles’ will. The alpha’s arms wrapped about Stiles’ trembling form as he continuously nosed his ear, hair, face, and nuded his nose pleadingly. Stiles sobbed wretched cries, tears clouding his vision, coming too fast and too great to control.

“Derek!” Stiles whimpered urgently, fraught for assistance. He was bursting with grief and guilt, and they tugged and pulled at him until his limbs turned to stone. Grasping Derek’s coated arm with destitution, Stiles silently yearned for the alpha to provide release from the cords of grief, to provide enough slack that they vanish altogether.

Derek bayed, yowled benevolently and intensely, the howl rising in pitch, eyes transitioning madder. He mouthed Stiles’ cheeks, laved the expanse of them, drinking the salty liquid and whimpered rampantly when Stiles mewled and pulled away to tuck his head into the crook of Derek’s neck.

As Stiles wept he hadn’t taken notice that Derek was swaying him in his arms. Only when he became drowsy with sleep, heard the soothing hum rumble out of the alpha, did he take note. His grip on leather loosened, slid along a shapely chest and pooled between them. Stiles shut his eyes, inhaled potent sweetness, hummed when put at ease and nosed Derek’s neck drowsily. He felt welcomed and cared for in a way he hadn’t in years.

Derek was his fiancé, his soon to be mate. Derek would care for Stiles now, because as an alpha, he’d accepted him into his pack. He would hold Stiles in highest regards among all else, and tend to him because his wolf accepted him. This was all evident in the way Derek treated him during the last few days, especially now, having appeared from nowhere to soothe his internal wounds.

Although, there was no love—never would be love from the alpha—Derek’s wolf sought after him, regarded him as his mate, which meant the two were bonded. Derek was a part of him now and soon the day would come for Stiles to do the same for the alpha.

Derek could be his family. He’d have the alpha’s loyalty and protection. With Derek, Stiles wouldn’t be alone; he’d have a spouse, a kin, a family. He’d always have someone’s devotion.

“Thank you.” Stiles whispered softly.

Finally accepting the truth of the matter, Derek was his fiancé, his future husband and mate. He would always have Derek—a companion, husband, mate, by his side. Stiles laved the flesh before him with gratitude, appreciating and demonstrating his loyalty and trust in the alpha as wolves did, and slipped away into the darkness of sleep as Derek purred shuddering, and grating hums.
Stiles woke slowly, the littlest of sensations stirring him from a restful darkness; smooth pads brushing his jaw line, a large palm plastering against a pliable hip, lips grazing a furrowed brow, a sharp nose nudging his. Stiles moaned, raising his head, his eyes shut, blinded by sunlight, his nose searching its pair. Derek bowed low and met Stiles’, exhaled in comfort and nuzzled him with much affection.

“Stiles,” came the hoarse call of his name.

Stiles didn’t respond immediately. He allowed himself this small comfort of being held in firm arms, the alpha’s soothing presence washing over him in waves of tranquility. The bed sheets were wrapped around their twisted limbs, cocooning them in warmth. The plush pillows encased their heads, and Stiles shifted away from them, to rest his in the crook of Derek’s neck.

Stiles pawed a broad chest, caressing the cotton shirt, soothed by the heated flesh underneath. The chest vibrated against his hand, welcoming the touch, almost needing Stiles’ touch.

“Stiles…” Derek attempted, worry evident, but Stiles didn’t want to talk, not about his breakdown, not about what prompted it. He would rather they talk about pap smears, and that was just—ugh!

“You smell of mint,” Stiles detected the cool freshness that wafted his senses.

Derek remained still for a moment in time before explaining, “I was roaming the woods when I fell asleep in a patch of mint leaves.”

“Were you in your full primal state?”

“Yes.”

“Why?”

“I’m a werewolf Stiles, an alpha; I have to monitor my terrain.”

“What’s it like when you shift? Do you still retain human logic or are you running off pure animal instincts?” Stiles debated what he’d always pondered in regards to alphas.

“It’s a little of both really,” Derek breathed, pulling away from Stiles’ nuzzling to meet his stare with one of deliberation.
Derek raised a hand to stroke Stiles’ face, his other curling under the human’s neck. With Stiles’ head resting on the alpha’s bicep, Derek attempted to explain.

“It depends. If I’m in a state of calmness I retain my humanity, but if I’m under duress I become a wolf; I lose all sense of logic.”

“Have you ever hurt anyone?” Stiles curiously raised a brow when Derek remained silent for too long.

“You have,” Stiles’ heart spiked.

“It’s not what you think. I was furious because someone betrayed me. I couldn’t control myself at the time and…” Derek looked away, unable to keep Stiles’ gaze for long, his eyes softening, gleaming ever bright, and Stiles felt an unsettling turn in the pit of his stomach.

“Hey, hey, I’m not judging you. Being out of control isn’t a choice, I get it,” Stiles breathed considerately, wrapping a leg over Derek’s hip. He reeled the wolf in as close as humanly possible, nudging his nose affectionately and receiving a heavy exhale of Derek’s approval.

“I heard you,” Derek whispered, lips grazing Stiles’ as his nose touched the slighter’s

“What? When?”

“In the forest, I heard your cries, they woke me. I followed them here,” Derek eluded, brushing Stiles’ hair with an open palm.

Stiles felt the curl of his lips before it registered in his mind he was pleased by this. He grasped a handful of the shirt before him and tugged. “Where did these come from?”

“I’ve hidden spare clothes throughout the woods for such an occasion I would need to dress.”

“Oh,” Stiles’ grin broadened. “Very smart you are.”

Derek lightly smacked the back of his head. “Smarter than you by a long shot.”

“Why so mean?” Stiles whined childishly, pouting a full lip.

Derek nipped at the jutting lip, tugged, and teasingly growled. Stiles felt a lightness consume his chest, a vivacious thrumming swarm his abdomen and roll out of him in amused lively mirth.

“Derek! What the hell was that!” Stiles choked through his laughter, curling in on himself, grasping his stomach as the tittering tumbled out of him.

Derek didn’t reply, only smiled in reprieve, rolling on top of the compliant human and nestled himself at the junction of his neck, mouthing his flesh, humming pleasantly, cradling the human’s head and nosing the flesh before him.

When Stiles’ laughter died down and he caught his breath, he shoved Derek onto his back and rolled himself onto the larger of the two. “This is better. You’re too heavy with all those muscles. Do you work out?”

Derek’s smile was faint and placid. Seeming to not have heard him as he raised a hand to stroke the nape of his neck and lifted himself up close. A tongue slipped out to lave along Stiles’ chin, past his mouth, and to the tip of his nose before reclining back against the bed.

Stiles tossed Derek a bemused grin and folded his arms over the alpha’s broad chest, resting his
chin there, and continued to stare at Derek with ease.

“Who would have ever thought Derek brooding Hale could possess a stunning smile,” Stiles mused aloud. He abruptly stilled at the realization he’d spoken his thoughts.

Derek didn’t seem to care; he continued stroking the human’s body, his legs rising to bend at his sides and repositioned them to pretzel Stiles’ own.

“Stiles…” Derek murmured; his eyes were without warning precise and calculating. “You don’t have to pretend you’re okay?”

Stiles tensed. His little meltdown in front of the alpha had slipped his mind and it occurred to Stiles that talking about it was the last thing he wanted. Of course Derek would want to know what brought it on, why he’d been a mess, but Stiles wasn’t ready to talk about it. He never felt right speaking about his late father, and would avoid it at all possible costs. The truth of the matter was he felt wrong for grieving, because he was to blame for his father’s death. If he accepted Peter’s offer, his father would still be alive. But because he refused, the alpha took his vengeance on the most important person in his life, and his father suffered a gruesome end. It was his entire fault.

“Stiles…” Derek exhaled. Large temperate hands rose to cradle his face, his thumbs swiping away tears that shed unbeknownst to him while his thoughts lingered on his late father.

Stiles laughed at his emotional self, laugh full of self-loathing and contempt, he reared back and away from Derek’s tender touch and wiped his tears away with maliciousness.

“I’m such a fool. You probably think less of me now. I cower before you, scream like a damn girl, now look at me, I’m crying like one,” Stiles chortled, sitting up and crossing his legs. At this angle, Stiles’ face was purposely out of eyeshot, Derek unable to see him unraveling.

He felt the alpha shift, muscular legs slid from behind and pressed into his own, and a chest hot against his back, supple lips grazing his ear while the alpha scented him.

“I don’t think that… not in the least,” Derek stated so definite and resolute, Stiles couldn’t stop himself from leaning into the alpha’s chest, grasping sculpted forearms and wrapped them firmly around his slender waist.

“Derek…” Stiles called, voice rough on edge of a wavering sob, twisting his neck, to meet the alpha’s stunning hazel depths, nudged his nose with his own and exhaled heavily. “Just hold me.”

Derek’s chest shook with his humming that started once more, soothing the slighter, putting him at ease as the alpha nuzzled him with much care, laved his tears away, and breathed him in.

Stiles felt safe in the alpha’s solid embrace, felt at peace, knowing within such sturdy arms he was protected. The alpha was here, would not leave his side, would watch over him and comfort him.

When Stiles felt the soothing remedy of sleep beckon him away from lucidity and towards lulling, rejuvenation darkness, Stiles welcomed it. He hummed deeply in reply to Derek’s own humming, nudging his nose one last time before completely relaxing into the alpha’s arms and falling into a deep sleep.

Stiles woke later that night. It was dark outside, the fully risen moon dimly lighting his room in blue hues. He was alone in bed; his shoes were removed and set at the side of his closet, while the blankets were raised over his form. Derek must have done so in Stiles’ sleep.

Stiles smiled softly at the attentiveness of the alpha. Derek really was a kind man, a man Stiles
could grow quite fond of, a man who obviously would treasure him as his mate. The smile gracing the Sheriff’s lips dulled, knowing it would never go further than this. Derek would never feel the same attachment for him as he did for the alpha.

Derek was gone when he woke, of course the alpha didn’t feel the same for him, because if their roles had been reversed, Stiles wouldn’t be able to tolerate leaving Derek’s side. He would hold Derek close, nuzzle him, dote on him, and give him whatever he needed. Without the alpha beside him, left in the darkness of his room, Stiles felt helpless and deserted, vulnerable.

Stiles jumped with fright at the abrupt sound of a car alarm going off from outside. Stumbling out of bed and rushing to the window, Stiles paled at what greeted him.

“Oh God!” Stiles rushed out his room, down the hall, descending the stairs two at a time, and bounded out the door.

“I’ll kill you!” Scott shouted, leaping from off a vehicle’s demolished and shattered windshield.

Stiles silently felt delight at the sight of Mrs. Price’s destroyed automobile. Only that delight was quickly replaced by fear. Scott had completely morphed into his werewolf state, glowing amber depths, widow’s peak and fur prominent, fangs bearing threateningly, icterine claws twitching with barely contained rage.

Across the street was a prowling, enraged alpha, coccineous gaze fixed on the beta, canines thick and sharp. Crouched low, his chest seemed broader, clear claws lengthening and glinting under a streetlight. Seeing him in such a different form set an alarm bell off in Stiles that triggered his knee-jerk to grasp at his hip for a gun that wasn’t there. The way Derek’s jaw was slackened, growls feral, eyes wild and merciless, and directed at his best friend nauseated the Sheriff.

“Oh shit… Scott what are you doing!” Stiles choked, rushing towards the werewolves as they circled one another.

“Stay out of this!” Scott ordered, trying to simultaneously gawk at Stiles and shoot enraged orbs of repugnance towards the alpha. “You bastard, you’ve already claimed him!”

Stiles’ mouth opened before words had formed in his head to talk Scott down. It was a frivolous effort, because before Stiles could even say his name, Scott was lunging at Derek to tackle him into another vehicle – a blue jeep.

“Not my baby!” Stiles whined when he saw the damage of the driver’s door. In the place of a flat, smooth metal sheet was the unmistakable imprint of two bodies.

Derek growled menacingly to display razor-sharp teeth and matching claws. Too quick to follow was the slashing of flesh; Scott stumbling when his neck and arm revealed bloodied wounds. After being thrown ruthlessly across the street and into a tree trunk, Stiles thought that was it for Scott, watching his broken body attempt to rise from the ground. He was shaking with the effort and collapsed before Derek could cross the road.

The alpha snarled pearly fangs, his upper lip curling in a demonstration of his canines, evidently pleased by the wounded beta, relishing the wolf’s pain, and stalked him, much like he were prey and he the predator.

“Derek!” Stiles exclaimed, attempting to draw the alpha’s notice. When the werewolf overlooked his attempts, Stiles hurried towards the alpha that was making quick strides in Scott’s direction.

Showing little regard for his own safety, Stiles jumped in front of the enraged beast. His hands
shoving out and forwards to press against a heaving chest, feeling the warmth there, radiating far more heat than Stiles ever felt from the alpha, and he suspected it had something to do with the shift.

“Calm down, Derek. Just, uh… stop glaring at me with those devilish eyes and talk to me. Talking is good.” Stiles swallowed thickly, gradually realizing this might not have been the best approach, a human trying to get in the way of an enraged beast.

“Stiles, you idiot, what are you doing!” Scott reprimanded, attempting to rise once more and successfully stood to his feet, where he proceeded to hobble towards the two.

Scott’s left arm was twisted out of place while his right hip appeared to be jutting out, blood soaking his mauve shirt in modena.

Hot breath gushing against the side of his exposed neck, startled Stiles. Realizing only now that by turning away from the feral beast he had provided a distraction, he felt Derek step closer to loom over him. Meeting erythraean orbs, Stiles exhaled a shuddering breath.

“Come on Derek… stop looking at me like that,” Derek stared at Stiles with an animalistic hunger. As if within the wolf’s mind, he pictured Stiles as premium steak, fresh and ready for the devouring.

The alpha snarled an undomesticated foreboding rumble; it projected a depth unparallel to any Stiles ever did hear. The very sound sent spasms of consternation to overwhelm him. So hostile, so aggressive, and all directed towards him. This wasn’t Derek’s normal, ‘I’m an alpha fear me before I rip you a new one,’ This was, ‘I’m a feral wild beast who answers to no one.’

The alpha’s jaw slackened all while he slanted forwards and in close proximity with the human. He began sniffing raucously of his scent, his nose brushing his brow, canines grazing the jut under his eye. The sharp edge of a canine pressing callously against pliable skin and when the alpha tilted his head to the side and nudged Stiles’ forehead with his nose, his canine slashed at flesh.

Stiles winced, felt the warmth of blood slip just under his eye and trail a path along his cheek. His breathing went shallow as the alpha’s, newly ragged, scented the blood. Slender clawed fingers rose to seize his arm, and Stiles whined, claws digging deep into pliant flesh.

Derek wasn’t in control. Stiles knew this. Derek explained just that afternoon when under great amounts of stress he became feral, uncomprehending of his actions. Stiles needed to stop him. Derek wasn’t in his right of mind and they were in public. At any moment one of the neighbors could come out of their homes and be placed under danger. He was Sheriff; it was his duty to protect the wellbeing of others.

“Get away from him!” Scott admonished, limping slowly towards them, narrowed slits directed at the beast.

The alpha brought Stiles to press against him, close, almost protectively, his madder eyes glinting in the light, rage well defined in the sights of Scott approaching.

Derek roared a primal shout of contempt and Stiles’ heart sped as Derek’s skin darkened and fur materialized. He was shifting. He was actually going to shift into his full primitive state, into the werewolf he was, the alpha in full wolf form.

Stiles had to act fast. If Derek shifted, there was no way he could stop him from attacking Scott, and Stiles couldn’t tolerate the idea of Scott being harmed or worse. Without thought of his
actions, nor what the alpha would do in retaliation, Stiles raised his unrestrained arm and clasped a clump of onyx mane within his hand, yanking hard.

“Derek, stop it, you’re scaring me,” Stiles commanded firm and authoritative, forcing his words to remain strong, even when they shook a fraction.

The alpha’s roar stifled back in his throat, altering into a growl when madder orbs met chocolate brown. Stiles swallowed back a cry of fear and wrenched the handful of curls unsympathetically, focusing on taming the beast.

Stiles lowered as the alpha folded to his will, an olive neck exposed to him and he bit into the flesh. The alpha’s growl swiftly faded into a choked whimper as he dropped to his knees before Stiles.

Stiles let the alpha sink to the ground, eyes following the gnawed skin, still intact. Hurting Derek hadn’t been the objective, but he needed him to submit as he’d done earlier in the kitchen. It worked.

“Stiles,” Derek whimpered shakily, emotions wavering one over the other, and Stiles felt soreness in his chest. Something he’d done hurt Derek, far more so than the biting.

“Derek, I’m sorry,” Stiles whispered not sure for what, bowing low and nuzzling the alpha’s bruised neck, his clutch on lustrous locks loosening and altering to fond caressing.

Derek hummed stridently, nuzzling the opposite side of Stiles’ neck, mouthing flesh, eagerly demonstrating his respect for the human. Stiles whined gently when claws retracted from out of his flesh and stroked the wound apologetically.

“I—I didn’t mean to… I—” Derek whispered against the junction of his head and shoulder.

“It’s okay. I’m okay. They’re just minor cuts, nothing that won’t heal,” Stiles reassured, breathing in the soothing scent of Derek, a sense of ease washing over him at the state of lucidity of his fiancé.

“I—I’m sorry, really, I just…” Derek’s voice was coated in a mixture of emotions, far too many to pinpoint and name.

Stiles smiled kindly, past the pain. Derek was worried he’d hurt him, and he had, but Stiles understood. Asking an alpha to just roll over at being challenged by a beta was unnatural, as was asking him to ignore lifelong, animalistic instinct. If Derek were human, he’d be able to control his emotions even when upset. However, Derek wasn’t human, he was a werewolf, and sometimes when they shifted their human sides were shelved in a dormant corner, inaccessible.

Derek didn’t understand what he was doing. He was relying on his instincts, but even so, something must have registered for him to take on a protective stance when Scott neared them.

*Scott!*

Glancing towards his side, Stiles caught Scott’s gaze, met bewilderment and astonishment. Pushing down his nerves and stuffing it away for another day, Stiles pulled away from Derek and met hazel depths.

“Could you retrieve the first aid kit in the upstairs hallway bathroom? I will meet you inside in a moment. I need to speak with Scott,” Stiles requested of the alpha.

Derek’s eyes narrowed at this, glanced over the human’s shoulder, hazel flashing madder in
forewarning. “If you need me, call,” Derek breathed, wrapping his arms around the slighter and lifting up with him, bringing him in close to nudge his forehead with affection and obedience.

Before Derek turned to leave, he bore his eyes into Scott’s as a warning, voicelessly affirming more than a few threats. It wasn’t until Derek treaded towards the Sheriff’s home, the door slamming shut behind him, that Stiles turned to glare at the beta.

“What in sodding hell was that!”

“You’re yelling at me!” Scott snapped incredulously.

“Yes, *you!* Why the hell was Derek so furious, he nearly shifted into the fucking full alpha form in my neighborhood!”

“I don’t know. Why don’t you ask him!” Scott scoffed.

“I’m asking you!” Stiles quipped angrily. “Because no matter how annoying I may be—and we both know I am a lot of the time—Derek’s never lost his temper, not once. But with you, he just about went bloodthirsty snarly beastie.”

Scott pursed his lips, scowl marring his features and deepening by the moment.

“I went to the precinct to apologize for upsetting you, but you never showed. So I came to your home—that smells more like that bastard than you by the way—when I stepped foot in the home, not a moment later was I being shoved out by said bastard and told to leave—because you weren’t in any shape for visitors.”

“He did what?” Stiles felt knots tighten in his gut, his features turning warm in the late September chilled air.

Scott seemed to bristle at the memory, “He kicked me out! Told me I wasn’t allowed in to see you, like the bastard owns the place. I snapped, told him to withdraw the proposal and let you go. Then he went all—” Scott made a grand gesture with his hands, as if Stiles was supposed to follow that!

“Then I went—” Scott demonstrated again with the flourish of hand gestures.

“Then that bastard shifted and went all ape shit on me!”

Stiles tried to comprehend all Scott explained, but it was truly more or so done within the beta’s mind, and still, even so, Stiles could semi-formulate the occurrence. He could imagine Scott entering his home (the door having not so quite closed on itself), Derek would have heard him with his freaky wolf hearing and stopped Scott from finding Stiles in his current emotional state—because Stiles was his future mate and in no shape for visitors as Derek explained to Scott—though not using so many words. Scott would have at that moment asked the alpha to break the bond they’d spent the greater part of a month strengthening, which could be viewed as a threat against their bond and grounds for battle in an alpha’s mind, which would explain their fighting—also why Derek seemed so hurt when Stiles put an end to it—he’d inadvertently stopped Derek from defending their bond. Not that Stiles would have let it continue knowing the reasons for such, but now he knew that by stopping the two wolves, he’d reprimanded the alpha and taken Scott’s side against him.

*Damn it, now I have to deal with a touchy snappy alpha!*

Stiles glared at Scott, not sure why he was upset, but he was, *Goddamnit!*
“How’s your hip?” Stiles noted with a glance at the bloodied wound.

Scott glanced over to his hip and huffed agitatedly. “It’ll be fine.”

“And your arm?”

Scott grasped the wounded shoulder, growled deep, eyes glowing in the night and with a roar and a snap the shoulder popped back into place.

Stiles grimaced.

“Dude… What the hell were you thinking going up against an alpha?”

“I thought I could get him to let you out of this arrangement.”

“Scott…I told you already. I’ve accepted my decision and will follow through with it. I will marry Derek Hale and become his mate. This is for the best. Think about it. You won’t have to worry about your mother or Allison. If he were to ever go hungry for power or bloodlust, I’d be there to stop him. Like how I stopped him now from eating you for his dinner,” Stiles jested and received a snarl from the beta.

“Damn it Scott, why must you be so stubborn! I’m my own person. I can make my own decisions. You’re my friend and I value your input. I understand you don’t agree with my choices, but I would hope you would accept my decision and support me. Lydia doesn’t agree with me, but at least she understands where I’m coming from, why I’m doing this, and will stand beside me. Allison recognizes my reasons and is being supportive in my decision. Even Jackson; Jackson Scott, he is a right ass and obviously doesn’t trust alphas, but he hasn’t tried to stop me. Can’t you do the same?”

“I—I can’t accept this,” Scott grumbled and raised a hand to rub at his sore temple, an obvious indicator a migraine was on its way.

“Then don’t, just support me. Because when the day comes and I marry Derek, I want you to be at my side as my best man, and know that whatever life throws my way, I have a friend to rely on,” Stiles conveyed with a deep exhale, shoulders sagging.

Scott remained in fixed silence for long moments in time. Only, for in that silence the beta came to his decision, and with a shake of his head, a firm, ‘No’ was placed for his answer.

“No, I can’t support you when you’re making the worst decision of your life. You go ahead and marry Derek fucking Hale, mate with him, but know I won’t ever be by your side to watch you throw away your life,” Scott snipped and staggered off and towards his cherry red Ford pickup.

“Scott, stop being an ass!” Stiles hollered, tears formed as the beta ignored his call of an insult and limped into the driver’s seat, slammed the door shut, and sped off into the night.

Stiles’ world felt unbalanced in every sense of the word and he let himself collapse to the concrete, raising his knees to his chest and cradling himself at the road’s center. He couldn’t imagine existing in a universe where Scott was absent, refused to support him, and wouldn’t even look at him. Stiles was doing the right thing, and this was his reward: the loss of a best friend, the loss of the only companion who’d been present when his parents passed away and acted as a crutch through it all. And now he would have to face a life without him.

When the padding of boots sounded Stiles felt relieved, when strong arms lifted him and held him close he wrapped his own around their neck and took in their potent sweetness.
“Derek,” Stiles choked on tears.

Derek’s humming sounded, continuous and soothing. It persisted as he laid Stiles on the bed, stripped him of his clothes and cleaned his wounded arm, rubbing soothing ointment and bandaging all his cuts.

Derek ran his hands over his smooth back as Stiles silently wept the loss of a friend, held him as his tears subsided and he immersed himself in the alpha’s affections, held him as he nuzzled his neck and hummed in gratitude, held him until sleep claimed them both.
When Stiles woke, it was late morning. The sun was midway up, bright albugineous cirrus clouds wisped about the sky, and encased the sun in a brilliant nimbus. The clear cerulean skies and the birds that sung their praise of a wonderful day could not quite reach Stiles.

“Are you hungry?” Came the soothing baritone vocals of the alpha.

Stiles rolled over on the bed and met the wolf’s gaze and found concern. In one hand the alpha held a plate of breakfast whilst leaning against the doorframe. Pushing against the frame, he made his way towards the human and the bed, to place the plate and fork before the Sheriff. Stiles brightened at the sight of a freshly made and appetizing looking omelet.

“Thank you,” Stiles gave his gratitude and silently forked a large piece, biting into heaven. It was delicious, Stiles was amazed. “Who knew you could cook.”

Derek bounced his bent knee against Stiles’ own and threw a contemptuous glare.

“I meant no offense. It’s just… I would have never thought you’d take the time to learn how to cook, and to do it so well.”

Derek tilted his head low; he stared at his hands that hard-pressed against his calve and tightened his grip harshly. “My mother was a chef. I learned how to cook from her.”

Stiles set his fork on the plate, swallowed his mouthful of heaven, and breathed deeply. Derek had opened up and finally told him something about himself—scratch that—Derek finally told him something personal about himself—about his family—specifically, his mother.

“What else did she teach you other than cooking?” Stiles treaded cautiously, knowing if he made one wrong move, Derek would shut him out and most probably never let him in again.

Derek glanced over to the human, met kind castaneous eyes, and shrugged his shoulders. “Just stuff, nothing important—well…” Derek paused, seeming unsure if he should convey something to the human.

“What?” Stiles persisted, genuinely curious.

“She—taught me how to hunt.”

“Like in werewolf form?” Stiles deliberated on whether Derek was referring to the human sport of hunting or hunting as a werewolf.

“Yes.”
“Those poor bunnies. You brute!” Stiles whined and playfully smacked Derek’s shoulder, his stomach knotting when the alpha smirked.

“No. Not bunnies.”

“No Bambi. Say it isn’t so, Derek. Why Bambi!” Stiles threw a hand over his forehead in a dramatic show of despair and bit his bottom lip when a throttled cough escaped from the alpha, and it closely resembled a stifled laugh.

Stiles grinned goofily and forked another mouthful giving Derek enough time to explain.

“She helped me hone my senses to fortify my hunting skills, whether it was for food, to find fresh water, a town, or someone.”

“That sounds… pretty awesome. If you were stranded in the middle of the woods, you could totally find your way out, like in no time. You’re totally MacGyver.”

“I wouldn’t say I’m much of a MacGyver, since he used tools to solve problems. But, yes that was the gist of it.”

“We should totally see how sharp your senses are. Like I could get one of my shirts, have you smell it, hide it somewhere in town, and see how long it would take you to find it,” Stiles contemplated, bouncing with excitement. “That would be awesome!”

Derek’s grin broadened to a full, marvelous smile. “I did something similar when I tracked you down on that deserted road.”

“Oh right! That’s totally what you did—hey, what do I smell like?”

“What?” Derek choked and cleared his throat.

“What do I smell like? You have got to have a better sense of smell than us humans, so…what do I smell like?” Stiles elaborated calmly, he didn’t see what the issue was.

Derek stared away warily, almost as if discomfited, a hand rising to palm his mouth as he muttered out his reply.

“What?”

Derek garbled his reply and Stiles strained to hear him clearly, but caught nothing.

“I don’t understand.”

“I said, you smell of damp earth, sage and gardenias.”

Stiles frowned. “What’s so disconcerting about that?”

Derek continued to look anywhere but at Stiles. “Nothing…it’s just…your smell…is exceptionally pleasant to my senses.”

Stiles was now the one who felt flustered. “Oh...”

“So, I guess this means you’ll be doing all the cooking once we marry,” Stiles noted, backtracking to their earlier conversation and the revelation Derek could cook.

“I’m not a househusband,” Derek snipped.
“And I am? Just because you’re taller, have more muscles and can make your eyes all…devilish, doesn’t mean I’m the bitch,” Stiles spewed hotly, glowering towards the scowling alpha.

Derek’s frown lightened as the ends of his lips quirked and the smile he took great efforts to restrain curved upwards. Stiles smiled too and laughed at how foolish he sounded.

“Okay, let’s just leave it to whoever is in the mood.”

“Mmm, sounds fair enough,” Derek voiced, shifting to lie on his back across the length of the bed, a hand rising to stroke Stiles’ bear knee, his other folded under his head, used for support.

Stiles continued to eat his omelet, glancing every now and again to Derek who watched him with intensity, and a blush blossomed. Forking a large piece of omelet, Stiles offered it up to the alpha, the fork hovering just over his mouth. Derek appeared startled by the human’s offer and for the first time ever Derek was blushing, honest to God blushing. No ‘I’m pissed off and about the rip your throat out,’ no ‘I’m barely controlling my rage,’ no ‘I’m about to shift and annihilate you.’ It was more, ‘I don’t know what to do… idiot.’

“You don’t realize what you’re doing, do you?” Derek questioned, gaze dubious.

“What?” Stiles brows furrowed, he just thought Derek would like some. He didn’t know if Derek helped himself to what he had in his fridge while he slept—which would have totally been fine, because as it was, they were engaged and bonding. Soon this house would be Derek’s as well, and he would like to know the alpha felt welcome.

God damn it. I have it bad!

“Nevermind,” Derek’s lips twitched again and took the offered forkful.

Stiles’ flush deepened by the act and when a flash of a red tongue swiped the silverware, lapping. He watched as those lips sealed and that strong shapely jaw tensed and relaxed while the alpha chewed. A simple act should not be so affecting, but it was.

God damn it, he had it bad!

“So, when should the wedding date be set for?” Stiles debated aloud, ignoring the fact his voice fluctuated, just a fraction.

“As soon as possible. December 1st.”

“So soon! Why not December 31st?”

Derek glared, “Stiles.”

“What? It gives us time to plan.”

“It is too close to January.”

“If this is about demonstrating to the alphas that a union like ours is to be made, it shouldn’t really matter if our wedding happens to be later in December,” Stiles reasoned, forking another piece of omelet and offering it to the wolf, who didn’t hesitate in accepting it.

Stiles looked away when Derek licked his lips and swallowed hard.

“It’s not just about that,” Derek murmured.
“What is it?”

“It doesn’t matter,” He grumbled, but obviously it did matter.

“I don’t believe you.”

Derek stared at the ceiling, body tense, lips twitching in the starting of a grimace.

“It would be best to have the wedding before January.”

“And that would be because…”

“Because I say so.”

“Oooh, because you say so. Well then, that makes all the difference, doesn’t it?”

“Stiles, I’m serious. December 1st, we marry.”

“Derek, I’m serious. December 31st we marry.”

“Are you really going to be like this?” Derek hissed, rubbing his hands over his face, and Stiles’ knee felt cold without the warmth of the alpha’s touch.

“Yes…yes I am. You’ve propositioned me and I know it’s my duty to keep Beacon Hills safe and this contract binding, but there is no way in hell I’m rushing this wedding. I have certain ideas of what I want. This will be my only wedding, and I want it to be perfect. So Derek, you will listen to me and let me have my damn wedding on December fucking 31st!” Stiles snapped, firm, and irrefutable.

Derek gaped at Stiles in complete bewilderment, not having expected for Stiles to be so zealous and grow a set of balls, enough so he was standing up to an alpha. But in all fairness, Stiles had seen the way Derek cowered under him when he claimed him and stopped him from shifting because of Scott. He thought he could do the same now.

Derek groaned, fisting his hair, and stomped his foot against the bed. “Fine, the 31st it is. If I—don’t say I didn’t try.”

With that, Derek sat up and snatched the half eaten omelet and fork from out of Stiles’ hand.

“Get ready, we have things to do,” Derek sneered, suddenly becoming his old brooding self and strode out the room.

“What the fuck? I wasn’t finished!” Stiles whined leaning over the edge of the bed, glaring passed the door and watched the angry alpha bound the stairs two at a time. “And where the hell are we going!”

After Stiles showered, dressed in a pair of faded jeans, and a celeste t-shirt, he grumbled and gripped his way down the stairs and to the looming darkened figure leaning against the front door.

“Ready?” Mr. Brooding asked and Stiles flipped him the bird.

Derek scoffed, opened the door allowing Stiles to exit before locking and slamming it shut. The two proceeded to enter the midnight Camaro and drive to God knows where. While Derek drove, Stiles phoned in to the station letting them know he wouldn’t be able to make it in, suffering a horrible migraine. While he said migraine he turned to glare at Derek and shoved his shoulder, gaining a menacing growl and flashing madder orbs. Stiles didn’t back down and stuck his tongue
out at the alpha.

They drove for long moments in time, far out of the city limits and down a deserted road. When they stopped and exited the vehicle, Derek rounded the car, took hold of Stiles’ hand and dragged him into the forest.

“If we came here so you could murder me, I hope you know you will be contending with some very upset werewolves, mainly a foaming at the mouth redhead known as the lioness Lydia,” Stiles half joked while remaining half serious.

“Just where in the hell are you taking me, Derek?”

Derek didn’t reply, apparently still pissed about something. Why should it matter if they marry on the 31st rather than the 1st?

“Derek… Derek… Damn it, Derek, don’t ignore me!” Stiles snapped, kicking out a leg just as Derek’s formed a upside down ‘v’, and effectively caused the brute to stumble, yet unintentionally causing himself to as well.

They fell in a mess of limbs, and Stiles cried out as the side of his head knocked against a rock.

“Damn it Stiles!” Derek snarled, jostling to rise and assist the slighter, and examined his head. He then proceeded to tenderly graze the tips of his fingers against the human’s sore temple. “Are you hurt?”

“No, just a bump,” Stiles exhaled heavily, leaning into the suddenly attentive brute. “Where are you taking us?”

Derek rested his hands at his side and surveyed the human with consideration. He sighed heavily before giving in. “To meet my pack, I wanted to wait until we were mated, but since our relationship has been exposed, it’s time you meet them, because once we’re mated they will become your pack.”

“And you couldn’t tell me this earlier, instead you had me thinking you were taking me out in the middle of the forest to have me silenced,” Stiles griped, punching the alpha’s solid arm, and received a loud exhale.

“Talking when I’m upset only causes me to become agitated all the more and being an alpha that is a dangerous combination. I thought it best to keep silent to ensure I wouldn’t shift.”

“So what? Now you’re okay with talking. Derek, you’re an ass,” Stiles hissed, punching the alpha’s shoulder twice more, as hard as he could, and received a contemptuous glare.

Stiles didn’t understand why he was so pissed, but he certainly knew he didn’t like Derek blowing hot and cold.

“Get up,” Derek ordered, standing to his feet and offered a hand for Stiles.

And there he goes blowing hot.

Stiles smacked the hand away, glowered at the alpha, and stood with no help from Mr. Moody.

“How far is it?” Stiles quizzed, continuing the way Derek had started.

Derek took to treading the wilderness beside him, glancing over at the human who looked
anywhere but at him.

“Not far.”

“Good.”

“I’m sorry.”

“What?” Stiles choked, thrown out of his element and glanced towards the alpha, stopping in his tracks at just how remorseful Derek appeared.

“I’m sorry,” Derek repeated. His lips pursed as if he hated the taste of those words.

“No… I’m sorry. I shouldn’t have been—such an ass, but then again you were a right ass yourself,” Stiles mumbled, swaying shyly towards his brute, and bumped his hip against the alpha’s.

Derek’s lips twitched, only this time to avert into a kind smile. An arm wrapped around the slighter and brought him in close where the alpha nuzzled his head and sniffed him persistently.

“You drive me up the wall,” Derek grumbled.

“Dito,” Stiles grinned.

And just like that, the atmosphere shifted, and the tension disappeared, miraculously into thin air. Stiles took to leaning against the alpha, curling an arm around a clad in leather forearm and cradled it at the center of his chest. One arm was plastered to keep the arm in place, while the other fiddled with the alpha’s slender fingers.

Derek didn’t seem to mind, nor did he protest that the other release him. He appeared taken aback initially, except without more ado conceded to the human’s will and strolled along the path closely beside him. Derek’s fingers twitched where Stiles took to stroking them and abruptly weaved them together to interlock.

Stiles paused in their movements, his pace slowing and took in just how their fingers fit perfectly together. The first time they held hands as Derek scented him, he hadn’t taken notice, his mind completely bombarded with other thoughts and sensations, but now he finally did. Derek’s palm was larger than his own, yet their fingers slim and lengthy corresponding in span, each finger fit in the fold of the other like a glove and sealed itself in place, as if it was always meant to be this way.

Stiles felt heated, finding that the cotton shirt and jeans he wore were far too thick and stifling. He tilted his head to the ground and away from the alpha’s gaze, finding it far too powerful and affecting of his nerves, though his grasp never faltered.

The sound of distant buzzing melted into distinct voices as the couple neared. Unexpectedly they were in the center of a swarm of werewolves, Stiles tried to scan faces, finding some familiar and others the faces of strangers. Hidden like ghosts among the overwhelming number of people were two betas that firmly snatched his attention.

Lydia and Jackson stood to his far right, arms crossed, faces tense in a scowl, glaring at him—no not him, his chest? No not his—

Stiles glanced down and found he still cradled Derek’s arm, while his other hand was threaded with the alpha’s.
Come on!

Stiles immediately disengaged from the alpha and took several steps away, only it was too late. Lydia looked as if she could kill him with the glares she sent his way while Jackson looked to be contemplating just what brutal beatings to inflict on a later date. A brief scan towards the other wolves told him they too took note of the closeness and affections of the Sheriff and their alpha. However, unlike Lydia and Jackson, when they met Stiles’ gaze they lowered theirs to the ground and tilted their head to the side, as if demonstrating their respect and submission.

In a startling revelation, Stiles saw that many of the familiar faces were werewolves he’d booked for misconduct at the station. They were all the type to fight back or cause a disruption. None of them had ever hesitated to threaten the Sheriff, yet the fear and respect they displayed now made it seem like a dream. The difference floored Stiles, who noted that something was seriously off.

“I’ve called you all here to make my intentions known to you, though some of you may have already heard. Sheriff Stiles Stilinski is to be my mate and successor,” Derek boomed authoritatively to the silent audience.

“Derek, what the hell are you talking about?” Stiles hissed in the lowest of whispers, but realizing it was futile when the audience of werewolves possessed super freaky hearing, and certainly heard his interjection.

Derek paid him no mind and continued.

“You are to accept his words as law and regard him as you would your alpha. Do as he sees fit, and show him your allegiance. If you choose to go against these terms, you’re lives may be forfeited if I see fit to do so.”

“Derek, don’t,” Stiles pleaded. This was too much. Derek was placing so much power onto his shoulders and the thought of any of these wolves defying them and facing death was too much of a burden, a burden he’d faced before with the death of his father, and couldn’t do so again.

Silence was their answer, glancing back to the duo, Stiles winced their gazes had not faltered from him in the least. They looked positively murderous.

“That is all,” Derek finished with a vociferous holler. He spun on his heel, grasped a hold of Stiles’ wrist and dragged him back the way they came.

“Derek, Derek, dude, come on, not so fast, I’m going to fall,” Stiles complained, glancing over his shoulder and back at the pack of wolves disbursing and leaving the meeting grounds within the woods. Only two wolves remained, continuing to stare after him disdainfully.

Stiles mouthed ‘later’ to the two, questioning their lip-reading abilities when neither reacted, and thought about voicing it instead. Before he could, however, Jackson waved his efforts off and stormed past a clutter of leafy trees. Confused, he then attempted to catch Lydia’s eye, Stiles frowning when she just shook her head and followed Jackson.

Derek finally released Stiles of his hold when they reached the car and took to slamming him back into the passenger door, hands shoved against his chest, pinning him back.

And here comes the cold front.

“Listen here, idiot, don’t ever interrupt me when I talk with the pack. You think all of them are willing to have a human as their successor? Don’t give them a reason to hate you. I might be powerful and their alpha, but for some that won’t stop them, they could harm you if they view you
to be disrespectful towards me. You need to show some respect, wolves—mates, are to demonstrate such to their alphas, and that now includes you,” Derek reprimanded.

Stiles huffed agitatedly and poked the alpha’s cheek. “Listen here, wolfie, don’t go shoving me against a car door and snapping those pearly whites at me. I don’t appreciate your evasiveness of what this meeting was about, and don’t go killing any wolves if they chose not to follow my rules. I don’t want anyone else’s blood on my hands.”

Derek’s brows knitted in contemplation. “Anyone else’s?”

Stiles paled. “What?”

“You said anyone else’s, which implies someone’s death—”

“Shut up, Derek,” Stiles snapped, shoving the wolf back and turning to face the car. “Unlock the doors and drive, okay.”

“Stiles, what aren’t you telling me?” Stiles could almost laugh at their situation. Derek was questioning him on his evasiveness, while Derek was the most complex jigsaw puzzle of all time. The man had more secrets than the government.

“Derek, I swear to Buddha, if you don’t get this car moving, I will walk the whole nine miles back to town.”

Derek stared at the human’s back for a long moment before, with an agitated growl and scuffing of the graveled road, Derek rounded the Camaro and unlocked the doors, clambering inside. When Stiles strapped himself in his seat, Derek revved the engine and the car screeched as it swiveled in a U-turn and they made homeward to Beacon Hills in absolute and perturbed stillness.

Tires wailing, the Camaro skidded to halt in front of Stiles’ home. The human swiftly exited the vehicle, slamming the door furiously before flipping Derek off. He swiveled his middle finger and pressed it to the passenger window, grinning with satisfaction at Derek’s obvious fury. He heard a distinct, agitated roar from within the Camaro as it sped off in the distance.

“Kiss my ass, wolfie!!!” Stiles screamed at the top of his lungs, for once pleased that wolves had impeccable hearing, knowing the alpha would hear him ten times clearly at the octave he shrieked his curse. Bouncing on the tip of his toes, Stiles felt pulsed with energy; like at any moment he could just let his fists go swinging, preferably at the alpha himself.

He couldn’t place why he was so agitated, it was just something about Derek that drove him up a wall, caused him to feel tense and crazed.

Stiles spent the next two hours working off his steam with a good long walk around the neighborhood, took a soothing warm bath, and stopped by an herbal shop for some much needed soothing brewed and spiced tea.

Seeing as it was now his day off since he called in sick, Stiles thought it best not to linger around the small city for too long and went back home. When he exited his car and bounded the steps he was staggered to find Jackson standing at his door.

“About time you showed up,” the beta grumbled.

Stiles blinked several times to confirm that he wasn’t having a hallucination and that it truly was Jackson Whittemore who stood before his door.
“Well, hurry it up, Stilinski, and open this blasted door!”

“No need to get your panties in a wad,” Stiles soothed snidely and made to unlock the door.

The two entered the home and moved into the living area. Jackson took to seating himself in his designated couch near the window—the one he felt was reserved for him on the rare occasions he visited Stiles’ home. Usually for a movie night with the gang, but more times than not, movie nights were held at Allison’s and Scott’s.

The two sat in silence and Stiles took to glancing over the beta’s shoulder, contemplating all the reasons that would lead Jackson of all people to visit him at his home. He could have spoken to Scott and come to mediate the situation. Stiles wasn’t pleased with the one-man-intervention, especially since they sent Jackson of all people, but it meant that Scott still cared. The other could be Lydia—who seemed to be quite agitated with him in the woods. Or—

“You can’t seriously be thinking about mating with Derek,” Jackson spewed hotly.

Or that.

“I’m not,” Stiles replied with calmness.

Jackson brows furrowed in complete bewilderment. “You’re not?”

“No. I’ve thought things through already and am quite determined to follow through with this union. So no, I’m no longer thinking about it, because I’ve decided. If you’ve come here to talk me out of it, you’re wasting your time, energy, and breath,” Stiles sighed heavily, overcome by everyone’s disapproval and having to talk reason into their thick skulls. None of this was rocket science. It was quite simple arithmetic: (Mating/Marriage) + (Derek/Stiles) = peace between Werewolves’/Humans.

“I don’t think you fully comprehend what you’re doing. Mating with an alpha isn’t like mating with a beta. Your relationship will be far different than Scott’s and Allison’s.”

This caught Stiles’ attention. “What do you mean by that?”

Jackson lips morphed into a stern scowl. “Once an alpha has recognized you as their mate, and bound themself—willingly submitting to your will, they’ve tied themselves to you, indefinitely. To the alpha you will be theirs. Once you mate, they will merge with you, and with it, you will be different.”

“Different how?”

Jackson seemed bristled and stood to his feet pacing the room. “You will be claimed and made into Derek’s, bonded and altered.”

“What does that mean?” Stiles blurted, truly lost in translation.

Jackson bypassed the Sheriff’s question with his own. “Do you really think you’re prepared for all that being the alpha’s mate will entail? Will you be able to bring forth the strength and power it will take to ground Derek and his thirst for power and blood? He is an alpha Stiles, if you make one wrong move, just one, your life will be in danger. Truly think this through, because Lydia and I won’t be able to stop him from hurting you, because you will be our alpha’s mate. Once you’re his, we can no longer protect you.”

Stiles breathed in deep, shut his eyes, and spoke evenly. “I understand this. I understand
everything, Jackson. I’m not an idiot, though I may act the part at times,” Stiles flashed a goofy grin, one effectively brought about to defuse the intensity of the situation. Seeing that it wasn’t working, his smile dulled and he exhaled in frustration.

“I know everything, and still, I wish to follow through with my decision. With this union humans will be protected. It’s for the best.”

Jackson remained still, lost in thought, before all at once he sat himself beside the Sheriff. Stiles met his gaze full of curious wonder.

“Okay.”

“Okay?”

Jackson gave a curt nod. “I’m not going to argue. If you say you understand what this bond means and are still willing to follow through with it, that decision rests with you alone.”

Stiles gaped at the wolf. He’d thought he’d have another Scott or Lydia on his hands, but unlike the other wolves, he’d spoken his peace, and there was nothing else to say.

Stiles started when a hand grasped his and Jackson’s gaze transitioned to one of indebted gratitude.

“Thank you.”

“What for?”

“For doing this, you’ll be protecting humans… and Danny.”

It had been expressed in few words, but the resulting warmth that settled in the pit of Stiles’ stomach was overwhelming. The gratitude and relief with which Jackson spoke of Danny’s safety, and in turn their relationship, had finally been expressed and Stiles was grateful. Jackson would never have to worry about his human’s safety; Stiles’ union to the alpha made sure of it, and the beta’s constant, destructive worrying could finally cease.

“S’all good,” Stiles grinned cheerily, bumping Jackson’s shoulder with his own.

Jackson rolled his eyes, released his hold on the Sheriff and stood, heading out the living room and towards the entrance.

“Oh, by the way, Lydia might have mentioned something about stopping over tonight.”

Stiles groaned, knowing Lydia wouldn’t be pleased with him, and their talk would be far more painful. Jackson’s shit-disturbing laughter magnified Stiles’ distress at the news.

“Go to hell!” Stiles shouted as the entrance door opened and shut behind the wolf.
Lydia arrived later that night, just as Jackson presaged, and Stiles had mentally prepared himself for her screaming, her demanding he break the bond, and cursing him for indulging the bond.

What he had not prepared himself for was opening the door and for the strawberry blond to burst out the startling proclamation, “You love him.”

Stiles choked on his saliva and began coughing up a fit, cupping his mouth, his lungs burning, and throat stinging. Lydia paid no mind, shoved the asphyxiating Sheriff to the side of the door and wandered into the kitchen.

Stiles followed after her, his coughing subduing as she rummaged through his fridge, retrieving a bottle of water and a container of peach yogurt. She slid the bottled water towards Stiles who gratefully took it and chugged the content down, the soothing cool liquid alleviating his sore throat.

Lydia retrieved a spoon from a drawer, sat herself in a stool at the kitchen counter and unsealed the container of yogurt to spoon herself a bite.

Stiles gaped at the beauty before him as if she done lost her mind.

“Have you done lost your mind!”

Lydia smirked, slipping the spoon from out of her mouth to point at the human before her with it.

“Don’t lie to me. I can hear quite well, and your heart started pounding like a jackhammer the moment I said it.

“Maybe that was because I was startled by the absurdity of the declaration!” Stiles exclaimed, flushing profusely.

“I beg to differ.”

“I beg your pardon.”

“Gladly given,” Lydia quipped, an arrogant smile in place.

“Damn it, woman, I’m not in love with Derek fucking brooding annoying ass Hale,” Stiles decreed, stomach twisting and churning sickeningly.

“Oh, come off it. You love him and his all brooding self, that dark hair, his bulky muscles, and those green eyes.”

“They’re hazel,” Stiles corrected inattentively.

“See,” Lydia smirked, having trapped the Sheriff.

Oooh she’s good.

“I—why in the hell do you keep smiling like that!”

“Because, I was so worried you were being forced into this union out of some martyr altruistic duty. I worried for you because Derek is an alpha and we don’t know anything about him. But then I saw you together—the two of you seemed—and the way Derek smelled. I’m on board.”
“What the hell are you talking about?” Stiles was struggling to keep up.

Lydia rolled her eyes, spooned another bite of yogurt and explained. “Wolves rely on sense of smell. Whenever you touched Derek or he you, your fragrances mixed perfectly in sync, making one whole scent, something that can’t be forced, but has to occur naturally. You were born with scents that coexist and were made for each other.”

“What the hell are you going on about?” Stiles was losing his patience, the more Lydia spoke, the more befuddled he became.

Lydia seemed disconcerted, mouthed another bite of yogurt all as Stiles cursed her to clarify.

“You’re his mate.”

Stiles frowned. “Of course I’m his mate; we’ve been bonding for the last month. He just needs to claim me to make it complete.”

Lydia sighed heavily, removing the spoon from her mouth to point at him with it.

“No, I mean you’re his *mate*. Your scents are too compatible and mix too well with each other to not be.”

Stiles stared blankly, uncomprehending, and Lydia groaned at the realization she would have to dumb it down for the uncomprehending Sheriff to understand.

“Wolves rely on scent.”

“Yes, you said that.”

“Wolves smell everything, what perfume you have on, if you’ve showered recently, whom touched you, etcetera.”

“I know this.”

“Wolves can also smell their true mates.”

Stiles remained void of any conception and Lydia screeched in exasperation.

“Derek can smell you’re his mate, any wolf can, if they know how to detect it. Jackson’s and Danny’s scents mix well, so does Scott’s and Allison’s, though I highly doubt those dolts realize that they’ve found their true mates.”

Stiles’ mind slowly stirred. Wolves could smell their mates, Derek said Stiles’ scent was pleasant —specifically—pleasant to his senses—Derek liked Stiles’ scent because it mixed well with his own, Derek’s and Stiles’ scents were well coupled, Derek and Stiles were true mates.

“What!”

Lydia snorted. “Finally, I thought I was going to have to draw a picture.”

“What does this mean?” Stiles felt sick by how many butterflies began swarming the pit of his stomach, it overwhemed him.

“It means; Derek must have figured it out, because when near to you and touched by you, I could smell him—he smelled satisfied and at peace. He’s been marking you so much so, I could hardly smell you’re true scent. He must be extremely affectionate because he knows. I thought Derek was
a cruel alpha, intent on forcing you into a union and would possibly hurt you, but don’t you see?”

Stiles shook his head, he didn’t see, he couldn’t comprehend much, his mind incessantly voicing his thoughts of; True mates, true mates, true mates, mates, mates, mates, mates for life, mates for life, mates for life, true mates, true mates, true...

“He can’t hurt you. He won’t hurt you. You’re too important to him.”

“But—he never said anything,” Stiles sputtered, completely at a loss.

“He most likely didn’t know how to. I mean, this arrangement is pretty abnormal and the situation is a bit… unorthodox. To add in the mixture that the two of you are true mates would make things all the more complex. He probably didn’t want to burden you,” Lydia contemplated.

Stiles sat heavily on a stool, the truth weighing him down, grounding him in place. The truth of the matter made everything all the more complex. Not only was he mating with an alpha, marrying him; Derek happened to be his true mate—the equivalent to humans and soul mates.

“Why were you pissed this morning?” Stiles couldn’t understand the shift in his friend, and focusing on such might help him rid thoughts of what this meant for the two.

Lydia’s face scrunched up in perplexed reflection, all at once shifting and relaxing as the answer came to light. “I was upset when I saw the two of you together and so close. I thought you were already aware and kept it a secret.”

Stiles shook his head, rejecting the assumptions, to which Lydia smiled at.

“Then I remembered what an idiot you could be and realized you probably could never come to realize this simple fact all by yourself.”

“But—but—I don’t love—love…” Stiles bypassed the redhead’s insult, tipped his head low, face heating, ears flaming, heart fluttering, and palms sweating.

Lydia beamed with a knowing look, full of understanding and amusement. “Are you sure about that?”

Stiles raised a hand to mask his heated face, shielding it all the more from the perceptive wolf. “I can’t…” came a soft whisper.

“But you do,” Lydia wasn’t even asking anymore; it was a statement of discernment, affirmative affirmation.

“I shouldn’t,” Stiles simplified, raising his head and stared back to Lydia with foreboding knowledge that this could never be anything more. “We’ve arranged this marriage and mating compromise on a treaty to ensure peace; my feelings are void in this. It can’t ever be anything more.”

Lydia’s eyes sharpened into a glare of remonstration. “Stiles, don’t be more of an idiot than you already are. You two were meant to be. True mates were made for each other. Derek knows this—knew it the moment he first smelled you. He’s probably known since he first began maturing as a wolf and his senses intensified. His sense of smell and hormones would have discerned you miles away and identified you were his mate.”

As Lydia brought forth this truth and knowledge Stiles felt himself fall back within the contemplations of his mind’s eye, and distinctly recalled many incidents that at the time made little
sense, but now were rapidly building truth and clarity.

He could recall as a child of nine walking home from school, side by side with Scott. The two would goof around, making detours on their path home. They’d stop by a corner market to buy junk food. Stiles was always constant in his purchases: cherry soda and a chewy caramel chocolate goodness bar. Scott chose whatever he felt at that time and usually ended up begging Stiles to trade with him, the two would bicker, and in the end Stiles relented. Scott’s whining far too annoying to withstand for long periods of time.

Each time they rounded the corner of the market and started back on their way home, Stiles took note of the brooding figure leaning alongside a tree, up a hill, several yards away. The fourteen year old Derek Hale, attired in his usual dark leather boots, faded jeans, black shirt (although it sometimes altered to white or gray), and a then loose leather coat.

Every time their eyes met, Derek seemed perturbed. His features would shift through many emotions, and unable to keep their gaze, his would shift to Laura Hale, standing beside him. The two would then leave, usually with the older sister grasping a hold of the younger man’s arm.

All the summers since, Stiles participated in the little league soccer meets. Every big game, Stiles would look out to the audience, find his cheering parents, flash a toothy grin, and play the game. After the game was over and the crowd thinned, Stiles took note that as his parents approached him, Derek and Laura Hale would stand off to the side. Derek always appeared agitated and furious while Laura remained determined and stern. Derek’s gaze would fall on Stiles, eyes clouded in hidden meanings unknown to the young boy, and he would watch as Laura ushered the brooding youth away.

Every other weekend, Stiles would visit the library to stock up on research pertaining to his latest fascinations, and when he was just about ready to leave, he would feel the prickling sensation of being watched, and there in the science fiction section of the library would be Derek and Laura Hale. Laura browsed the rows of books while Derek leaned on the shelf, his eyes ever constant and piercingly attentive towards the young boy.

Stiles felt flustered each and every time he found Derek’s gaze on him, unsure what it was he should do, and in the end, he’d scuttle off.

Stiles found himself in the same location as the werewolf many times in his life, almost every day. Each time he’d spent a long while staring at the broodingly pensive wolf, before Laura would mutter something to her brother and with a firm grasp on his arm drag him away, or Stiles felt far too flustered to remain under the brooding man’s scrutiny and speedily darted off.

As the years came and went Stiles saw less of Derek, though when he did, the dark haired wolf seemed far more agitated, tense, and wired. Laura appeared worn, fretful, and overwrought.

When Stiles was fifteen he attended his first high school party, he’d been psyched. He spent a good thirty minutes primping in front of the mirror until he was satisfied he looked good. He’d decided on wearing a scarlet undershirt, an unbuttoned onyx long sleeve blouse, faded low-cut jeans, and cherry Vans.

Stiles picked Scott up and the two went to the party together. There, they split. Scott conversing with some buddies he knew from homeroom whilst Stiles went to find Lydia, (who he’d been infatuated with, not fully accepting his true-self at the time). He found the beauty tipsy and stumbling about in a drunken stupor near a table of booze.

He’d rushed to help her regain her balance and she seemed unable to do so without wrapping an
arm around Stiles’ shoulder. Stiles thought it best he help her find a seat to regain her senses and led her to the not so crowded lounge. They found seats on one of the couches and collapsed beside one another.

Lydia began spewing nonsense, cursing Jackson for being a dick, Shelby for wearing far too skanky clothes in an attempt to steal what was rightfully hers. She glared at the blond Shelby, who at the time was flirting with Greenburg of all people.

Lydia noted all the blonde’s flaws that amounted in a good several minutes and Stiles praising his ADHD for the first time in his life so he could easily zone out. He only found himself slowly withdrawing from his thoughts at the sight of Laura Hale helping herself to some spiked punch. Stiles suddenly found himself searching for the elusive Mr. Brooding, but instead found a furious Jackson walking towards the two. Lydia seemed to notice Jackson swiftly approaching and grinned evilly whilst wrapping her arms around Stiles’ neck and bringing him close, nuzzling his neckline and glancing over to a reddening Jackson who was all but marching towards them now.

Stiles squawked when Lydia licked his cheek, working her way towards his lips.

The startling screech of glass breaking seemed to halt Lydia’s movements and Stiles jumped. The rest of the attendants came to a halt of what they were currently saying or doing, and stared in the direction of the disturbance.

There, just several paces from Laura, Derek Hale stood, enraged. His face was tense, lips thinned in a snarl, seething with wrath. A broken beer bottle shattered to bits, pieces of glass embedded within his hand, alcohol and blood smearing the palm and dribbling in a continuous flow to the ground.

The swarm of teenagers began to whisper harshly amongst themselves while Laura Hale hurriedly set her drink down to immediately approach her brother. She whispered something vehemently within his ear so only he could hear, wrenched the pieces of glass out of his wounded hand as he hissed something equally displeasing. She raised her gaze, snarled threateningly, grabbed his arm and with an angered holler of, ‘Now, Derek,’ she yanked him out of the room. Derek spared a moment to flash a murderous glare towards Stiles, eyes almost appearing electric cerulean.

“Stiles… Stiles… Stiles… are you even listening to me!” Lydia snapped, waving her spoon in front of the human’s face, leaning across her stool to gain his attention.

“What?” Stiles mumbled in a daze.

Lydia huffed an agitated breath, shut her eyes inhaling sharply, then opened them once more and stared with purpose.

“I said, stop being a flibbertigibbet and grow a set of balls. Be assertive and just tell Derek.”

Stiles sucked in his bottom lip, nibbling on it fretfully, and his hands wrung themselves together to fidget unremittingly. “Even if we’re true mates… it doesn’t mean he cares for me in that way.”

Lydia shook her head in disbelief, groaned low, and slammed her head against the counter whimpering, “You’re an idiot… a true undisputable idiot.”

Lydia left soon after realizing Stiles wished to remain in denial, heeding as she stepped foot outside the Sheriff’s home, ‘avoiding the truth was inevitable’, sooner or later he’d slip up and his feelings would be expressed.
Stiles frowned, stuck his tongue out to her roll of the eyes, and watched her drive off in her silver BMW.

Stiles sat himself on the living room couch, flipped the television on, set it on the news and watched the segment in silence, trying to steer clear of the revelation that came from Lydia’s and his conversations and his memories. He couldn’t think about them, because thinking about them brought the truth to light, and the wolf’s actions suddenly made perfect sense.

As time went on, Stiles glanced all the more to the clock above the television, then to his cell to affirm the time was correct. Derek had yet to come and it was getting late. It always seemed—that Derek arrived at his home before he did. Yet for the first time, Stiles was home first, only because he had taken the day off, and still, Derek hadn’t shown up.

Stiles hated to admit it, but he was getting worried. It already passed the time frame it took Stiles to arrive home and find the alpha in bed, already waiting for his appearance. Stiles didn’t like waiting and worrying. Derek was so agitated when he left him earlier and it’d been his fault, but maybe—maybe Derek was so frustrated he got in an accident and was laying hurt or dead somewhere. Stiles shook the thought off by the knowledge Derek couldn’t die from a car accident on the accountability he was a werewolf with supper healing.

But what if he’d been trapped and the car caught fire, he could die that way; werewolves weren’t invincible. Maybe he’d survived but was in a vegetative state, slowly healing himself cell by cell, just like Peter, and when he awoke he would become a crazed killer. No, no, no, those thoughts were eradicated.

Still, Stiles couldn’t take the worrying and dialed the alpha’s cell, recently given to him. There was no answer. Stiles bypassed leaving a message to call eight more times, one right after the other, but with no reply. On the tenth call, Stiles did leave a message, quick and brief. “Derek, call me.”

Stiles waited an hour for a reply, a call, text, anything, but nothing came. Unable to sit and wait any longer, Stiles snatched up his keys and headed out for town, in search of the alpha. Stiles took to wandering the city aimlessly. Derek wasn’t one for socializing and kept to himself. He wouldn’t be in any local bars, restaurants, and hangouts, but Stiles had to try. He asked around, stopped werewolves who took to staring at the floor, heads bowed slightly, and only meeting his gaze when need be. They weren’t sure, but all had voiced they suspected Derek to be at the Hale manor, his rightful home.

It was a likely assumption, one that proved all the more evident when Stiles spent two hours in the city with no sightings of the alpha, but Stiles refused to go to the Hale manor. Never again. The place held far too many painful memories.

When another hour passed and Stiles still was without Derek, he folded under the weight, and slipped into the Jeep to begin his journey into the woods and towards the Hale manor, his most dreaded of places.
Stiles stomped the breaks of the Jeep and came to a halt before the Hale manor. It was dark and the home held an eerie presence or maybe that was just how Stiles felt in regards to the home.

Shadows cast by the half moon floated and danced about in the chilled breeze of night, leaves rustled and the earth whispered. Stiles was consumed with trepidation.

He breathed in deep, assessing the darkened home. It appeared vacant, nevertheless, Stiles knew better than to always believe what his eyes told him. He sensed the alpha’s presence though he could not see him. Stiles was determined to speak with Derek, despite his impulses that told him to run from this place. Resolutely, though shakily, he exited the Jeep, slammed the door shut, swallowed dryly and took several steps towards the ghostly desolate home.

“Derek…” Stiles uttered, his voice uneven and heart thundering, wreaking havoc on his nerves.

“Derek,” He tried for firmness and this time his body thrummed with his will to remain steadfast.

A flash of Peter’s cruel smile, glinting madder depths and threatening fangs assaulted his mind’s eye. A moment later a cry tumbled out of his lips, his breathing intensified whilst his quivering overpowered his will to walk up the steps of the home and search the grounds.

“Derek,” Stiles whined, eyes desperately scanning the abandoned darkness around him, but there was no Derek in sight.

Maybe he’d been wrong but he just hoped his senses spoke truth of the alpha’s presence. Maybe Derek was deep in the woods, in his full form, sleeping in a patch of mint leaves.

There was no answer but the whistling of a breeze beating down woodlands and the faint chirping of crickets.

“Derek, please,” Stiles beseeched. “Come out and talk with me.”

Derek didn’t come out if he could hear him—if he was even there. If Derek could hear him and still refused to make himself known, he must not care—must not see how extremely difficult this was for him to come to the home his father’s murderer once resided, to the place where the crazed late alpha attacked him.

Stiles’ knees felt feeble under so much mental burden as he treaded back to the Jeep, each step seeming to drain him further of strength, until with one final step he slid to the damp earth, hands rising to press into the cool dented metal of the door. He needed to get out. He needed to grasp his bearings, clear his mind, pacify his fear and then get the hell out of this place.
Shutting his eyes, Stiles concentrated on his breathing, slow, steady and measured, inhaling deep through his nose, holding the breath for several long seconds, before releasing it in a powerful exhale. On his fourth breath, he tensed, hearing a twig snap near his side. He whipped his head in the direction and found Derek looming before him.

The alpha’s hands were shoved into his leather pockets, features hardened in a frown of contemplation. “What are you doing here, Stiles?”

Stiles couldn’t speak, far too overcome with a multitude of emotions, yet his trembling all but stopped as soon as his mind registered it was Derek before him and he was safe before the alpha, knowing no harm could ever come to him, beside his true mate.

The Sheriff scrambled to his feet, hesitated, leaning against the car for fear his knees would give out on him. When he stood for long moments and they did not collapse under pressure, he warily approached the alpha. Standing no more than half a foot away from the wolf, Stiles felt distressed, his chest sore and throbbing, and before he realized what he was doing, he began to repeatedly slam the heels of his palms against the broad chest in front of him.

“Stupid, ungrateful wolf! I can’t believe I worried myself over your wellbeing—so stupid—searching everywhere for you—an idiot—and this whole time—stupid—you’ve been avoiding me.”

Derek didn’t struggle, neither protest, nor attempt to still the human's angered blows. He allowed Stiles to vent and use him as his humanize live punching bag, even when he was swayed back by the power of the Sheriff’s striking.

He indulged the human, took his frustrations, and lowered his head under Stiles’, craning his neck in an odd angle and nudged his nose apologetically against a chin. His arms winding themselves around the slighter and brought him close, effectively trapping Stiles’ arms between them.

Stiles sniffled softly, blaming his stinging eyes on the cool breeze that brought with it pieces of earth, and bowed his head against the alpha’s shoulder, breathing in the soothing scent of his true mate and relaxing completely in the wolf’s hold. Derek brushed his nose along Stiles’ ear, his tongue slipping out to mouth the shell of the ear, nibbling it kindly.

Palming the chest before him, Stiles stroked at the alpha’s muscles, feeling the vibrations of the humming that ensued before the vocals reached his ears. The comforting hums the alpha projected whilst he cradled him in serenity set the human at ease. His disturbance dissipating to nothing, replaced with calmness and security.

Staring up into darkened hazel depths, Stiles exhaled a breath of his lingering agitation and tipped his head forwards and pressed his forehead into the prominent chin of the alpha.

“Take us home,” Stiles murmured softly, because, as far as he was concerned the Hale manor was no longer Derek’s home, nor would it ever be Stiles’. Their home would always and forever be the place where he grew up with loving parents, where Derek and he first began bonding and where Stiles first fell for the brooding brute during their restless nights conversing (mainly Stiles, but every once in a while Derek).

Derek remained still for several moments as if gradually coming to comprehend Stiles’ request. Stiles felt Derek’s chin bob against his forehead, feeling his answer of agreement rather than seeing it. Even after confirming his wish, the alpha never made to move, nor did Stiles. His eyes shut consumed by darkness, allowed him to strengthen his human sense of smell and touch. He felt the heat of the wolf radiate off and course through him in waves, the vibrating hums pulse and
strum against his hands, down his arms and to his quaking form, smelled the alpha’s appealing scent, drowning in it.

“Derek,” Stiles breathed airily, finally pulling back, raising his gaze to meet Derek’s once more.

Derek’s eyes glinted in the light, faint madder laced in hazel, features relaxed, soft and feeling.

Without a word, Derek stepped back a fraction, leading the human to the Jeep with an arm about his waist. Derek opened the passenger door and ushered Stiles in. Stiles felt the scarcely present brush of a hand on his lower back, caressing dotingly, before it was gone. Derek's other hand connected with Stiles’ on the clasp of the seatbelt, seeking permission to assist the anxious human. Stiles intently fixed his gaze on the benevolent brute, eyes kind and appreciative, releasing his hold on the seatbelt to cup Derek’s face in an open palm.

Derek pressed himself against the caress, eyes half lidded and buckled Stiles in. He lingered to stand before the car, leaning in close to the human, and immersing himself in Stiles’ thoughtful affections, tipping his forehead against the slighter, breathed him in and nuded his nose.

When Derek finally pulled away and shut the door behind him, Stiles whined feeling cold and empty without the alpha’s closeness. Lydia reaffirmed his feeling for the alpha, and knowing—just knowing that they were made for one another completed him—and God he really didn’t want to sound like that Maguire bloke, but he really did feel complete. It reassured him and gave him confidence in openly expressing his feelings, knowing that this was his only chance, and that once they married and he’d been claimed it would end.

He needed this, needed to remember these moments for the rest of his life, because after he was claimed, Derek would pull away and Stiles would have to allow him, though never would his feeling change, because he knew now more than ever, he cared deeply for the alpha.

Derek opened the drivers end, glanced curiously over to Stiles who was far too caught up in his thoughts to notice, and began their journey back to town and their designated home.

Stiles felt his thoughts calm to whispers, dulling enough to stare out in the darkness of night and the trees surrounding them in wilderness. His focus altered and took in the man beside him.

Derek’s olive skin paled in the hue of moonlight, narrow wrists, slender fingers, nimble pads, large palms, gripping the steering wheel. Stiles’ inhibitions flew and parted from his logical contemplations and took to acting out on his needs so he swiftly curled a hand around Derek’s wrist.

The alpha stiffened for one brief moment in time, caught off guard. He peered over to the hushed human beside him with inquisitiveness as to what it was he wanted from him. When Stiles sat up straighter, leaned all the closer, and rested his head against the man’s shoulder, he felt Derek sag in complacency, bowing his head to rest against his.

Stiles tugged once and Derek allowed Stiles to take possession of his right arm.

Stiles threaded his fingers through Derek’s in a firm hold, interwoven, a perfect fit. He tugged the arm persistently against him, until he embraced it firmly against his chest, and whimpered softly, fanatically. He wanted to be held by Derek, held until his worries and frustrations at having been without the alpha’s presence that night disappeared. He wanted to be further reassured Derek wouldn’t do it again, wouldn’t leave him at home alone without his comforting presence. He’d become attached to the alpha and accustomed to falling asleep in Derek’s arms, surrounded and overwhelmed by his wondrous scent.
“Stiles,” Derek murmured gently, shifting his head to nuzzle the human’s while his eyes remained on the road.

“Even if I get angry…bitchy…don’t ignore my calls…and come home, always,” Stiles whispered; voice unstable.

Derek made a sharp noise, similar to a whimper, nuzzling the human persistently, nudging him with his nose, as if giving consent and confirmation of his promise.

It took them less time to arrive home than Stiles ever thought possible, but he’d noted Derek drove far above the speed limit to do so, specifically when he’d taken to holding him close, and Stiles attempted to remain blind to the fact they were breaking a law. Throughout the ride, Stiles tucked his head at the crook of Derek’s neck, smelling him headily and ignored glancing at the speedometer.

Derek noised pleading and piercing sounds resembling an animal’s needy whine, seeming to sense the disturbance his absence had caused the human and attempted to right those wrongs with his cries of regret and nuzzling.

When Derek pulled into the house lot, he hastily shut the ignition off, unstrapped himself, and exited the vehicle. He rounded the car, did the same for the human and then grasped Stiles forearm hauling him out of the car and towards the front door of the home.

Stiles took the chain of keys offered by the alpha, shuffled through them, found the key to the house, and speedily opened the door. When he shut the door after them, feeling the alpha’s gaze enticingly focused only on him, he without pause leapt onto Derek, ignoring the bark of surprise, wrapping his arms around the beast, head bowing low to lave the expanse from the wolf’s ear to his cheek, mouthing the flesh, breathing ragged.

Derek growled low, his tongue slipping out to lap across the distance of the human’s ear, cheek, and swirled the edge of his mouth, before catching Stiles’ tongue with his, lapping at it, tongue darting the length of the human’s in a sloppy animal styled kiss that Stiles eagerly returned with fervidness.

Strong hands clasped Stiles’ buttocks, raising him high, supporting his weight, claws digging through the fabric of jeans and piercing flesh when lanky legs wrapped about his waist tightly, pressing the younger’s hardness against a muscular abdomen. Stiles’ arousal pulsed as the alpha hummed, the grating vibrations shooting through him, coursing through his confined arousal and his toes curled in his shoes.

What started off as soothing Stiles’ need, swiftly altered, and now Stiles wanted Derek in a completely different way. He wanted to wither in bliss, fall in ecstasy, wanted it all with Derek.

“B—bed?” Derek choked, still retaining logic though his eyes had shifted vibrant red, gaze smoldering with lust.

Stiles exhaled a shaky breath, weaving fingers in the wolf’s dark mane, and nodded insistentely, lapping at the other’s lips in confirmation. “Bed, please Derek, now.”

Derek slammed his eyes shut, groaned deep, features shifting to that of pain. Stiles whined when Derek didn’t move, had yet to lead them to their bedroom.

“Are you sure?” Derek hissed as if struggling to hold some semblance of humanity and logic, muscles flexing.
Stiles whimpered helplessly, nudging the alpha’s forehead with his nose insistently. “Derek, please. Feel me.”

Stiles thrust his hips forward, whining feebly when his sensitive hardness smacked against the wolf’s hard stomach.

Derek stifled a growl, nodding in concord, and without so much as another word, he ascended the stairs, hands apologetically caressing his sore buttocks he’d clawed at earlier.

“It’s okay,” Stiles breathed brokenly against the wolf’s ear, petting the alpha’s onyx mane.

Derek tucked his head in the junction of Stiles’ neck, inhaling the human’s scent. “If I become rough—or you want me to stop—”

“You won’t. I want this. Derek, so much,” Stiles placated, their lips brushing.

Derek met his gaze with consideration, exhaling a breath before claiming the human’s lips with his own, in a full complete earth shattering kiss. Teeth tugged and nipped, broken gushes of air and animalistic cries belted out from the alpha and Stiles keenly moaned pleasantly surprised and appeased. They were kissing, truly kissing now; such an intimate act expressed by humans and it was welcomed and praised.

Derek slammed Stiles into the wall of the upstairs hallway and it shook by the power and force, nearly toppling the table beside them. The sensation of hot smooth lips pressing against his own had a dizzying affect and with a twitching limb, Stiles unintentionally kicked the lamp resting on the table, sending it crashing to the ground. Derek’s lips were brutal and demanding, his warm tongue was immediately released and running along the crease of Stiles’, exacting that the other man submit and confer him entry, he felt he rightfully deserved.

Stiles was all frivolous and elated that he grasped Derek’s face in his palms, clamping them across his cheeks and pressed him closer, but refused to open his mouth and allow Derek to deepen the kiss, this time. He wanted Derek to not only desire him, but need him, as much as he needed to breathe, as much as he needed a heart, as much as he needed life itself. He wanted Derek to submit to his will.

Derek’s hands desperately fisted Stiles’ shirt, his body shoved forward until Stiles’ breathing became strained by the weight, but still Stiles was not satisfied. Derek’s eyes flashed madder as they opened and stared pleadingly up at the human who only stared back with liveliness. Derek let out a feral guttural sound from deep within, latched his mouth on Stiles’ exposed neck and laid openmouthed kisses across the expanse of reddening flesh, but it wasn’t enough. He wanted more. Derek wanted to fall completely into Stiles, feel him and taste him, be that much closer to Heaven. But Stiles was being his teasing self and this frustrated the wolf.

"Kiss me already," Derek whispered darkly, biting Stiles’ clavicle, not enough to break skin, but enough of a warning as he dragged his teeth up to graze his Adam's apple.

"Ughnnn," Stiles groaned, unwilling to let go so easily. "Submit," His face became rosy as he sucked in a shaky breath and let out a whine before slamming his head against the wall when Derek nibbled ever so gently on his esophagus.

"I yearn for you, what do you want from me?” Derek was whimpering his words, willingly open for whatever it was Stiles desired, and that surprised the human. He really thought he’d have to work harder to get the alpha to submit, thought he’d have to be physical and exert his dominance to ever get Derek to be so willing and insistent. He wanted to do so much, to have so much given by
the alpha, and give into the deepest desires that lurked within him and were slowly drowning him.

Derek let out another whimper that turned into a rough and hearty cry of bliss when Stiles hand's that grasped his head forced him back up and Stiles shoved his tongue deep within his mouth and tasted the other man's essence. Bliss, it was absolute total fucking bliss. Their tongues collided and chaotically overwhelmed the other's senses, taking in all the other could offer. Derek was now mewling into their kiss, tongues chafed against one another, teeth biting mischievously on the other's swollen lip, harsh breathing overpowering their frantic movements to taste, to take over and dominate, until they imprinted themselves in the other's very soul, branding the other with the pandemonium of the passion that they both felt.

"Derek," Stiles’ voice was thick with yearning and disbelief that the other man had all but come undone and was kissing him with such want it made his heart burst in flames.

Stiles wanted to say more, tell the other man how he truly felt, that he wanted this always, he wanted to truly live the rest of their lives as true mates and husbands, that he never wanted these affectionate caresses, nights spent holding each other, to end after they married and mated, but he couldn’t.

Instead he graveled out, “I want to claim you.”

Derek yanked back in surprise, glistening lips parted; reddened, bruised, throbbing, and eyes ever constant madder. Derek’s mouth moved in the starting of speaking, of voicing his thoughts, but not a word was released. Stiles’ stomach knotted with nerves, butterflies dancing about when the alpha’s ears sharpened, canines lengthened and a foreboding rumble escaped slackened jaws. Stiles didn’t fold under the alpha’s intense gaze; he met it head on, leaned close, and laved a long trail from Derek’s chin, against a slackened mouth, and polished the alpha’s fangs breathlessly with his tongue.

“I want to fuck you raw,” Stiles attempted for vulgar brazeness.

The alpha shivered against him, breathing tattered and harsh. Derek’s growl lengthened, his chest vibrating with them, remaining an ever constant grating.

Derek moved all at once, slamming his lips against the human’s, in a ruthless kiss, letting out a hiss when Stiles immediately jerked away and back, breaking their kiss. A hand quickly cupped his sore mouth; the metallic flavor of blood gushing passed his lips and over his hand.

“Derek, careful,” Stiles spoke through a mouthful of blood, his bottom lip having been nicked within their kiss by sharpened fangs.

Derek pressed forward, nudged Stiles’ nose apologetically, and slid his tongue to lap the edge of the human’s mouth, drinking up the blood. Stiles watched the alpha shrewdly, mouth slowly opening to the wolf’s pleading lips, and welcomed the affections as he tongued his lips, cautiously keeping his canines in check as to not harm the human anymore than he had.

Stiles groaned at the very thought that Derek was showering affection onto him, craving his attention, not pulling away at the human’s request. He was wordlessly opening up to being dominated and taking it in such large strides. Derek’s hands were tightly clamped on his shirt now, hips pressing hard against the wall supporting and suspending the human, raising him up and forward until Stiles wrapped an arm around the older man's waist, bringing him into a tight embrace as he all but shoved his tongue deep within Stiles’ mouth, trying to calm the frenzied need and want, while remaining mindful of his canines. The flavor of blood overwhelmed the kiss in the most pleasing of ways.
Stiles’ harsh breathing intensified with the prolonged deep kissing, that was more salivated lapping of tongues, breathing in the other’s scent and it was leaving him with little air, which he desperately drank up through their kiss when he could. He was starting to feel lightheaded, but he couldn't stop, he couldn't pull away, not now.

Derek’s hands caressed Stiles’ lower back and buttocks while he led them blindly to the bedroom, far too distracted by their kisses to notice. When Derek sat himself against the bed, lay on his back and stroked Stiles’ hips, Stiles realized the alpha was allowing the human free reign, willingly giving up power.

Stiles exhaled a shuddering breath of nerves, his hands lowering to press against the alpha’s broad chest and shifted off the wolf to strip himself of his clothes and Derek wordlessly did the same. Derek took longer to undress, being he’d had to loosen the ties of his boots before effectively ridding them, along with his pants and azure boxer-briefs.

Stiles stared intently at the bare alpha sitting upright in bed. He watched with amazement when he lowered himself on his hands and knees and crawled to him, bowing his head to nuzzle the human’s lower region. Stiles had to bite into his hand to stop himself from coming then and there when Derek sniffed headily and whined pleasantly. Pulling back, he rolled over and landed on his stomach, folded his arms under his head and raised his hips up, his pale muscular buttocks swaying invitingly.

Stiles groaned deeply at the sight, his aching hardness twitching in pain, wanting to be within the alpha, claim Derek, become one with him. Mate Derek as his. Shuffling behind the alpha, Stiles straddled the man’s lower legs and stared at the wolf submissively obedient to the human’s will, welcomingly beckoning him to do a he wished.

Stiles heart hammered, unsure of what to do, but began doing what felt right. His hands clasped Derek’s strong sculpted hips, caressed the flesh, stroking up and down the expanse of the man’s sides, with each stroke becoming all the more sure of himself as the alpha hummed pleasantly, burying his head in the junction of his arms and raising his hips higher and closer to Stiles’ touch.

Pressing Derek’s hips down and against the bed, the wolf barked in protest, having found great contentment at Stiles’ gentle touches. Stiles grinned good-naturedly at Derek’s crabbiness and laid himself over the wolf, mouthing the pointed ear before him, nibbling against it and relishing the sharp baying of the alpha. Stiles’ affections traveled along the pale olive flesh, lapping at the wolf’s back, suckling the flesh, and rubbing his hardness into the equally hard alpha’s buttocks, much like Derek had done to him when he was first scented. As his pre-cum coated the wolf’s buttocks, the beast seemed to become all the feral, growling animalistic, muscles tensing, arms shifting to create a halo above the alpha’s head and fist the sheets.

Stiles nuzzled his nose into the alpha’s soft skin, kissing and nipping his lower back and to the two indentations just above his buttocks. He watched the flesh twitch and shudder in anticipation and his tongue drifted over the quivering flesh and to the cleft. Sliding his tongue further down while planting his hands at either side of his buttocks, Stiles spread them open and revealed the puckered and virginal entrance. It was rosy, bright, and inviting, so much so Stiles couldn’t stop himself from leaning in close and nuzzling the spongy hairs of Derek’s sack. He trailed his tongue towards it, rising with each lap to the center of the alpha’s core.

Derek hollered a throttled cry, straddling the lines of a human’s shout and an alpha’s roar, quaking as Stiles’ tongue experimentally grazed his entrance.

Stiles licked at the puckered ring, smirked as Derek whimpered under him much like a submissive mate. The alpha’s hips quaked persistently, rising up to meet the human, voicelessly requesting
more. Derek’s claws dug deep into the sheets, piercing through the thin cotton and further, tearing through thick mattress and dragging lengthily, tattering fabric.

Derek shoved further against the human, adamantly. He shoved his hips back in an attempt to coax Stiles’ tongue to plunder his depths. Stiles whirled his tongue over the puckered skin and experimentally heeded Derek’s persistent request and dipped in, poking and stabbing passed a knotted core and into a pliable entrance.

Derek arched at the intrusion, his thighs tremulous and fraught in sustaining his weight, to keep himself upright and close. Stiles hearing Derek’s wordless plea dipped his tongue through the narrow passage and twirled it about and through the ringlets of muscles. The taste of Derek filled Stiles’ head with the bitter saltiness that was laced in sweet honey. Lapping at the alpha’s entrance greedily he wanted more, more of the unbelievably delicious tangy sweetness, more of the noises ripping out of the alpha.

He shoved his tongue hard, curling through the undulating cords of muscles and struck the core of the alpha. Derek groaned thickly, his flushed face slamming against the sheets, canines biting the mattress, tugging and growling feverishly. Stiles’ tongue jabbing further into him, his nose pressed at the crease, nuzzling and inhaling harshly, and slipped a finger to join his tongue.

Removing his tongue, Stiles slipped another finger in and stretched the beast’s contracting walls. Derek’s harsh breathing and soft mewls filled the bedroom, his hips rocked unevenly, his grip on the bed increasing until his knuckles dipped into the openings of the mattress and grasped the bedsprings.

When Stiles supplied a third finger to stretch Derek, scissoring him, unclamping the tightness of contracting walls, he licked a wet path under Derek’s sack, slow and lazy-like. Tasting salty flesh, nibbling so gently, the alpha truly did sob with enjoyment.

Derek’s fangs hooked through the mattress and with one particularly vicious tug, he yanked back a mouthful of sheeted mattress. Stiles choked back a laugh, though it did nothing to hide his amusement when the alpha spit out the mouthful of mattress. He didn’t really mind his bed having been horrendously damaged when it meant Derek loosing himself to pleasure and he being the one that caused it.

Stiles reached over with his free hand and grasped a pillow from behind him to place under Derek’s head. The alpha immediately took hold on it, biting into one corner while his claws fisted handfuls of downy fluff.

The lingering taste of Derek’s heady flavor, along with the alpha’s growls and shudders made Stiles’ hardness ache agonizingly so, wanting to be within the man. Stiles was overcome by heat. He could hardly believe a 31 year old alpha was bending over backwards for Stiles—a 26 year old youth to take what he wanted. His constant need for pleasure and having Derek lay out in front of him, begging, submitting and willingly compliant, was just too much. He couldn’t wait any longer. He knew he had stretched Derek as much as his lust would allow him and discerned he’d been thorough, as the alpha whined with his own need.

Stiles hastily removed his fingers from out of Derek and the wolf yowled his disapproval of being empty without Stiles’ attention. The alpha rolled his upper body, twisting on his side, though his lower half remained raised and pleading for Stiles. Cinnabar eyes shimmering with yearning, his eyes spoke far more truth than words could.

Stiles took hold of Derek’s hips, repositioning to spread his knees further apart, and leveling their bodies. He guided his neglected length against the rosy entrance and eased within the smoldering
heat of the alpha. Pressing the head of his length within the tautness of Derek, Stiles’ breathing grew with intensity as muscular walls swelled and contracted about his mass in a vice-like grip.

“Derek,” Stiles moaned, pressing further in, past the protesting tightness.

Derek whimpered piercingly, keenly baying in answer to Stiles’ steadfast thrust, heaving laboriously, forcefully, as he took in the fullness of the human, stretched to his limit, expanded and full.

Once sheathed within Derek’s quivering walls, Stiles paused for several long moments, allowing the alpha to adjust to his size. Derek panted in exertion, the muscles of his arms and legs flexing as he held himself up, while his creamy pale face altered to an arduous continuous flush. Gritting his teeth, Derek mewled and squirmed as Stiles’ swelled organ pulsed inside of him and spouted pre-cum, his own arousal pressed into the mattress.

When Stiles was assured Derek was at ease with his size, laying compliantly, humming moans of satisfaction, he experimentally started to move, slow and gentle-like, observing the alpha fixedly. Intent on stilling his movements if he noticed an inclination of pain to cross Derek’s features, only, Derek seemed content and in need, groaning a humanized purr, craving more.

Stiles’ features blossomed beet red, beads of sweat sheeted across his entire body and Stiles took note Derek wasn’t fairing so well either. The werewolf was completely flushed from head to toe, panting hotly, and hair wholly damp.

Snarling low, eyes ever devilish, Stiles shivered at the intensity of them. Being confined within Derek’s astringent walls were enough to break him of his will to fall over the edge and come undone.

"Derek, I… Derek," Stiles didn’t know how to explain just how good this felt, how incredibly wonderful it was to be a part of Derek, to have this moment together, sharing in the closeness and intimacy of the other.

Stiles slid his arms from off Derek’s hips and pressed them at the alpha’s sides, looming closer and their chests brushed each other, effectively straining the alpha’s limbs in an awkward twist. Derek raised himself up, regardless of the strain, to nudge Stiles’ nose, lap across his lips before falling back against the bed and clutching deathly tight to his pillow.

Stiles wanted more; he wanted to be that blasted pillow, to embrace Derek, feeling his comforting hold as they fell into bliss. Stiles sat back up and withdrew from out of the alpha whose contented features shifted to dismay and confusion. He barked out his reply, yowled mournfully, the English language lost to him as he was flanked by human and wolf instincts.

Stiles jolted Derek’s thigh and the wolf tamely followed the human’s request and moved it and effectively turned on his back. Stiles grasped Derek’s legs raising them over his shoulders to rest them there. Derek stared fixedly, jaw opening wide in a heavy growl when Stiles slid back in and started his slow measured thrusts.

Grasping a hold of the pillow, Stiles attempted to tug it from out of the alpha’s fixed hold, but the wolf only held it all the tighter and growled possessively, threateningly. Instead, Stiles pressed Derek’s legs close to his chest so he could lap at the alpha’s mouth and their tongues met to roll and chafe against the other, the alpha remaining mindful of his fangs. The pillow between them was released and thrown somewhere near the window by the alpha so his arms could embrace Stiles and bring him closer. The straining of the alpha’s legs became a constant ache and Derek was forced to drop them, but then took to winding them about the human’s narrow waist.
Derek suddenly whimpered at their new position caused a surge of pleasure to attack his being, and Stiles realized he struck that sensitive spot within the wolf. Stiles continued to thrust ever so leisurely, each time hitting that same place within him and bringing the alpha closer to release. Soon Derek was withering below him, his hands clasping urgently against Stiles' back, searching for purpose, his breathing escalating, as he stared up at Stiles in wonder.

"Ha—har—ard—ughnnnnmmmm!—er," Derek whined a disjointed breathless plea, his whine shifting to a rumble, thick with lust, enamored with want for completion.

It took Stiles a moment to decipher the broken request, when he did, only then did he begin to move at a much more rhythmic rate, his hips driving upwards at every bucking motion the alpha made. Stiles’ heart hammered against his chest that he finally had Derek and that the wolf that lay below him, shriveling up and thrashing chaotically in his bed, wanted this just as much.

Derek’s eyes slammed shut, the beads of sweat that lined their bodies proved to ease their movements as they rocked together as one being. One of Stiles’ hands held to Derek’s hip to assist him with leverage and thrust more intensely in him, the other he moved to stroke Derek’s hard and abandoned manhood.

Derek was lost. His animalistic growling turned feral, snarling feverously of disjointed pleads for Stiles to give him more and push him over the edge. Stiles’ hand gripped firmly to a solid hip and used the force of his grasp to control his thrusts, his body trembling against the wolf, feeling close to fully loosing restraint, close to culmination. Stiles’ quaking body arched signaling his impending climax about to erupt and break through the barriers.

Stiles stroked Derek harshly, quickly, flicking his wrist with every upward stroke, and twisting his hand every downward. All the while, Stiles proceeded to plunge further into the alpha’s depths, plowing against Derek’s receptive gland, as his liberation swelled in the pit of his stomach.

Derek gasped stridently, he was so close now. Opening his eyes, Derek met Stiles’ gaze that was ablaze with lust and shivered when Stiles licked his lips. Reaching out with equally shaky hands, he grasped Stiles’ face and enacted a kiss, fervid and passionate. Derek tried to pull away when his fangs slashed the human’s tongue but Stiles pressed firmly against him.

Stiles groaned brokenly against the kiss, mouth overflowing with blood, seeping out of their mouths, and trailing their chins. He stroked up the length of the wolf, swiped his thumb over the slit of the head, dragging the tip of his finger against the curve of the slit was all it took for the alpha to come undone.

Derek yanked away from the kiss despite Stiles whining in protest and roared in absolution and with several uneven thrusts Stiles was coming. Spasms rippled through him, his body shuddering, thrashing against the wolf, and Derek hummed, quivering, still on edge.

Derek bit into his bottom lip, his canines tearing through his flesh and mixed his blood with Stiles’ that lingered in his tongue. Stiles’ fortitude spewed hot release in the smoldering warmth of the walls of Derek’s core. The alpha’s release coated his own belly in large amounts of spunk, and he shuddered violently, face seeming all the redder, his muscles tensing and barriers closings savagely around the throbbing manhood within him.

Stiles bit down onto the alpha’s neck, the wolf sobbing wantonly, a growl of ecstasy thrumming in his ears transforming to a high pitched whimper. Stiles wrung out Derek’s release in unbelievably pleasurable spurts and the wolf moaned lewdly. His hips bucked wildly against the unfeasibly and unyielding hand encasing his organ that pinched around his spouting mass as he emptied himself
entirely.

Panting fatigued, Derek’s arms and legs slid off Stiles and plunked, flopping back onto the bed, as he regained his composure, breathing raucously in an attempt catch his breath and frazzled human senses.

Stiles shivered with the aftershocks of his orgasm and unsteadily rocked back and withdrew himself from out of Derek to straddle the wolf’s lower legs. Dipping low, he began lapping up the load of spunk layering Derek’s abdomen, greedily swallowing the bitter sweetness and moaning keenly.

“Stiles,” Derek wheezed, staggered, humanized hand raising to caress the younger man’s head, petting affectionately, having shifted once his thirst for lust had been quenched.

Stiles continued to lave the expanse of Derek’s abdomen, even when he’d effectively cleaned him of any traces. He only ceased his affectionate mouthing of flesh when Derek yanked him back up and claimed his lips in a hungry and eager kiss. Stiles relaxed against the wolf’s broad chest, kissed back with enthusiasm, dragging his tongue against the wolf’s now blunt teeth, his fingers weaving in damp hair and fist ing at it possessively.

When the need for air became too great, Stiles broke their kiss, smiled fondly down at a flushed wolf, pecked his lips once more and rolled them onto their sides. Their arms wrapped around the other’s waist, legs tangled together, staring at one another with thoughtfulness.

“Did I hurt you?” Stiles asked, because he worried he might have, and Derek would have been too far gone to comprehend language, enough to tell him if he had.

Derek smiled fondly, shook his head ‘no,’ and nudged the human’s nose with his.

“Did I hurt you?” Derek asked for their worries were one in the same, and raised a hand to brush the human’s lips with the pads of his fingers.

Stiles smiled goofily, grasped the alpha’s hand with his, pressing a kiss to each digit before placing the large open palm against his cheek, savoring their closeness. “Not at all, you were perfect.”

Stiles shut his eyes complacently when Derek’s forehead pressed against his own, their exhaustion weighing them down, slumber calling out to them. Though Stiles tried to fight it, always finding comfort in his bedtime chats with the usually unwilling and far too sleepy wolfie.

“Was this your first time being claimed?”

Derek remained in silence, breathing even, and Stiles supposed the wolf must have fallen asleep already, and sighed with disappointment.

“Yes,” Came the soft answer, Derek shifting drowsily closer, until he was practically nudging Stiles on his back to hold him.

“Did you…enjoy yourself?” Stiles flushed embarrassedly, but truly wished to know if Derek had, he knew he did, but hoped that Derek’s first time being claimed would have been a pleasant occurrence.

Derek stilled a moment before snorting out in laughter and Stiles felt sick to his stomach. It was that bad.

“Idiot, don’t ask stupid questions.”
“It’s not stupid. Was it that bad?”

“No.”

Opening his eyes, Stiles pulled away and poked the alpha’s cheek till Derek opened his and met his fretting stare. Stiles stared on expectantly, nervously. “Well?”

“Well what?” Derek teased, a knowing sideways grin spreading across his mouth.

“Was it bad?” Stiles stressed his question impatiently.

Derek exhaled in a long huff, features softening with one of warmth. “Not at all, it was perfect,” Derek remarked using Stiles’ same sentiments from earlier and Stiles blushed foolishly.

“You’re such a damn tease,” Stiles mumbled, not at all pleased.

Derek smiled brightly, true and pure, leaned in close, nuzzled the human’s nose, and sighed.

“You’re so adorable when frustrated,” Derek noted, tauntingly, and Stiles smacked the alpha’s shoulder.

“Shut up.”

“Aw, did I upset you?” Derek mocked, affectionately lapping the human’s nose and burying his head in the crook of his neck, inhaling contentedly.

“I hate you.”

“No you don’t.”

“You piss me off,” Stiles amended and Derek snickered.

“Sleep Stiles, it’s been a long day,” Derek ordered, playfulness still layering his voice, one hand stroking the humans lower back, his other clasped against his chest, feeling the beating of his human heart.

“Whatsoever, you’re still my bitch, wolfie,” Stiles grinned and struggled to hold in his laughter, enjoying the feel of Derek shuddering with restrained amusement, his lips thinned and curved against his neck.
Stiles was officially no longer a virgin, and it was great, fantastic really. Expect for this one thing. Stiles was downright frustrated he woke the next morning face down on the tattered mattress and in a home vacant of Derek. He’d begrudgingly readied himself for the day, replaced the ripped sheets for fresh ones, and tried to ignore the fact he would need a new mattress.

After Derek met with his pack to inform them of their union, Stiles thought he should do the same for the humans of Beacon Hills. News the Sheriff was hosting a meeting at Beacon Hills High School soon spread, and the few humans inhabiting the city attended the meeting later that afternoon. Many officers of the precinct were present as well as a few werewolves, and Stiles suspected they were there to show their support and allegiance. Among the werewolves Stiles knew were Jackson, Lydia, Boyd, Isaac, and Erica.

The meeting went rather well—by rather well—Stiles meant uproars of protest and confusion by many of the older citizens. They didn’t believe it was right, marriage between the opposite species. Stiles once recalled the protests concerning same-sex marriage, yet when the knowledge of werewolves came to light and many fraternized with humans, it seemed their biases switched. Now same-sex marriage and homosexuality were thought to be the norm and interspecies marrying humans were taboo. Nonetheless, werewolves were in control of the government, and marriages between the two species were allowed, though many humans protested. Scott and Allison constantly received disapproving glances, but they always ignored them, blissfully content in their life choice.

Stiles remained calm when addressing the issue; he explained their union was legal and by enacting this union, peace between werewolves and humans would be ensured. He explained what he learned when first conversing with Derek over their union. Humans would no longer have to fear for their lives, they would not be forcefully bitten and changed, alphas would give back power to the cities, and the chaos would stop.

When the meeting came to an end, Stiles let out a breath he’d not realize he’d been holding. When the crowd thinned and the citizens left the auditorium, Stiles approached Jackson and Lydia whilst smiling appreciatively.

“I didn’t think you would come.” Stiles addressed the two when he stood in front of them.

“Yes, well we overheard some citizens discussing the meeting, and thought we should show our support,” Lydia smiled, nudging an agitated Jackson with her elbow as he glared at her.

“You wanted to come. I wanted to spend the evening with Danny, but you wouldn’t let me.”

“Aw, did I interrupt some Janny time,” Lydia giggled at her wittiness. “You get it? Jackson slash Danny—Janny—or should I say Dackson.”

Jackson rolled his eyes, flashed a fierce glower and shoved the strawberry blonde’s shoulder before he shifted to stand beside Stiles.

Stiles chuckled softly; though Jackson seemed genuinely upset with his ruined plans with Danny he appeared good-natured enough to tease the woman.

“I thought we could have dinner together, and hell Jackson, if you’re really going to miss Danny that much—even though I saw the two of you having brunch at the café and just know you spent
the day together, we could invite him.” Lydia suggested, flashing a knowing look at the wolf before her who seemed flustered by her observation.

“No, its fine,” Jackson mumbled, bowing his head, shoving his hands in his front jean pockets and kicked at the wooden floors.

“Mhmm, just call him,” Lydia urged. “Danny’s a great chap.”

“No.” Jackson groused suddenly tense.

Stiles raised a curious brow and made to question the man’s sudden moodiness. “Jackson—”

“We’d love to join you.”

The trio glanced to their side and towards Boyd, Isaac, and Erica, having not noticed them till then.

Stiles frowned at the blonde, never having liked her; she'd been a bitch when turned in high school, and made Stiles’ life hell. She constantly mocked him, roughed him up, once she even knocked him out and thrown him in a dumpster far away from home, and Stiles couldn’t understand why. It wasn’t like they spoke much, if at all, in fact before she was turned and made it her purpose to make his life hell, he’d said all of a handful of words to her, mostly, ‘Hi’s, Bye’s, S’up’s, and ‘Do you think I’m attractive?’

“Uh…” Stiles didn’t know how to reject her request without coming off as rude and offensive. Instead, with a heavy exhale, he tipped his head in conformance, glancing to Jackson and Lydia who weren’t pleased with his admission.

The group decided to dine at a local pizzeria. Stiles ordered a medium chunky monkey meaty pettie pizza extravaganza while the rest opted for a more conventional order of pepperoni or cheese. They took the two tables at the back of the restaurant and joined them together and sat themselves down. Stiles attempted to take a seat at the edge, but Lydia guided him to sit between Jackson and herself whilst Boyd and Isaac sat at either side of a smirking Erica.

As they waited for their orders Stiles eyed the werewolves opposite him and Erica seemed to size up the trio. Lydia and Jackson scowled at her obvious scrutinizing and Stiles cleared his throat, hoping the tension would somehow vanish, but it truly was a foolish notion, for it only thickened.

Isaac appeared perturbed while Boyd disconcerted, it was apparent to Stiles the two weren’t so open to this get together as Erica seemed to be.

When the waitress brought them their orders Stiles could just kiss her, for it proved a distraction from the uncomfortable silence and the tense stare-offs. Stiles immediately put his full attention to his meal, remaining optimistic that when he was finished the group would be less intense.

Isaac and Boyd apparently thought the same as they too focused on their meals. Erica smirked smugly towards Stiles. The Sheriff felt Lydia tense beside him.

“I think it quite interesting how much you smell of Derek, having not been claimed, and when I saw Derek this morning, he reeked of you.” Erica suddenly said.

Stiles choked on his pizza, red in the face, though not from loss of breath as Jackson seemed to believe because he began smacking his back in an attempt to help clear his throat. Stiles hastily reached for his soda, downed half the contents, and swiped his damp mouth with the back of his hand, breathing deeply.
“What?” Stiles squawked.

*What the hell was Erica playing at?*

Boyd and Isaac sat straighter, glancing from the blond to the Sheriff unsurely.

“Erica, don’t.” Boyd cautioned.

Erica didn’t seem to pay much mind to the man’s warnings. “It’s not easy for a werewolf to be marked by a human, especially an alpha.” She continued.

Stiles gawked at the blond, why was she doing this? She wasn’t saying Stiles mounted Derek parse, but it was evident in her observations. Stiles glanced helplessly to Lydia and Jackson. Lydia appeared aggravated and Jackson unsettled, yet just as irritated.

“Don’t get used to it. Once you’ve been claimed, it will end. Derek will never be interested in someone like you. You’re weak, scrawny, and a man, not worthy of an alpha like Derek’s time.” Erica voiced with such certainty, Stiles couldn’t help but take her words as truth.

“I think it’s time you leave.” Lydia advised, stern and insistent.

Erica sneered at the redhead and leaned over the table towards Stiles. Lydia and Jackson shifted to the end of their seats, one hand subconsciously placed on either of Stiles’ knees, the other slamming against the table revealing threatening claws of warning.

“When I leave and your friends try comforting you, know this, what I speak is truth. We both know no matter what anyone says this will never change,” Stiles could feel the heat of the woman’s breath brush against his face, see the pure hatred dwelling in the depths of amber glowing orbs, and his heart sink by the weight of truth. She was right.

Lydia growled in forewarning, the chair sliding behind her as she stood. She leaned over the table and pressed her face inches from Erica’s, fangs prominent as she spoke once more, “Leave now and I just might not rip that traitorous spinal cord of yours and feed it to the rats.”

Erica features crinkled, her smirk fading to a scowl, eyes narrowing, edging back and away. She stood erect, glanced to the wolves beside her and nodded her head to the exit. As they rose to follow after the quickly strutting deadly beauty, they spared a contrite glance towards Stiles, tipped their heads and departed.

When the door shut after the group and Stiles was left beside two wired beasts’ he let out a loud over-exaggerated breath and willed himself to smile sheepishly at the two.

“Now, who thought Erica was going to rip me a new one?” Stiles raised his hand. “I did.”

Jackson flashed a disbelieving glare to the human while Lydia smacked the back of the man’s head harshly.

“You’re a damn fool!” Lydia screeched, though a smile slowly surfaced, appeased to see Stiles wasn’t taking Erica’s words for truth.

“Yeah, well, if she did try anything, you would have gone all crazed mama bear on her.” Stiles jested and received another painful blow, but this time from Jackson.

“You’re a right idiot.” Jackson grumbled.
Lydia followed Jackson’s smack of the head with another of her own. “Don’t call me a mother, I’m too young!”

Stiles whined helplessly grasping his head and glaring angrily at the two ex-friends.

“No hitting Stiles!” Stiles mocked cried.

Stiles arrived home just as a midnight Camaro pulled up. Stiles exited his Jeep, crossed the distance to the Camaro’s driver’s side. Derek emerged from the vehicle to greet him with a dark frown.

Stiles couldn’t help but smile up at his Mr. Brooding and placed his hands against the alpha’s chest, pressing him back and against the slightly opened door, shutting it effectively. Leaning against the wolf, Stiles rested his head along a broad chest and breathed him in.

“I missed you this morning.” Stiles spoke gently, shutting his eyes in comfort when Derek embraced him close, bowed his head, and nuzzled his ear.

“Alpha business.”

“It couldn’t wait?”

“No.”

“Not even for breakfast with a chatty fiancé?” Stiles quipped and chuckled at the feel of a grinning in silence alpha.

“Maybe.” Derek murmured, nipping the shell of the man’s ear.

Stiles exhaled pleasantly nudging the alpha’s neck affectionately.

“I’m off tomorrow.”

“Oh?”

“Yeah; it would be wonderful if I woke one morning to find you still beside me.”

Derek remained silent, Stiles wondered if he’d asked too much in their playful banter. But Erica’s observations only made him want to cherish the time he still had with Derek. Even if it were for two more months, these two months he’d spend every chance he had with Derek, knowing once married and mated it would all end, and only then would he allow himself to give into the destruction of their separation.

“Do you want me to stay?” Derek clarified what he suspected from Stiles’ evasive teasing.

“Yes.” Stiles breathed softly, shakily, nervously.

Derek’s lips curved upwards against his flesh once more, “Okay.”

“Will you…will you spend the day with me?”

Another lengthy pause followed and Stiles gripped the edge of Derek’s leather coat to keep his nerves in check and still his slight trembling.
“Okay,” Derek whispered, so low, so soft; his words broke and wisped into the early October breeze.

Stiles pulled back from the alpha, smiled radiantly in reply. Raising himself to his tiptoes he pressed a solid and firm kiss against Derek’s smooth lips. A second passed before the wolf tightened his hold around him, dipped low to strengthen their kiss, and exhaled heavily against him.

Stiles pulled away after a long moment of bliss, features reddening with embarrassment at his boldness and Derek’s willingness to comply.

“We should get some sleep. I know how much you enjoy the act.” Stiles mumbled through his grin.

Derek allowed the human to bear witness to the sweetest of smiles, the tenderest (Stiles knew that it wasn’t a word, but it should be) of expressions from the recurrently brooding sour wolf.

When they settled in bed, nothing on but their undergarments, they slipped together in a close embrace so ingrained that it seemed second nature to hold one another so close. Stiles hated thinking about the days when he would no longer have this, no longer share his room with a man who’d slowly slipped deep in his heart, one he’d marry, and with the union become his family. Derek would become the only person he’d want to go to, because he was already. He was his rock when he felt lost, he was his comfort when distraught, his anchor keeping him grounded and suspended. He was everything Stiles ever wanted or needed. In Derek’s arms he felt at place in the world…at home.
Stiles woke to a stinging pain striking his right ear and a piercing whimper. Opening his eyes in the cool light of morning, Stiles found himself being held tightly against the wolf and Derek’s teeth gnawing on his ear, still caught within a dream. Although surprised by the wolf’s strange behavior and the fact his ear stung, he couldn’t help but to laugh at the situation and ran his hands over the other’s sculpted back. Derek shifted, the caresses slowly drawing him away from sleep, and as he did so his teeth lightened in pressure.

Derek seeming to realize what he’d been doing, sucked on the glaring ear, murmuring a ‘Sorry,’ against the human’s flesh.

“S’allright.” Stiles smiled.

When Derek released his hold and sat upright on the bed, Stiles frowned, suddenly cold and raised the bed sheets to wrap around his shoulders.

Derek appeared unsure of himself, raising a hand to toss unruly hair and glancing over to Stiles expectantly, as if waiting on orders of some kind to inform him of what it was he should do. Stiles could only grin at the awkward wolf, allowing the sheets to pool at his waist, he grasped the alpha’s shoulders for guidance as he straddled him.

“Morning,” Stiles greeted cheerily, hands joining Derek’s to thread in silky tresses.

Derek tilted his head to the side, calculating the human’s actions, but Stiles ignored the wolf’s analyzing gaze to lean forwards and press a chaste kiss upon the other’s slightly parted lips.

“Why don’t we do this; I’ll go down stairs and prepare breakfast while you shower and get ready for this fantastic day,” Stiles suggested, pressing his forehead against the alpha’s, breathing in deep, and nudging the other’s nose with his own.

“I didn’t bring a change of clothes,” Derek noted thoughtfully, a hand wandering to clasp Stiles’ thigh, his other on a hip and rubbing soothingly.

Stiles thought for a moment, “You could borrow some of my father’s. They should fit well enough.”

“I still need a toothbrush?”

“I have loads of them. My dentist is always handing them out,” Stiles assured.

“Alright.”

Stiles smiled brightly. He had Derek to himself for the whole day.

“Stiles.”

“Yeah?”

“I can’t ready myself with you astride me,” Derek voiced with amusement, the fond smile gracing his lips made Stiles melt.

“Oh! Right you are!” Stiles scrambled off the wolf and the bed, catching himself before landing face first on the ground and rushed for the door.
“I’ll find you something to wear,” Stiles called over his shoulder.

When Stiles entered the still room of his late father’s, he felt a sense of melancholy. The room smelled of peppermint, vanilla and witch hazel. It had been a long time since his father’s passing, yet the room still carried traces of his father. Stiles tried not to enter the room, nor leave the door open much, wanting to keep the scent bottled within for however long was possible. So that for the times he felt at his lowest, felt ready to fall and give in to despair, he’d be able to enter his father’s room, lie in his bed, and smell the sweetness of his scent.

Only each time he entered the room, he’d feel a swarm of sorrow and guilt take root, knowing he lost him, lost his father and it was his fault. He quickly sprinted for the dresser, grabbed the first articles of clothing he could find and just as quickly shut the door behind him on his way out.

Derek stood in the hallway, clad in his black boxer-briefs and pointing to the open bathroom to his side.

“I don’t know how to work the heat on the shower.”

Stiles bobbed his head in acknowledgement and entered the restroom followed after by the wolf. Stiles set the clothing on the counter and retrieved a sealed toothbrush from the lower cupboard; shower gel, tooth paste, deodorant spray, shaving cream, fresh razor, and aftershave from the medicine cabinet. Spinning to the shower, he switched the showerhead on while turning the knob to the far right, he felt the gushing cool water heat over and glanced over and met Derek’s gaze.

“That should do it. I’ll have breakfast prepared soon,” Stiles confirmed. He laid a hand upon the warmth of Derek’s chest, raised himself up on his toes, pressed a kiss to the alpha’s cheek and hastily exited the bathroom and shut the door behind him, face red.

“Okay…” Stiles breathed heavily, “I can do this,” With that said, he rushed the rest of the way down stairs towards the kitchen.

He spent a good while deciding what he should prepare for breakfast. Unable to make a solid choice he decided to make a variation of things. When he was done he scratched the back of his head and grinned foolishly at himself. He’d most probably—and when he said most probably, he meant most definitely, prepared far too much food for two people.

Splayed out on the kitchen table was set a large stack of pancakes, bowl of fruit salad, tray of scrambled eggs, omelets, strips of bacon, sausages, freshly squeezed orange juice, premade lemonade, milk, iced water, coffee and tea.

Geee, Stiles, Derek's a werewolf, not a boar. Stiles reprimanded himself.

Stiles’ attention drifted to the side staircase and towards the bounding wolf that swiftly ridded the distance between the two. Derek’s hair was damp, his flesh blossoming warmth from a tepid shower. The white dress shirt sleeves were folded just under his elbows, the first three buttons of the collar undone and exposed a hard smooth chest. Strong definite and muscular legs seemed snug, encased by pale navy denim jeans. The boots Derek wore held a military feel, buckles at the ankles studded and laced. The ensemble made Derek appear much like a rebel and Stiles couldn’t help but smile fondly. He could recall his father wearing the outfit on his days off, could remember the feel of the fabric brushing against his flesh as he was held in an affection embrace.

Stiles knew logically Derek wasn’t his father, but it didn’t stop him from taking the half step separating them to embrace the alpha close. Derek tensed a fraction, clearly unsure of himself, but an instant later he embraced the human just as close, a large palm smoothing over his back while
another massaged his scalp.

“Stiles...” Derek murmured, pressing lips against his temple in a kiss that wasn’t so much a kiss than brushing of lips.

“Derek,” Stiles hummed, pleasantly surprised and consumed by the scent that plagued his senses, the wolf smelled like the freshest and sweetest of elements of nature—his father, and potent earth—his own aroma.

As Stiles tilted his head under the alpha’s chin and scented him, he could detect hints of his own scent—his brand of soap, after shave, shampoo. All the scents mingled as one, twisting his insides with a sensation nearing nerve-wracking connection and contentment. Such an odd overwhelming feeling came over him, overriding his sense of thoughts, disordering them, and all he could do was nudge himself closer, hands grasping solid hips and reeling the other as close as humanly possible, and still it wasn’t enough, he wanted to be in Derek. He wanted to be completely and totally lost in the warmth, the smells and their embrace.

“Derek,” Stiles breathed enthused.

Derek cooed, actually cooed, just as a dove would, though the cooing was a noise similar to a feline purr and a wolf growling. It was so gentle, so soft, and so tender. Stiles never heard an animal make a sound quite like this. It fascinated his innate inquisitive nature, yet more than that, it sent a current of tranquility to engulf his very being and soul. It held an indescribable and unexplainable effect of lulling him. It swayed, rocked and glided Stiles deep into a place of safety and security. It seemed to mend his pains, the guilt of his father’s death, for the loss of Scott, and for his uncertainty and insecurities of their union.

Stiles was overcome by it all, falling, falling deep into Derek’s arms, into his soul.

*I love you.* Stiles finally acknowledged without hesitation, eyes stinging. *Derek... I really love you. You will never know just how much I love you.*

Stiles strangled out a cry of protest when Derek finally broke their embrace after long moments of cradling and the most beautiful of cooing ceased to exist.

A hand once stroking the human’s scalp slid to palm his face, and warm lips placed a kiss upon the brows of his teary eyes.

Stiles exhaled deep, he inhaled just as intensely, and raised up to claim the alpha’s lips in a slow intense kiss. Derek dipped, growing the kiss with zeal and purpose. A tongue grazed the crease of his lips, requesting admittance and Stiles moaned in accord, opening, impatiently greeting Derek’s before the other had a chance to fully slide in.

Stiles’ fingers slithered up the alpha’s chest and grasp the nape of his neck reeling him in close, kissing with intent. Just as soon as the kiss started, Stiles felt withdrawal strum through his blood when the alpha yanked back, breathing heavily, eyes shifting, flickering between hazel and scarlet.

Derek soothingly stroked Stiles’ cheek, smiling softly down at him, “Maybe we should eat. I’m sure you have plans that stray from...” Derek’s smile shifted with a knowing look that said more than words and Stiles blushed.

“Yer—um, you’re right,” Stiles conceded, stepping away, giving them space to compose themselves completely and glanced towards the table, flush deepening. “I didn’t know what to make, so I—appear to have made a buffet.”
Derek surveyed the table, lips twitching upwards, “It all looks appetizing, the question that should be asked is… is it?”

Stiles frowned at the insult. Every time Stiles warmed up to the alpha, Derek managed to do something to upset him.

“You don’t have to be an ass so early in the morning.” Stiles mumbled dejectedly under his breath, fiddling with his fingers and glancing to the ground. He really put his heart into preparing Derek a lovely breakfast and this was how he was repaid? He’d been bit by the rabid wolf.

Derek glanced over to him, smile widening and grasped a hold of the human, pulling him back and close, despite Stiles having given them space for that very reason.

“You’re cute when you pout,” Derek admired with good cheer.

Stiles tipped his head against the man’s shoulder and stared at the table and lovely gourmet (he liked to think so anyways) prepared banquet.

“You should respect my considerate nature, if not, I might not be so attentive next time,” Stiles grumbled, nudging the solid hip alongside his.

Derek pressed his lips against his forehead, lips tickling the human’s flesh as he spoke against him. “Stiles… I have the utmost respect for you.”

Stiles flushed all the more and smacked the alpha’s belly with the back of his hand, all playfully, flashing a resilient smile to the kindest of hazel depths.

“Stop being a sap and dig in.”

Stiles didn’t give Derek a chance to dig in, because he began stacking a plate full of food, so much so, that when he finished, it was stacked over and just about toppling together, mixing the food in a mess and shoved it against the alpha’s chest. He pitched a fork upwards nearly poking the alpha’s eye out in his eagerness.

“Eat up,” Stiles grinned amusedly at the look of wonder and apprehension.

“Stiles, are you trying to fatten me up?”

“Of course, I need to feel good about myself and marrying someone who looks like an Adonis isn’t fair,” Stiles teased. Derek huffed a breathless laugh, took the offered plate and fork before sitting himself at one end of the table.

Stiles then proceeded to make himself a plate, though only filling his plate with half the content, and not quite as much in portion as he’d done for Derek. When appeased with his items, he sat himself next to the alpha, scooted his seat until their chairs clanked together and their opposite leg plastered against the other’s.

Derek wrapped his arm around Stiles’ waist, pressing the man’s side into his, and continued to fork himself mouthfuls as Stiles did the same. They ate in silence for some time and when Stiles took note Derek finished his serving of fruit salad and focused his attention on the sausages, Stiles forked a row of strawberries, cantaloupe, and blackberries from his own plate. He raised the enormous forkful and allowed it to hover near the alpha’s mouth.

Derek laughed, honest to God laughed, no hiding or concealing his amusement. His hazel depths glinted in the light, bright and pleased as he dipped his head to take the offered forkful of fruit,
smirking as he chewed.

Leaning close to the flushing Stiles, Derek nudged his nose against the slighter’s, forked a bite size of sausage and offered his food to Stiles. He hadn’t expected Derek to offer him some of his food, even though he had a hefty amount of sausages on his own plate and more than several servings’ worth on the tray placed at the table.

Still, Stiles took the offered bite, smiled, chest puffed out boastfully, pleased to find Derek as attentive to his needs. The two then began feeding the other. Stiles offered his fruit salad, pancakes and eggs, while Derek offered up his sausages, bacon and omelets. By the time both plates were empty, Stiles felt sickly full and ready for a nap.

“Bed?” Stiles suggested and the alpha nodded in agreement.

When the two finally wandered back to the bedroom, Derek threw back the unmade sheets and opened his arms for the human. Stiles didn’t hesitate in accepting Derek’s voiceless offer, he happily wrapped his arms and leg around the alpha, tucking his head under his chin and fell into a deep sleep, far too tired to begin their bedtime chat.

Stiles woke later that afternoon alone in bed and cold without his life-sized heater.

“Derek?” Stiles called in the empty bedroom and heard the distinct sound of glass shattering. Without much thought he was rushing out the room, down the stairs and towards the kitchen, having heard the sliding of glass on tiled floors. When he entered the room he found Derek on his knees picking up what appeared to be a shattered piece of a serving tray.

Derek met Stiles questioning gaze with gracelessness and a crooked wry grin. “Did I wake you?”

“No… Derek… What are you doing?”

“I thought I’d clean up after you’d prepared our breakfast. I was just about done when I dropped the tray.”

“Oh… you didn’t have to. I would have cleaned up,” Stiles assured. Stepping around the bits of glass with bare feet and trash bin in hand, he raised the bin up for Derek to drop the shards of ceramic in.

“No. I wanted to. Why don’t you shower while I clean the rest? I’m almost done,” Derek suggested, retrieving the broom from the compartment near the edge of the room.

“Are you sure, I could help you before I—”

“I can tend to things here, really, ready yourself and we can go out,” Derek directed, taking hold of the trash bin in his vacant hand.

Stiles smiled gratefully and planted a kiss on the unsuspecting wolf’s lips. He laughed by the surprised expression that reflected back at him and scurried out the room still minding the bits of glass. Wagging his hips teasingly Stiles chanced a look back and found an equally amused alpha watching after him fondly.

After Stiles had showered, and took care of his hygiene routine. He chose to dress in his best; a fitted red t-shirt with a low v-neck accentuating his clavicle, dark denim jeans that hugged his legs
and bum, and checker gray and black Vans. Stiles made his grand appearance downstairs and to the
awaiting alpha leaning against the front door.

He reveled in the fact Derek’s gaze wandered the expanse of his body. His gaze lingered on his
neck, specifically his clavicle. Derek had already seen him naked more than once. Still, Stiles
always thought wearing clothes that revealed the littlest of flesh left more to the imagination. This
notion seemed evident and true for the fact Derek gazed on with intensity.

“Ready?” Derek cleared his throat, glancing anywhere but Stiles.

“Yup.”

Not having a specific place in mind Derek drove them around the city until Stiles suggest they go
to the town mall. There they spent several hours window shopping, which mostly entailed Stiles
looking at merchandise and Derek sighing heavily, uninterested. Apparently, Derek wasn’t one for
shopping and most times Stiles felt the same, but something about having Derek beside him as he
shopped gave him a sudden cheer and urge to search through merchandise, in search of something
that screamed ‘Derek.’

Stiles found black leather lovers’ gloves, a striped red and black scarf that matched one he had at
home and the most amusing black t-shirt that read, ‘Hazard: Take Ten Steps Back’ that he just
had

to get Derek. Derek grumbled and squirmed out of Stiles’ touchy grabby hands as he attempted to
read the shirt tag so he could affirm the brute’s precise size.

Stiles pouted a full lip whilst glaring daggers at the uncooperative brute and was forced to estimate
the wolf’s size. He bought the items, ignoring Derek when the wolf asserted there was no way in
hell he would wear any of the items.

Stiles just glared all the harder and bumped the alpha’s hip with his own and stated with much
bravado, “You will so.”

Derek responded with a roll of the eyes and a bump back, much harder, sending Stiles stumbling
into a coat rack. Stiles scowled and just about began spewing a rant when a glance at the alpha had
his heart melting once more, a sweet smile spreading to his face.

Derek’s features were flushed, his chest trembling as he grasped at his sides and he tipped over
slightly, harsh breaths gushing out of him with the softest of laughter. It sounded more like light
wispy whining hisses of amusement, but it must have been contagious because Stiles began
laughing just as hard. He stumbled towards Derek, one hand managing to hold the shopping bag
while grasping the alpha’s shoulder and his other clutched to his convulsing stomach.

Derek tipped his forehead against Stiles’, eyes brightly shinning with amusement and fondness as
he mumbled merrily, “Idiot,” and continued hissing laughter.

Stiles should be mad that the alpha just insulted him for his lack of intelligence, but he could only
smile all the more, laugh all the harder and nuded the alpha’s nose with his.

They leaned against each other and Stiles contented in the warmth of Derek’s arm wrapped around
his waist holding him close as they wandered to the food court. They purchased some fruit
smoothies and sat in a booth near the children’s playpen.

Derek drank his beverage in contented silence, staring warmly at Stiles, seeming unaware of the
stares of Beacon Hills citizens, though Stiles knew that couldn’t be so, Derek was too alert for that.
Stiles was becoming accustomed to the stares and tried focusing on something, giving his full
attention on whatever it was to help distract him. Now it happened to be Derek.

Stiles smiled shyly, cheeks heating, biting into his straw when he realized he’d been staring across the table and at Derek for a good several minutes. He laughed at himself and Derek flashed a knowingly crooked smirk.

Stiles’ attention was drawn to a playpen and the piercing howl of a child lament. He watched as a toddler seeming to have fallen on his pudgy knees was lifted by what he assumed was the mother, the woman held the child close and cooed sweetly while rocking the baby and it appeased the boy. Stiles smiled adoringly towards the nurturing mother and child.

“You like children?”

Stiles was startled, having almost forgotten where they were and that the alpha sat across from him.


Derek’s features seemed to tense and Stiles paled.

“Uuuh… that is… um… it was just a thought. I mean, we can’t… because we’ll be… and you don’t love me… and… Aw, just kill me. See, before you proposed, I wanted children—that’s not to say I don’t want them anymore—I mean! I love children—Lydia says I’m like the baby whisperer because children love me… and… I’m still talking? Oh my God, shoot me, just—yeah, shoot me,” Stiles groaned miserably, smacking the heel of his palm against his forehead before glancing apprehensively towards the wolf that was stone cold of any emotion and whined helplessly.

Why couldn’t you just shut your trap Stiles! Why! Why-ie-ie-ie-ie-ie-eeeeeeeeeee! I hate you life, I hate you ADHD, I hate you tongue and mouth! Teeth gnaw tongue off and never say a stupid thing again. Oh…my…God…is Derek… blushing? Yes…he’s…

“You’re blushing?” Stiles blurted and could have killed himself then.

Derek looked away, coughed, cleared his throat, sat straighter and stared at the table.

“We should really talk about the wedding if we are to marry in two months.”

“What? You want to plan the wedding together?”

“If you rather do it alone—”

“No! I’d love your help,” Now Stiles was blushing.

“So um… I was planning on meeting up with Allison and Lydia to assist with the preparations. We should all work on it together.”

“Just let me know when.”

Stiles shifted his gaze from his hands and to the alpha whose features seemed all the rosy, his hazel depths staring so intently at the table before him.

Swallowing thickly, Stiles forced his nerves to stop wreaking havoc on his body.

The two finished their drinks in silence, listing to the distant chatter, screams, cries and laughter of the children nearby, features blossoming all the more.
They decided to watch a film in the indoor theater within the mall and chose to watch the final installment of Star Wars in 3D. The theater played both new and old films, but the newer ones were lost to him and the older ones, specifically Star Wars was a classic and well-loved film.

They sat in silence beside one another in the nearly deserted theater. Stiles glanced towards Derek who was completely focused on the film. He stared at the alpha for the first half hour before gulping back his fears and took hold of the man’s hand in his own, embracing it with both of his. Derek said nothing, still focused on the film, but he tilted his head against Stiles’ and threaded their fingers together.

Stiles stroked the smooth flesh of the alpha's knuckles with his free hand, sighed deeply, pressed his head against Derek's shoulder and finally started watching the film.
When the film came to an end, it was late evening, and Stiles was adamant they head back home and stroked the wolf’s arm when voicing his preference. Derek rumbled deep within his chest and led the way out of the mall towards the Camaro.

When Stiles finally unlocked the door of the home, he latched his lips on Derek’s, and shoved the larger man up the stairs. Derek growled feral and animalistic, hastily removing his coat and shirt then did the same for the human.

Stiles laughed when Derek stumbled back on a particular step of the stairs and hauled him on the stairs with him. Derek flashed an agitated scowl in reply, assisting the trembling with laughter Stiles to his feet as he rose himself. Stiles shoved the man’s shoulders back and up the final steps at the top of the staircase and led the rest of the way to the bedroom.

With one final shove, Derek fell back onto the bed. Stiles removed the rest of his clothing until he stood in front of the alpha completely nude, enjoying when those hazel depths drank him up, shifting bright coccineous.

Kneeling at the foot of the bed and between the alpha’s legs, Stiles stroked the rough fabric of jeans, caressing at the warmth radiating through the cloth.

“Stiles,” Derek breathed headily, a hand cupping his face, another stroking his short hair.

Stiles smiled uncertainly, twitching nimble fingers working at the alpha’s clasp. It felt odd—though they’ve already been together—to remove the man’s clothes himself. When Stiles hooped his fingers through pants and the waistbands of his undergarment, Derek raised his hips, and Stiles dragged them the rest of the way down to the ankles. He took his time unknotting each boot lacing, slipping them off and followed after with the rest of the man’s clothing.

Derek’s hardness was swelled, glaringly flushed and in need of attention. Rigged veins strumming coursed through and the man’s hung fortitude tightly pressed against his sculpted abdomen.

Raising himself up, Stiles gripped broad shoulders and hoisted himself onto the bed to straddle the alpha’s lap and he seated himself against his taunt rectus femoris thighs.

Leaning down to press his lips against the tip of Derek’s nose, he kissed the soft flesh there, dragging his lips up along a fluttering madder depth and kissed it fondly. Trailing his kisses to a thick brow, he took in the scent of the alpha’s hair that distinctly smelled of brown sugar and honey. Whining softly, Stiles’ kisses drifted away from Derek’s forehead as the alpha’s fingers grazed his head, claws lengthening and digging just the slightest amount of pressure along soft tissue.

Reeling back, Stiles remained still, just staring at the alpha, breathing heavily when lustful vibrant depths stared at him with a need unparallel to any he’d ever known possible. Madder depths mirrored his own desires in kind.

Derek exhaled deep, laying back against the bed and allowing the Sheriff to take control. Submitting once more, requesting was unnecessary. It seemed as if the alpha wished Stiles take control and dominate him, mark him, scent him, mate him. The thought however fictitious warmed his heart. He would have liked to think Derek truly wished to have him, but knew this was nothing more than bonding. This was a union of compromises and propositions, there was no love, and
there could never be love. Still, Stiles would never forget these moments. Never forget the way Derek’s gaze softened, orbs glinted the lightest of scarlet, the parting of pale lips, breathless whines that begged Stiles move and claim him. Never forget the warmth and welcoming touches that followed.

Never...

Lowering himself fully, their lips met and the alpha’s tongue slipped through the Sheriff’s inviting passages, corded around his, gliding further and grazed the roof of his mouth, tasting. Immersing himself in the flavor of strawberries, peaches, and tangy sweet nectar—the fruit smoothie still lingering and something else, singularly Derek.

“Derek…” Stiles moaned urgently when Derek bucked up and connected their receptive arousals in a constant friction.

“Tell me what you want,” Derek whispered into Stiles’ ear, dragging a tongue across heated flesh and bit into the shell.

A gurgled groan escaped Stiles’ parted lips, licking and dampening them he whined as Derek nibbled the flesh of his tender ear. The alpha’s ragged breathing, grazing of lips along his skin and wet lapping was far too intense and sharp in this particular ear.

“All of you… Just…” Stiles tucked his head under Derek’s jaw, whimpering, “You, please, Derek, please.”

Derek chuckled softly at Stiles’ urgency, nudging his nose indulgently. Stiles exhaled heavily when the alpha grasped his hips, guiding him down and against his pulsing hardness. His other hand grasped a hold of them and stroked their adulthoods along the other, fondled their base and hard-pressed them together.

A resonating hum rumbled, graveling and grating against Stiles’ ear as the wolf came out little by little; body bulking, ears sharpening, teeth lengthening, claws growing all the prominent—mindful in their movements.

Stiles was growing ever dizzy, lightheaded, drifting in a swirl of sensations of feelings. His eyes fluttered drowsily in the lull of bliss, floating in an ever constant current of gratification and a swell of love.

“Derek…” Stiles murmured languorously, nose nudging the alpha’s neck, up a definite jaw, gruff stubble, along the corner of a mouth, and tilted his head to lap at the alpha’s lips and jutting fangs, breathing harshly. “Want you.”

Derek snarled, fangs grazing the human’s lips, his tongue slithered out and lapped eagerly against the human’s lips.

“Claim me,” Derek urged, driving hips forward, a hand working all the more fiercely along their lengths and Stiles was teetering over the edge and he knew at any moment now he would burst.

“Der—rek, Derek—stop—I—fuck!” Stiles groaned lowly, bucking wildly, falling over the edge, the ringing of ecstasy flowing in his ears, heated love splattered against the both of them.

Stiles gripped tightly onto the alpha’s shoulders, tipping his full weight against the wolf, his continuous groans deepening as Derek proceeded to pump his post-orgasmic length, milking him for all he was worth. When he spurted the last of his life essence, he leaned harshly against the alpha’s shoulder, before untangling himself from the man and landing on his side against the bed.
He raised a hand for Derek to take, but the man glanced to the floor and back to him in a struggle of precedence, and Stiles suddenly realized the ringing in his ears was not of ecstasy but the alpha’s phone ringing.

“Don’t,” Stiles deadpanned, raised a brow in warning, wanting more, needing to please the alpha and work his way back for another round.

“It could be important.”

Stiles’ eyes narrowed in forewarning, “Don’t you even think about it. Not now. Not for a long while.”

Derek’s lips pursed in a displeased scowl and glanced towards his pants on the floor, the cell in one of the pockets falling silent. Stiles smiled with satisfaction raising himself to his knees and wrapped his arms from behind Derek, nuzzling the alpha’s neck.

“See. Come on. Let me take care of you,” Stiles whispered, sucking against the brooding wolf’s neck, felt the rumbling ensue and slid his legs to press against the alpha’s, sitting himself behind him, feet dangling on the foot of the bed.

Wrapping a loose hold of the alpha’s arousal he stroked twice before the blasted cell rung once more. Tightening his hold still wrapped around the alpha’s chest, he worked persistently, fondling the alpha in quick firm strokes, fisting the base, and flicking his wrist every upward pull.

Derek groaned lewdly, rocking his hips upwards, hands grasping the human’s hips from behind him, tipping his head back and rolling to nudge the human’s cheek.

“Stiles—I—Stiles” Derek struggled to make sense of his words, but they broke when Stiles thumb brushed the slit of his head.

“Fuck me,” Derek whined as the phone once again died away.

Stiles sucked in a shaky breath, his own arousal growing to full hardness by the alpha’s plea, pressing against a muscular lower back and pulsed with its own need.

When the phone rang for a third time, Stiles cried in protest as Derek growled against him, tensing, and as he feared, grasped a hold of his wrist stilling him of his movements. He disentangled from out of the human’s grasp, lifted himself off the bed, retrieved the cell from his pants, and answered with a breathless growl, “What!”

A moment of silence passed as Stiles sat agitatedly against the bed staring up at Derek’s nude form trembling slightly. He watched Derek’s exasperated and incensed features softened into contemplative worry.

“What?” Derek asked far more softly this time. “Who? … Where is he now? … No, don’t do that. I’m on my way. Gather the rest of the pack and hold him off as long as you can.” With that said Derek hung up and glanced apologetically at the human.

“No, don’t even,” Stiles groused, already knowing their night together had come to an end.

“Derek!”

“Stiles, I have to go. An alpha in a nearby district has shifted… something’s caused him to change and he’s not shifting back. I’m the only one who can contend with him in his full form and if I don’t get there in time… I have to leave now.”
Stiles silently seethed, eyes narrowed furiously, features livid, knowing Derek truly had a valid reason for calling off their bonding. Still, it didn’t mean he had to accept it. He glared mournfully as the alpha slipped his atrous boxer-briefs and pants on, hesitating in exiting the room, his shirt and coat splayed out somewhere on the staircase.

“How far and how long will this take?” Stiles griped despondently.

Derek exhaled heavily, treaded the distance between the two, clamped Stiles’ face with his large palms and claimed his lips in a firm kiss. His now blunt teeth grazing the human’s bottom lip, nibbling it affectionately, before pulling away.

“I will try my best to come soon.”

Stiles nodded in comprehension, nudging the alpha’s nose, “M’kay, hurry.”

Derek flashed a grateful smile and planted a chaste kiss to the human’s forehead before rushing out the room. A moment later, Stiles heard the front door open and thud shut and groaned agitatedly, falling back into the bed. Regardless that their bonding was ruined, Stiles couldn’t help but smile. He got to spend so much time with the alpha; about a day and night worth. Their time together could have been considered a date, but they both knew that it wasn’t the case. Still, Stiles laughed merrily at the thought he and Derek had spent a day doing so many things a couple would on a date.

He would never have thought Derek could be so kind and warm, yet each day he spent with the alpha the man expressed his true consideration. He almost felt like a school girl, warm and fuzzy with admiration and love for his crush. Only, his crush was an alpha—his fiancé, and his soon to be mate.

Sometimes his life felt surreal, so unreal, and that at any moment he’ll awake and find this was all a fanciful dream of an alternate universe, but he won’t and it wasn’t. It was October now, in two more months they would marry, Derek would mate with him and he knew his life would never be the same. His life changed the moment he met the alpha when plotting their attack on Peter, when he let the alpha into his home, when he accepted the wolf’s proposal and it was changing once more.

He wondered if these changes were for the good, because once married and mated they’d be tied together forever. True mates bonded and wed, yet unable to be close as they were now. Was that really what he wanted? He knew he couldn’t back out now. Derek’s wolf accepted him and Stiles didn’t like the idea of breaking their bond. However, he didn’t like the idea of being so close to Derek, living in the same home in separate rooms, eating their meals together and not being able to feed and be fed in return. He didn’t think he could stand living with the alpha and never being able to touch, hold, kiss and love Derek again.

He really didn’t know what to do. Stiles was so completely out of his element and unsure of himself. The answers were truly lost to him. All he knew for sure was these feelings that seemed to have blossomed in a matter of a month were true, ingrained and branded on his heart, and this love, his love...was the one thing driving him to have more of the alpha, all for the fear of losing it once wed and claimed.
Stiles was not too pleased when he spent the remainder of his night in bed, waking every thirty minutes to an hour later. He would glare at his counter and the clock resting on it, tuck his head under the pillow, namely Derek’s, inhale sharply and try to go back to bed. Derek’s scent would soothe him only for several moments before he’d wake unsettled at not having the alpha’s arms around him, consumed by his warmth. He’d grown far too accustomed to the brute’s presence.

The next morning Stiles woke to the relentless ringing of his doorbell and harsh knocking. Grumbling the whole way downstairs, the Sheriff swung the front door open with a contemptuous glare.

His eyes narrowed at whom stood before him. “What do you want so early in the morning?”

Lydia smiled warmly, batting her long lashes flirtatiously. “Don’t be such a sourpuss,” She complained whilst wrapping her arms around him and pulling him in close, shaking him from side to side with the force of her fierce bear hug.

Stiles frowned even though he indulged the woman when she tightened her hold.

“Did you at least bring breakfast?” Stiles noted with hopefulness.

“No,” Lydia dashed his optimism.

“I hate you.”

Uproarious laughter erupted from out of the wolf. “So grouchy this morning,” She observed and Stiles mentally agreed with her, but it was all Derek’s fault.

“She might not have brought breakfast, but I did.” Allison chipped in, popping out of nowhere, carrying with her a pink box full of unknown delights.

Stiles brightened, shoved Lydia to the side and made a beeline to the dark haired beauty.

“I love you!” Stiles' eyes shone with the utmost adore and it was all directed to the box the dark haired beauty held.

Stiles snatched the box from out of the woman’s hands, raised it to his nose and smelled past the cardboard and at the sweetness of pastries.

Allison smiled cheerily, grasped the distracted man’s head and pulled him down to plant a sloppy lip glossed kiss of greeting against his cheek before treading alongside an amused Lydia to the kitchen. Stiles carried the pastries with a childish grin, following contentedly.

After the three sat themselves on the kitchen stools and around the counter, Lydia retrieved her laptop from the leather satchel clapped about her shoulder. She set it up on the counter, and plugged the charger in the outlet on the lower part of the counter near the cupboards.

Stiles was far too distracted helping himself to an apple fritter to take note of this, once he had, he raised a quizzical brow.

“What are you doing?” He garbled through a mouthful of sweets.
Lydia sat erect and gleeful. “Allison and I thought it time we put this wedding into full gear.”

Stiles choked on his food. “What?” He blanched, he wasn’t ready for planning, and he knew logically he should be, but still…it felt too soon. He was hoping he could hold it off for another month.

Allison brushed at the crumbs layering Stiles’ gridelin robe, smiling just as bright as the wolf across them.

“Why don’t you get your flash drive full of wedding ideas?”

“How—how—do you know that?” Stiles’ eyes bulged. He had never told anyone about the flash drive.

Allison rolled her eyes, huffed an agitated breath of restlessness and smacked the man’s shoulder, “You become such a lovelorn sap when drunk. You’re always saying when you meet Mr. Right you will have a fairytale wedding.”

“What? I never said that,” Stiles refuted and Lydia barked with laughter.

“How else would we know your ideal wedding theme colors are sapphire blue and vibrant red, or that you wish to marry at Alder Lake. As a matter of fact, I distinctly recall a very drunk and horny Stiles commenting that his honeymoon would be at Fergusons’ lodge far off in the woods so no one could hear just how satisfied Mr. Right—”

“Oookay, I’ll just go upstairs—and—and—and retrieve that flash drive!” Stiles stammered, a heated flush marring his features at the distant piercing females cackling like amused hyenas.

Stiles returned several minutes later and shoved the flash drive in Lydia’s outstretched hand with a grimace. Lydia winked pleased while Allison beamed with a twinkle in her eyes. Stiles helped himself to another sweet while Lydia looked over Stiles’ wedding documents.

Glancing to the beauty beside him, Stiles gulped his mouthful of food and noted softly, “How’s Scott?”

Allison set her cinnamon bun on the napkin placed before her, turned kind eyes to the Sheriff and flashed an encouraging smile, “I’m working on him.”

“Do you think…he’ll come to the wedding?”

“Stiles…”

“I know,” Stiles exhaled heavily, he knew Allison would try her hardest, but Scott was a stubborn man and it would take a great amount of effort to work through his stubbornness and stupidity (or that was how Stiles viewed Scott’s stubbornness).

“Lydia told me about Derek being your true mate.” Allison broached cautiously, stilling Stiles of his thoughts concerning Scott in that moment.

“She did?” Stiles gushed surprised and apprehensive of just how Allison would feel about this unearthing revelation he’d come to know only recently himself.

She smiled warmly, kindly full of support. “I’m glad the man you’ll be binding yourself to was meant for you.”
“You think so?”

“I do.” She confirmed considerately.

Stiles nodded in affirmation, frayed, he wished he was more certain on his union as Lydia and Allison seemed to be.

Scooting her stool closer to the man beside her, she nudged his shoulder playfully, “Meanwhile, Scott will be going without sex. I thought that would speed up his acceptance of your union with Derek.”

Stiles choked out a laugh that soon altered into a pained groan and he shook his head in an attempt to rid the images of a hard, hot and bothered Scott going through sexual withdrawal.

“You’re evil. I sooo did not need to know that,” Stiles hissed with a contemptuous glare.

Allison brightened all the more.

“So, first things first: location. Who wants to make the calls?” Lydia determined, glancing between the two human’s before her expectantly.

Several hours passed and throughout that time, Stiles fiddled with his cell, texting Derek with no reply.

8:20AM
Lydia and Allison came over to plan the wedding. Will you come and participate?

8:45AM
We just booked the wedding location.

8:50AM
Where are you? Are you ignoring me again?

9:00AM
Do you want a DJ or live band for the reception?

9:01AM
Derek…I will make these decisions without you if you don’t reply.

9:02 AM
I mean it.

9:03AM
I’m serious.

9:10AM
It’s a DJ.

…
Jerk.

9:32AM
We’ve booked a DJ, decided on the florist and chosen the floral arrangements. We’re working on the members of the wedding party. I’ve chosen mine, who do you want for yours. Do you want a flower girl? Lydia has a six year old niece who could do it.
10:12AM
Damn it, Derek. Reply back. You can’t be so busy you can’t tell me a simple yes or no.

10:13AM
I hate you.

10:14AM
Don’t even bother saying I don’t, because I do. You suck. You’re an ungrateful brute of a fiancé who is always ignoring me. I thought you wanted this, to be a part of the planning. Don’t come. I don’t care anymore. Just find a suit and come to the wedding. Bastard.

Stiles sent the text with narrowed beady eyes, glaring at his unresponsive phone when a cell buzzed with life. Stiles first thought it was his, then the girls, but when their gazes were focused behind him, he suddenly felt a disturbance in the force—

*Am I really going there, apparently I am.*

He glanced over his shoulder and towards an agitated Derek Hale. While texting he’d been far too busy to notice the brute enter the unlocked kitchen door, the brute furiously strutted towards his suddenly crouching form.

When the alpha smacked him beside the head, hard enough to sting, he recoiled for one moment, though sneered a second afterwards, straightened and smacked the alpha’s shoulder.

“When I said I’d come as soon as I could, I meant it. Instead, my whole way back I struggled staying on the road reading text after text.” Derek snapped, angrily seating himself beside the human, sliding Stiles’ stool away from Allison’s and closer to his own.

Stiles didn’t seem to notice when his head throbbed glaringly and his frustrations doubled. “You could have messaged me back! Pulled over to do so, called me even. How was I to know!” Stiles groused, socking the bicep closest to him.

Derek growled with warning, but Stiles didn’t seem to care, “You have no right to be angry with me, and thanks to your evasiveness, again, we’ve just about finished without any input from your sorry ass.” Stiles simmered, punching the alpha’s bicep, paused with a moment’s thought before punching him twice more, just as hard. A total of four punches and it still wasn’t enough to appease his frustrations.

Hazel depths narrowed into forewarning slits, gleaming madder, rage evident in the alpha’s gaze.

“Well then, we’ll just have to call whoever back and change the plans to suit both our preferences. Also, I want a live band, no DJ’s.”

“We’ve already confirmed—”

“Un-confirm it then.”

“Just because you now have the time, you want me to change—”

“Yes.” Derek asserted and Stiles scowled.

“No.”

“Yes.”
“I said no.”

“I said yes.”

“You can’t tell me what to do.”

“Yes I can.”

“Why’s that?”

“I’m the alpha.”

“I’m not a wolf and I’m not a part of your pack.” Stiles might have just crossed some line when Derek looked positively homicidal, fangs bearing, a deep vibrating growl rumbling out of him, still, Stiles wouldn’t back down. He’d been able to tame the beast more than once, and he was pretty sure he could do so again.

“You are a part of my pack.” Derek deadpanned, leaning close, their faces inches apart.

Derek appeared as if at any moment he could shift and eat him whole, and for some odd reason that pleased and amused Stiles to no end. He couldn’t help the giddiness he felt at being able to perturb the alpha to react so. To cause Derek to become so possessive over him and his need to confirm that Stiles was a part of his pack. He didn’t want to stop the words from tumbling out with mirth. “Make me.”

Derek gazed incredulously, long moments passing. As the moments came and went the alpha’s features relaxed, shoulders sagged, and with playfulness he ruffled the human’s fuzzed head while reclining back and away.

“Aw, you two make the cutest couple ever!” Allison mused, a wide grin plastered on her face, and Stiles was suddenly brought back to the present and that he and Derek just…in front of his friends. True they didn’t do much but argue, but the arguing was more playful bantering between the two bonding in their union. Blushing heatedly, Stiles looked away from Allison’s delight and Lydia’s satisfaction; they seemed to be enjoying this far more than they should.

“Shut up,” Stiles mumbled abashed, head bowed low and cheeks red.

“Well then, Allison, why don’t you call the DJ to cancel our request. I’ll set meeting with bands around town for a test performance.” Lydia ordered, directing her attention once more towards her laptop a wide grin in place.

Stiles glanced towards the wolf beside him and blushed all the more when Derek fiddled with his cell and focused on the last text message sent by the human. A powerful arm wrapped around Stiles waist and pulled him close. The alpha’s gaze rose a moment later; the wolf then inched his face closer to Stiles’. When there were mere centimeters of distance between their lips, a malicious smile curled across the alpha’s lips and Stiles’ stomach churned with dread.

“Is that how you really feel?” Derek snarled, fangs sharpening.

Stiles glanced over to the women for help; Allison was distracted and caught up in her conversation with the DJ while Lydia typed away. The redhead glanced up as if sensing his gaze, flashed pearly white teeth, winked good-humoredly and continued with whatever it was she was doing… the bitch.
“Bitch.” Stiles hissed his thoughts.

“Excuse me?” Derek growled and Stiles whined helplessly.

“Oh come off it Derek, no one means what they say through texting. It’s like—void in all things conversation…” Stiles didn’t know what the hell he was saying.

Derek’s brows furrowed as if attempting to grasp the meaning of Stiles’ words, falling short evoked another growl.

“Derek. You can’t kill me.” Stiles protested, leaning further away, curling his legs around his chair and hopped back a foot away from the agitated wolf and closer to Allison.

Derek’s orbs flashed a second before his stool was dragged back towards Derek’s personal space and the alpha dove for his attack. It happened so fast, Stiles never expected it. One moment he was sitting beside Allison, the next Derek hauled him against his body, dipped his head at the junction of his neck, and nipped at his tendon there, hard enough to bruise though not enough to break skin. Stiles squawked in disbelief, attempted to jump out of his seat and dash off, only the alpha’s arms were wrapped around his waist, firmly holding him close.

Stiles distinctly heard Allison giggling and Lydia’s hysterical strangled sniggering. Stiles turned several shades of crimson before he was sure he was going to die of embarrassment. Suddenly, coming to realize Derek was playing with him much like a cat with a mouse, watching him squirm and squawk in fear, enjoying it all as he toyed with him much like the mouse he now was, before going in for the kill and mischievously gnawing at his neck.

“I hate you.” Stiles groused vehemently, bowing his head against the alpha’s shoulder shielding his heated face, though frustrated the slight trembling of the alpha against his body and the curving of his lips digging into his neck seemed to lighten his spirits and cause his stomach to knot nervously.

When Derek pulled away a hard scowl was put into place, “Stop being an idiot,” was his only reply, yanking him against his chest, arm wrapped possessively around his waist as he finally addressed the girls.

“So who’s going to be the flower girl?”

Lydia and Allison bounced in their seats, giddy at the show of affection between the two, glancing to one another before meeting the hard gaze of the alpha.

“My cousin’s daughter, Abigail. She’s just the sweetest thing you ever did see. I think I have a photo of her on my phone. Hold on.” Lydia began shuffling through her pink bedazzled phone while Allison finished her call and clapped her hands eagerly when she did.

“Stiles, oh my God, you two are so adorable like that—hey Lydia, take a picture of them!” Allison suggested excitedly.

“No!” Stiles deadpanned, struggling to untangle himself from out of the alpha’s hold, rocking on his stool in his efforts, face hot, heart thumping so loudly he was sure the wolves’ could hear.

Derek’s lips grazed his brow, nose nudging his forehead, breathing him in heavily.

“Come now, Stiles, you shouldn’t disappoint your friends.” Derek gushed, sickly sweet against his flesh, lips pressing a lengthy kiss at his temple. Stiles’ struggles came to a halt at the public display of affection, heart stilling for one moment in time before speeding.
“Derek.” Stiles rasped, eyes shutting, feeling faint, so hot, his flushed being mixed with the alpha’s always heated body far too much for his poor nerves to tolerate.

When the flash and snapping of a photo sounded he distantly acknowledged it for he was far too lost in the sensations caused by the alpha. He sagged against the man’s hold, tilting his head against the alpha’s chin, opened his eyes and stared at the beaming women before him lazily, completely giving in to the comforting embrace and affections of the alpha.

The women chattering were far too animated and speedy for his sluggish mind to follow; however, Derek seemed to follow their ranting. The deep rumblings of the alpha’s chest as he spoke, and the nodding of his chin against his head registered through Stiles’ daze the three were conversing over the wedding. Every once in a while words would registered within his mind; wedding cake, flowers, color theme, music genre, female vs. male vocalist, invitations, guest lists, etcetera, etcetera, etcetera. None of it made much sense; he was far too caught up in the warmth of the wolf. His restlessness seemed to make a sudden reappearance when he felt soothed and lulled into a drowsy haze, wishing for sleep—to sleep in the man’s arms.

When Stiles’ eyes drooped shut, he knew he should be fighting off the sleep, but he didn’t want to. He felt contented, at peace and safe in the alpha’s arms. The soothing warmth of the alpha sent peace and tranquility. Lydia’s and Allison’s voices mixing with Derek’s resonating timber of vocals dulled as darkness wrapped him in a calming and rejuvenating rest and he yielded to its entrancing lull.
Drunk Antics

Color Adjectives:

Atrous: Jet black.
Madder: Red or Orange-red.

Stiles woke later that afternoon to heated breath brushing against his neckline as smooth lips grazed his flesh in stirring kisses, slowly beckoning him to awareness. He was taken aback to find he lay in bed with the alpha holding him from behind.

“Afternoon,” Derek greeted and sucked at his tendon, humming contentedly.

Stiles groaned with mortification, recalling that morning, how Derek acted and how he responded. Burrowing his head into his pillow, Stiles whined helplessly, mumbling his feeling against the plush pillow, yet his words were lost in cotton.

“What?” Derek, no matter how good of hearing he was, struggled to attain clarity in Stiles’ statement.

“I can’t believe you did that in front of my friends,” Stiles repeated and craned his neck to peer up at the satisfied alpha.

“I like to think of it as being karma’s little helper,” Derek remarked as a matter-of-fact.

“There is nothing little about you,” Stiles snipped hotly.

Derek smirked arrogantly and Stiles moaned with frustration. “I didn’t mean it like that. Get your mind out of the gutter.”

“How did you mean it then?”

“That…you know…you’re big; tall, all muscles, therefore—not little.”

“Are you attracted to my muscular frame?” Derek smiled broadly, teasing the slighter.

Stiles flushed, stared off and away from the brute, though he raised a hand to caress the wolf’s sculpted forearm and felt at the warmth through a white short-sleeve shirt.

“Derek…” Stiles breathed softly, wishing to ignore the man’s attempt to get a rise out of him, finding their closeness was a distraction in itself. “Please, kiss me.”

Shutting his eyes, wishing to remain blind to the alpha’s reaction he waited for lips to claim his own. When their lips collided, he exhaled heavily through his flaring nostrils and opened his mouth without being further prompted to do so. The alpha grunted deep through his chest, the resonance filling the room in victorious thrumming as Stiles was willingly opening himself up to the man.

Derek pressed himself completely on top of him and Stiles mewled pleadingly, spreading his legs welcomingly. When Derek rubbed his pant encased crotch against the folds of Stiles’ robe, his
lower region awakened and an earnest whine escaped.

“Please, I want you,” Stiles begged.

Derek broke their brief kisses and began sucking at his neck, loving the flesh, nipping and bruising.

“Stiles—I… I want to claim you,” Derek breathed against his flesh and Stiles stiffened at the request.

He wasn’t so knowledgeable about werewolves and mating, but what Stiles did know was to be claimed meant you were bonded to your partner. Stiles claimed Derek, therefore Derek was bonded to him and was now his mate, but Stiles had yet to be claimed. Once claimed by Derek the wolves mating matrimony would be affirmed and they would be married by werewolf custom.

Derek mentioned soon after propositioning Stiles they would wait until legally married and this would give Stiles time to accustom himself with the alpha, bond with him and set him at ease. Now, however, Derek was changing up their initial plans. He wanted to claim Stiles as his, to mate with him, finish their bonding, and with it, everything would come to an end.

“Stiles,” Derek breathed insistently, a hand snaking through the folds of his robe, caressing an inner thigh before rising further up and through the opening of his briefs.

Stiles groaned deeply, arching up from the bed and against Derek’s chest, gasping stridently as the wolf fondled his sack.

“Derek—I—”

“Please. Let us mate and complete the bond,” Derek sounded so insistent, desperate. “I want this.”

Stiles wanted this too. He wanted Derek. He wanted to offer himself to the alpha willingly, give himself completely, bond and mate. He wanted to know this was permanent, that Derek and he were mated for life, but…he couldn’t. By finishing the ritual the bonding would end. He’d be claimed, married by werewolf tradition, and in two months, married legally. But the last two months of bonding would be unneeded because they would have finished the werewolf bonding process.

“I… Derek—I really—I want—but—” Stiles struggled to voice his thoughts, even though he fell short, and knew he made little sense. His heart sped, fear coursed through him, and his eyes stung at the thought of giving into this one moment of bliss only to lose many more moments.

Abruptly, Derek’s heated hand was gone, his soft kisses vanished, and his weight lifted off of him. Stiles lay in bed, cold and abandoned while the alpha shuffled to sit at the foot of the bed. Stiles sat up, straightened his robe, and crawled to silently take a seat beside the voiceless alpha.

Derek’s head was dipped low, staring at his boots, hands clasped together and resting on his knees, shoulders bent forward and slouched.

“I shouldn’t have asked,” Derek finally said.

“It’s alright.”

“No it’s not. You’re not ready. You don’t know me—not really. I’m just forcing you to marry and mate with me. I can’t expect you to agree after a month of bonding… I just thought—”

“Thought what?” Stiles was curious now, but Derek remained tightlipped, not wishing to voice his
Stiles scooted closer to the broodingly silent alpha, pressing his leg against the unvoiced brute’s, leaning his shoulder alongside the wolf’s, and tipped his head to rest on Derek’s shoulder.

“’You’re not forcing me, Derek,” Stiles disputed the alpha’s earlier claims and this seemed to cause the alpha to relax slightly and to raise his gaze and meet the human’s with question.

“I’m not?”

“No,” Stiles smiled kindly. “I made this decision myself. Our union will bring peace between our two species. I knew what I was getting myself into. Don’t feel like you forced this onto me,” Stiles comforted.

Glancing down, the alpha exhaled heavily before rising from off of the bed. He made his way to the door and paused exiting.

“Lydia and Allison left when you fell asleep. They would like us to join them for drinks at Brady’s Pub tonight at eight. I have some things I…need to do. I’ll meet you there,” With that said, the brooding wolf parted, and for some reason or another, Stiles couldn’t bring himself to stop him—maybe it was because if it really would please the alpha—he would willingly allow Derek to claim him and with it destroy himself.

All he knew was he’d hurt the alpha and he couldn’t understand why.

When Stiles arrived at the Irish themed pub, he spotted Lydia and Allison situated in the unusual booth they occupied when dinning there. They seemed deep in conversation while snacking on spiced nachos. As Stiles approached them, Lydia seemed to sense his presence, glanced over her shoulder just as Allison took note he’d arrived.

They smiled and screeched their greeting of, “Stiiiiiles!”

Stiles grinned merrily, several empty glasses of alcoholic beverages were set on the table, and it was quite obvious they were drunk.

“Guess you started the party without me,” Stiles teased, sliding in and sat beside Allison.

“Nooo, we just had a little bit to drink, just a little tiny bit, not even enough to get hung-over,” Allison guaranteed, words slurring every which way.

The Sheriff laughed at Allison’s attempt of denying what was so evidently the case. He good-naturedly patted the woman’s thigh and flagged a waitress, gesturing to the ladies fruity drinks and ordered them three more of whatever it was. The waitress noted their order and informed him the drinks were called sex on the beach. Stiles blushed at the name of such a drink and thanked his stars the waitress didn’t make their conversation any more awkward then it could have been.

Allison and Lydia sniggered obnoxiously through the whole ordeal and when the waitress left, their laughter doubled in volume as they grasped their stomachs and cackled.

“You’re both so immature,” Stiles asserted with a roll of the eyes.

“It’s not the name of the drink, but the face you made. It was all like,” Allison imitated a shocked expression that was far too extreme for his taste and he was pretty sure it wasn’t that bad.
“I did not look like that,” Stiles reprimanded, nudging the woman’s shoulder.

Allison nodded adamantly. “You so did.”

Lydia made a loud, “Mhmm!” before her eyes brightened with delight as the waitress returned with another round.

As Stiles drank he found himself giggling just like a school girl over the most ridiculous of things, when he drank his second glass he too was slurring his words, and on his third he thought it would be great to sing karaoke.

Derek was late. It was 8:43PM, and seeing as the wolf had yet to show up, he thought it would prove as a fun activity. The girls and he stumbled drunkenly to the man in charge of the karaoke listing, looked through the folders of music choices, and bickered amongst themselves. Ultimately, Lydia the most stubborn and fiercest of the three demanded she knew the best song to suit their vocal range, taste, and something all together enjoyable.

Once selected they wandered back to their booth, ordered two Irish Car Bomb’s for each of them and downed them as fast as they could. After drinking the brew they felt absolutely free, wild and about ready to make fools of themselves. At that moment, their names were called by the man in control of the karaoke set list and the three stumbled up the stage, laughing up a storm of nerves that left them as soon as the liquor took effect.

Maxine Nightingale, ‘Right Back Where We Started From’ blasted off the speakers. As soon as the music reached their ears the three swayed their hips and bounced their knees to the fast tempo. Smiling up at one another they belted the lyrics as they appeared on the screen set just in front of the stage.

“Ooh, and it's alright and it's coming on. We gotta get right back to where we started from. Love is good, love can be strong. We gotta get right back to where we started from,” They sang in unison.

Stiles wasn’t one to toot his own horn, but he was actually a decent singer. He and his mother spent countless hours singing to the radio in the car on long drives, in the kitchen cooking and cleaning, lounging on their porch during the summer. Stiles remembered his mother had the most beautiful and warm voice he’d ever heard. She had such talent, but due to her meekness, she never had the courage to sing in public. Stiles learned much from her teachings and he had a wide range for a tenor because of it. Thanks to the countless hours he spent singing with his mother he could sing both tenor and baritone.

“Do you remember the day (that sunny day). When you first came my way. I said, ‘no one could take your place’. And if you get hurt (if you get hurt). By the little things I say. I can put that smile back on your face,” Lydia sang lead while Allison and Stiles sang back up.

“Ooh, and it's alright and it's coming on. We gotta get it right back to where we started from. Love is good, love can be strong. We gotta get it right back to where we started from,” They sang as a trio, Lydia’s deep and colorful voice projecting just a fraction more than Allison’s bright vocals, both were exceptional singers for women who only sang for enjoyment, or apparently when intoxicated.

As they sang, Stiles noticed a darkened figure enter the pub, hands burrowed deep in their leather coat pockets. A fluttering materialized in the pit of his stomach when the stranger became illuminated by the pub’s florescent lights and he met the curious hazel depths of Derek.

Smiling goofily, Stiles' grasp on his microphone lowered and he waved happily at the startled
brute. He took note of the audience staring back from Derek to him with inquisitive interest, yet it didn’t quite seem to register as to why, when he most certainly was smashed.

When Allison nudged his shoulder and nodded towards the screen, he realized it was his turn to sing. He raised his microphone and just barely caught up with the beat and his solo.

“A love like ours (a love like ours). Can never fade away. You know it's only just begun. You gave me your love (gave me your love). I just can't stay away, no, no. I know you are the only one,” Stiles sang lead now, resonating and crisp, Allison and Lydia laughing slightly as they sang backup as if hearing a hidden meaning lost to the Sheriff.

“Ooh, and it's alright and it's coming on. We gotta get it right back to where we started from. Love is good, love can be strong. We gotta get it right back to where we started from,” The trio sang in harmony.

“You gave me your love (gave me your love). I just can't stay away, no. I know you are the only one,” Stiles rang in the piercingly clear tenor’s head tone.

“Ooh, you know it's alright and it's coming on. We gotta get it right back to where we started from. Love is good, love can be strong. We gotta get it right back to where we started from,” Allison crooned.

“It's alright and it's coming on. We gotta get it right back to where we started from. Love is good, love can be strong. We gotta get it right back to where we started from,” Lydia followed.

“It's alright and it's coming on. We gotta get it right back to where we started from. Love is good, love can be strong. We gotta get it right back to where we started from,” Stiles finished softly.

As the final notes died away and the patrons applauded, some men whistled when Lydia blew kisses and Allison leaned over a bit too low, unknowingly revealing pale bosoms. When Stiles attempted to bow, he lost his balance in his stupor, leaned too close to the edge of the stage, and fell over.

Where he expected to feel the hard wooden floors he felt warm flesh and smelled the wilderness. Sighing deeply, Stiles raised his gaze and looked up into probing hazel. Stiles felt positively scatterbrained in Derek’s arms, the alpha holding him bridal style.

“Hey,” Stiles greeted through a wide smile. Allison and Lydia screaming in laughter was dulled by his closeness to the alpha.

“Hey,” Derek greeted back, breathily.

Stiles realized that to save him from falling head first against the hard and unforgiving wooden floors Derek must have had to use supper human speed.

“You’re late.”

“I had alpha business—”

“To attend to, I know,” Stiles sighed heavily, the sudden giddy and playfulness dying away, leaving restlessness and agitation. “And yet again, you didn’t even bother texting or calling.”

“I was a bit busy at the time,” Derek graveled crossly.

“You’re always busy. Let me down.”
When Derek set Stiles to the ground, the Sheriff glared irritably at the brute, turned his attention on assisting the two women down the stairs of the stage, even though he was just as drunk as them. The four wandered back to their booth. Lydia whispering something to Allison and the two sat beside one another, leaving Stiles with the only option of having to sit beside Mr. Brooding.

There was a long uncomfortable silence between the alpha and Stiles, Lydia and Allison smiling edgily glancing at the two before them. Derek glared at the table arms folded across his chest whilst Stiles stared off and towards the stage, features firmly placed in a scowl, and listened to a blond female karaoke to a jazz song that was unknown to him.

“So…” Lydia began, grasping at straws, attempting to come up with a conversation to rid the awkwardness and tension.

Stiles felt he had a valid reason to be upset. For the last few days Derek had ignored him, his calls, and closed himself off, especially today. Just when he thought the alpha was opening up to him, he clamped up, and refused to voice his thoughts. Now they planned to meet with his friends and Derek had arrived late because of alpha business. He was getting tired of it and just what was so important that Derek couldn’t bother to text him and inform him he was going to run late?

Maybe Stiles was being a bit of an ass and was overreacting. But if this was how Derek was going to be after they were married; keeping to himself, going out on shady alpha business, leaving Stiles to worry and question his whereabouts. They were going to have serious marital troubles.

“You’re such a bastard,” Stiles huffed, flashing a livid glare to the brute.

Derek seemed genuinely surprised by the human’s outburst, though his shock soon wore off and was replaced by irritation.

“Am I now?”

“Yes you are.”

“Are you sure about that or could it be your time of the month?”

“Excuse me,” Stiles leaned close to the alpha, eyes narrowing, breathing intensifying with the prickling sensation of rage.

“You heard me loud and clear,” Derek snarled, bumping his nose against Stiles’, though this wasn’t of kindness nor full of warmth as it had always been. It was full of antagonizing bitterness and held a demanding nature.

“You’re such a bastard.”

“You said that already,” Derek smirked condescendingly, unfolding his arms and planting a clawed hand against the human’s thigh and gripped it in forewarning.

“It still rings true,” Stiles hissed, holding back a cry of pain when the alpha tightened his hold and his claws just barely sunk into his flesh, as if warning him, demanding he back down and submit.

“Uh… Lydia,” Allison attempted to defuse the situation before them and looked for Lydia’s help, yet it appeared the always clever Lydia was struggling to find an out to this situation herself. Their intoxicated states dulling their capacity of surmising a good enough distraction.

Only it seemed as if some divine higher power sensed their need, because Derek’s phone chimed its familiar ring and Stiles barked with spiteful amusement.
“Look at that, Derek, alpha business has come a-calling. Why don’t you answer it and leave to attend to that business of yours. I’ll be here, singing, drinking, flirting and having a grand old time,” With that said, the Sheriff slapped Derek’s clutch on his thigh away, slid out of the booth ignoring the ominously thunderous growl of the alpha, Allison’s broken cry of surprise, and Lydia stuttering out his name.

He set his eyes at the bar, struttled with purpose, and sat himself in the only vacant stool between a group of chatty women and a young man minding his own business, drinking in contented silence. He flagged the barman, ordered another Irish Car Bomb and turned his sights to the man beside him.

“Hey there,” Stiles voiced his greeting, a kind smile spreading across his lips.

When the man turned and met his gaze he was surprised to find he knew him.

“Daehler?” Stiles could hardly believe it.

Matthew Daehler met Stiles’ gaze with furrowed quizzical brows.

“Stilinski?” Matt voiced slowly, as if debating if it were a trick of his inebriated state that prompted him to see an old class mate standing before him.

Stiles laughed at the coincidence that led him here and he slid from off his stool as Matt did the same to embrace him in a welcoming hug. The last time he saw Matt was during graduation, the next day he took a flight to London where he would be attending school and furthering his education of photography. Stiles on occasion would bump into Mrs. Daehler and questioned her on her son’s wellbeing.

He knew Matt graduated, started working at a popular newspaper press, and in his spare time worked on his own photography projects. Mrs. Daehler worried her son was too focused in photography because he had not dated or shown an interest in anyone, not since high school. Stiles felt sorry for the man, because he knew he carried a torch for Allison and that his love for her was unrequited.

In some ways Stiles felt he could relate to the man. Both had never dated, and watched their friends begin dating in high school. In college and as adults they focused on their education and careers. As far as Stiles knew, Matt could very well still be a virgin and if he didn’t find himself forced into a marriage/mating of convenience, he too would still be a virgin himself.

The two laughed at the twist of fate that brought them here and sat themselves down once more.

“Wow, so what are you doing here?” Stiles had no idea Matt had come back to Beacon Hills, if he had, he would have tried to get in contact with him.

“Well, after my father passed away a year ago, my mother’s health declined. I thought it time I came back and take care of her. I arrived last night and moved in, back home with my mother. She needs me,” Matt conveyed honestly, shrugging his shoulders as if to voicelessly express this wasn’t a big deal, though he sensed it was.

“She isn’t sick, is she?”

“No, just getting older and needs someone who can help her out,” Matt explained, taking a long swig of what appeared to be pure hard liquor.

“Stiles,” Came the agitated gravel of his name from a well-known voice at his side, a moment
after, a burly arm wrapped around his waist and a heated body pressed against his own as the alpha stood beside him.

Stiles glared up at the brute, though Derek’s gaze was focused on Matt, his features were tense in a scowl.

“Why don’t we head back to our booth?” Derek suggested, and Stiles would have laughed if he didn’t feel the prickling sensation of claws pressing forebodingly against his side.

“I’m fine here. Just catching up with a good, oh so good friend of mine,” Stiles smiled sweetly at Matt, focusing all his attention on the man, knowing alphas were territorial and wishing to piss Derek off just a bit. If Derek chose to read something in his statement, suggesting he and Matt were more than friends, well…that wasn’t his fault. Really, it wasn’t. He’d been stating fact, Matt was a good friend, a ‘oh so good’ friend.

Okay, he wasn’t stupid, he knew what he was doing, how wrong it was to use a friend he hadn’t talked to in years just to aggravate his fiancé. But in all fairness, the brute deserved it.

Matt glanced from Stiles to Derek with furrowed brows of incomprehension. He attempted to grasp the strange vibes directed towards him by Derek (who Stiles thought that if he didn’t watch carefully, said brute might snap and attack either one of them) and to the sweetly smiling and batting his lashes too innocently Stiles.

The recognizable ringing of Derek’s cell blared once more; reaffirming why Stiles was so upset with Derek and urged him on in his attempts at frustrating the brute.

“Seems like business can’t get enough of you. Why don’t you go answer it while Matt and I will…” Stiles paused for effect; glanced kindly towards the poor unsuspecting photographer and winked while finishing his sentence with a deep resonating tone, “bond.”

He raised his gaze and focused on Derek, knowing that the usage of the word, ‘bond,’ did a number on the alpha. It appeared the act of bonding was sacred to werewolves’, because he could recall Derek using the word several times when discussing mating. So bonding and mating were one in the same. He was sure of this when a mere glance at Derek clearly revealed the agitation that was so evidently present in the alpha’s eyes.

Derek’s definite jaw line tensed as the alpha was struggling to hold himself together, keep himself in control, remain in his human form. As they continued to stare at one another, Stiles’ stomach fluttered with a swarm of butterflies as what was left of Derek’s façade crumbled and he glared murderously.

“Let’s go,” Derek groused, tugging at the human, sliding him off the stool before he could make a struggle, and even if he wanted to, it was futile when the alpha possessed ten times the strength of any man.

Stiles glanced over his shoulder and towards the puzzled photographer. Matt gaped at his departing form with perplexity as Stiles was manhandled out of the pub by the raging brute.

“I’ll call you, sweetie pie!” Stiles cooed dreamily to the astonished Matt.

“No you won’t!” Derek snarled, kicking the swing doors of the entrance open.

Stiles managed to wring an arm free of the alpha’s possessive pawing and used it to blow the photographer a kiss. Matt appeared bewildered and he knew he seriously would need to call the man and apologize at a later time, explain things—though he wasn’t sure how the hell he could
explain this.

Derek roared an enraged primal and animalistic shout as Stiles blew another kiss, winked, and moaned out with yearning, “I’ll miss you, Matt!”

As the swing doors swayed back and just about closed he heard two piercingly high earsplitting hyenas cackling their drunken amusement and met their heated faces. He watched as Lydia and Allison leaned against the other, desperately trying to hold themselves upright in their hysteria.

As the doors slammed shut, Derek hoisted the drunken Stiles over his shoulder, breathing ragged growls of anger as he marched them through the empty parking lot.

“You’re no fun,” Stiles exhaled with disappointment, the continuous ringing of the alpha’s phone falling silent then. “Matt’s gotten so buff, did you see those trunks called arms he was sporting?”

Stiles might be crossing the line, but he really didn’t care at this point.

“And oooh God, his lips, so full and just—mmm,” Stiles faked a shiver of excitement and started when Derek stilled his accent to the Camaro.

“Stiles…shut up, if you know what’s good for you.”

Stiles grinned, and thought; just a bit more.

Shutting his eyes he recalled the image of having Derek laid out on his bed, being within such heat, rocking against that toned body, and felt his arousal awaken.

“Matt,” Stiles groaned imagining Derek.

Derek’s body shook against him, seeming to bulk out as he hastily made his way to the Camaro, unlocked the doors, shoved Stiles into the passage seat, buckling him up, madder depths piercing honey brown. He slammed the human’s door shut furiously, rounded the car, strapped himself in, revved the engine and slammed on the accelerator.

Derek drove with purpose, his growls ever prominent, growing angrier as the time passed.

“I don’t see why you’re so pissed,” Stiles grumbled, suddenly sobering.

Derek snorted a not at all amused vicious laugh.

“You’re the one always ignoring me, leaving me, answering your phone.”

“You’re whining like an upset housewife. Alpha business is important, no matter how you might not like it. I have to answer the phone.”

“Why didn’t you answer it earlier then?” Stiles noted, having been hauled out of the pub while the phone persistently rang.

Derek spared a moment’s glance to the human, flashing a devilish sneer. “You know damn well why.”

Stiles tried to glare back, but the luminous smile gracing his lips could not be restrained.

“Were you jealous of Matt?”

“Stiles,” Derek tersely sighed.
“You were! You were totally jealous of Matt. Awww, Derek,” Stiles leaned close to the alpha, tugged at the closest arm to him, removing it from the steering wheel to embrace it with consideration and care.

“You’re just…every time I think I know you…you surprise me. I know I’m immature, and shouldn’t have done that…but uh—just so you know—at the lot—my reaction…it’s because I was—um—well—thinking about you,” Stiles blushed heatedly. “So don’t go killing Matt. He’s 100% heterosexual anyways.”

Derek didn’t reply, though he glanced back at Stiles and when he did the Sheriff felt relief in the sight of hazel depths staring back at him.

“What am I going to do with you?” Derek exhaled jadedly, shaking his head. The pace in which he drove slowing down to the appropriate speed limit.

“Don’t know, but you’re stuck with me, forever, and ever, and ever, and ever, and—boy am I drunk,” Stiles laughed at his own foolishness and glanced over to an equally amused Derek.

“You’re downright belligerent.”

“Heeey, you don’t have to be mean about it. Always such a sweet talker, you are,” Stiles pouted, tugging at the alpha’s arm, raised his hand and planted soft kind kisses against his knuckles in a show of respect and repentance.

“I’m sorry about ruining tonight.”

Derek shrugged. “I just came because I thought that’s what you would have wanted—for me to spend time with you and your friends.

Stiles had almost forgotten about Allison and Lydia. He was going to have to call them tomorrow morning to apologize to them too.

“Hey, Derek?”

“What is it Stiles?”

“Do you think I’m attractive?”

Derek didn’t look at Stiles, just concentrated on driving, no matter if he felt the Sheriff’s gaze burning a hole through his head, though his lips twitched.

“Stiles…”

“Yes, Derek?” Stiles replied with anticipation.

“Shut up.”

Stiles wasn’t sure how it happened, but some point during their long drive back home he snuggled near the alpha’s arm he cradled and fell asleep. He woke the next morning in bed, under the covers, in his briefs, cold and alone. He really shouldn’t be surprised or disappointed, but he was. Why was it so hard for Derek to stay in bed and wake together? Stiles would be the happiest person out there known to man, so happy he’d make Derek a buffet—whatever it was Derek wanted. If he wanted fresh butter, he would drive out to a farm, milk a cow, and start making butter. Okay, okay,
okay, he might be over exaggerating, but if Derek wanted something, he’d strive to get it for him.

Boy was he in love.

After readying himself that day, he prepared to take the bus to the pub to pick his Jeep up, but was surprised to find his Jeep parked outside. The key to his car was set on the foyer counter with a brief note that read: Jeep is outside. Stiles couldn’t help but smile at how considerate Derek was for doing this for him after the way he treated him the night before—and he felt more like an ass.

Later that day he was called to settle a domestic altercation, and it’d been a stressful interaction because there were children involved—and the social services had to be contacted. But the issues were resolved and the children were provided a case manager to assist the family as a unit.

He took an early lunch break, stopped by an authentically crafted Mexican restaurant and while dining made several calls. First, he called Allison and Lydia using three way; he apologized for the scene he caused and having to leave early. They laughed it off, remarking how worried they had been at first, but that for some odd reason, no matter how much Stiles crossed the line Derek managed to keep his cool (as best he could anyways).

Lydia was adamant this was due to the fact they were true mates and as she’d stated before, Derek wouldn’t hurt him because Stiles was too important to him. Allison still thought it important to warn him not to do it again. Stiles argued he’d been drunk and foolish and that he could hardly think rationally when intoxicated. Regardless of the reasons, Allison was stern that he not push the alpha and Lydia argued it was all void when they were true mates, because true mates couldn’t tolerate the idea of harming or upsetting their partner.

Stiles thought they should try to meet up again, this time remaining sober as could be. Lydia mentioned Stiles should invite Derek to her annual Halloween party. Stiles agreed he would bring it up and see if Derek would be interested in attending.

When he ended the call with the ladies of his life, he called Mrs. Daehler. He asked if Matt were home but found he’d gone grocery shopping. She was more than willing to relay his mobile number and Stiles ended their call to ring him up. Matt answered on the second ring. He’d been surprised to get his call and Stiles began his awkward explanation about the night before.

Matt laughed halfway through his bumbling, explaining his mother had informed him about the Sheriff’s engagement to the alpha Derek. As for the unwarranted and awkward flirting, he really didn’t mind, so long as the alpha wasn’t somewhere filing his nails preparing to make him suffer a painful death. Stiles choked back a laugh though his insides churned at the possibility.

He could recall conversing with Derek about finding someone else and how he reacted. He was pretty sure Derek wouldn’t go after Matt, especially after they cleared the air on their drive back home. But just in case, Stiles was going to have to reaffirm his affections for Derek to reassure the alpha there was no possibility he was seriously interested in Matt.

Stiles hadn’t okayed it with Lydia, but knew she wouldn’t mind if he invited Matt to her Halloween party, so he did. Lydia invited everyone for the party; it was more a Beacon Hills mandatory meeting for the youthful to attend. Matt mentioned he couldn’t give a certain yes, because it really depended on how his mother was fairing at that time. Stiles understood, but strongly encouraged him to participate, being Lydia’s parties were well thought out and always enjoyable.

After lunch, the day seemed to be going by so slowly, Stiles would glance at his clock, groan with aggravation to find only several minutes had passed by in the time he last checked the clock. After he finally clocked out, he rushed home and found a midnight Camaro parked in front of his home.
When he entered his room to find Derek sitting upright against the head bored texting, wearing scarlet boxer-briefs Stiles sighed dejectedly. Derek was so distracted by whatever he was texting he didn’t even look up in greeting, just nodded his head in Stiles’ general direction validating his presence.

“Hello, darling, how was work today? Oh great dear. I had this one difficult case, but I managed to solve it. Oh really, do you want to talk about it? Oh no, dear. All I want is to wrap my arms around you.” Stiles role-played agitatedly while undressing, glaring at the alpha whose lips twitched amusedly, though his eyes remained on his cell screen and he continued texting.

“Oh darling you’re such a sweet talker—just let me finish texting—alpha business and all. Oh, sure dear. I’ll just undress and wait for you to look up from your phone and see that I’m completely bare and unbelievably hard for you.”

Derek’s thumbs twitched mid-text. His gaze rose curiously and Stiles grinned evilly, still wearing his black briefs.

“Made you look.”

Derek chuckled softly while shaking his head. “Damn, I should have known better. I would have smelled your arousal.”

Stiles laughed, smiling brightly when Derek turned his phone off—actually turned it off—as in, shut off—power off.

“Derek, that is about the sexiest thing you’ve ever done,” Stiles moaned teasingly, sprinting for the bed, leaping up in the air before catapulting against the ready arms of the alpha.

Derek chortled loudly, wrapping his arms around Stiles, tucking his head in the crook of his neck and inhaling his scent deeply. Stiles shifted his legs to straddle Derek’s thighs, ran his hands over a sculpted back and held tight.

“I missed you all day,” Stiles breathed truth, though also wishing to affirm that he cared for the alpha, valued him, and reassure Derek that Matt meant nothing.

Derek hummed happily, growls soft, rumbling against his chest like a cat’s purr.

“I love the way you smell,” Stiles inhaled headily, nudging the alpha’s cheek with his nose, stubble rough on his tender flesh, thrillingly so.

“You smell like home,” Stiles spoke tenderly, finding he quite liked this honest streak he had going.

Derek groaned pleasantly, caressing his hips, rolling them around and laying himself against the slighter. His pelvis pressed along the bed, abdomen against Stiles’ pelvis, and head resting on the human’s chest, breathing him in contentedly, his large palms rubbing the slighter’s shoulders.

“You’re nurturing when you want to be—when I need you to be. You’re giving, willingly compliant—even though you don’t have to be,” Stiles began to absentmindedly stroke Derek’s atrous mane as he thought of all the wonderful attributes his future mate harnessed.

“You’re thoughtful, truly and shockingly so very thoughtful. You’re patient and lord knows I make it hard to remain so,” Stiles chuckled, Derek’s graveling growls of purrs dulled and ceased as the man relaxed further against him and Stiles’ petting continued.
Stiles grinned amused Derek felt so at peace he was falling asleep against him, and this time Stiles thought the alpha deserved an uninterrupted sleep. He massaged Derek’s scalp, wrapped his legs around the larger man’s waist, enjoyed the heat radiating off of the wolf and warming his body.

“I love how tender you are, the gentleness of your touch,” Stiles murmured softly, sleep lulling him away from awareness little by little.

“You’re such a kind man, Derek. Truly, sincerely kind…and its sad most will never know that. I’m glad I do. You’re really wonderful, and I’m pleased that you’re the one I will call my mate.”

Stiles paused to yawn sharply, exhaled heavily, staring up at the ceiling with half lidded eyes. His eyes slowly weighed down by sleep but just before he did, he wished to make one thing known through the stillness of night and to the slumbering beast.

“All these things…made me love you.”

Stiles hummed happily and finally succumbed to darkness of sleep. His slumber was quick, so much so he didn’t feel the alpha stiffen against him, didn’t hear the harsh exhale of breath, nor feel the fluttering of lashes against his bare skin.

The alpha was awake.
Stiles was upset...no...that wasn’t the word—although a part of him truly was upset. It was more than that. He was unnerved, unhinged, uneasy, and several other feelings that meant biting of the nails, constricting painful churning of the abdomen and aching of the heart.

Something had gone terribly wrong between the night of his drunken fiasco and the day after. Something had changed Derek…the alpha was...he was...different. Derek was indisputably different.

Every night Stiles would arrive home to find the room empty. Derek was always early, always in his room and ready for bed—until now.

The first night it happened, Stiles undressed, lay in bed and texted Derek, inquiring where he was and when he would arrive. Derek did not respond. Stiles seriously thought about going out around the city to conduct a search, even stop by the Hale manor, but his nerves held him back. He didn’t think he could go back to that home again; it really didn’t matter when several long moments later the alpha entered through his window.

Stiles questioned him on why it was he did not reply and what made him late, but Derek didn’t feel the need to voice his thoughts. He only undressed down to his boxer-briefs and slipped into the bed. Stiles turned towards the alpha and tried to wrap his arms about his waist, but Derek pulled away and nudged Stiles’ shoulder until he faced away from the wolf’s emotionless gaze.

Stiles felt sick to the stomach as the alpha curled his arms around his torso and pressed him against his chest where he nestled his nose at the nape of the human’s neck. When he attempted to talk Derek into conveying his feelings, the wolf remained still. Stiles didn’t know what to do, or how to illuminate the strange behavior of the brute.

Stiles stayed up late that night even when Derek finally relaxed against him in a deep sleep, he couldn’t rest, he was too anxious. Eventually, Stiles body fought against his spinning mind and he fell to darkness as the sun began to rise.

When he awoke alone in bed he wasn’t surprised, but as he tried to contact Derek that whole day and received no call, text or voicemail, he knew something had changed.

Each night was the same for several weeks. Stiles arrived to an empty home. Once he undressed, he would lay in bed staring at his lifeless phone, after having spent a good while calling and texting the alpha. Derek would eventually arrive home, remove his clothes in silence, and slip under the sheets to press up from behind Stiles. He would hold him close, though say nothing.

Stiles tried broaching the odd behavior late one night when Derek finally arrived. Stiles blankly stared at the wall, his back pressed against a broad and heated chest.

“Derek…”

Derek did not reply, just breathed evenly, his breath brushing against the nape of his neck.

“Did something happen?”

Silence was his answer.
“Derek, please talk to me. Maybe I can help.”

Still nothing, though the alpha’s arms around his waist pawed at his abdomen possessively.

Stiles leaned his head back and against a hard shoulder, turned and nudged the alpha’s cheek with his nose pleadingly. Derek’s only response was to shut his half lidded eyes and exhale heavily.

“**Derek,**” Stiles beseeched fretfully.

Desperate to gain some reaction out of the wolf, he plastered his arms over the alpha’s and clutched the wolf’s hands with his own whilst lapping across a stubble cheek. He keened like a animal in the hopes he could appeal to the alpha’s animal instincts and press out a response in some way or form.

When his tongue edged towards the corner of the alpha’s mouth, Derek reared back and voiced a graveled, “Don’t.”

Stiles felt the sting in his eyes before he realized the pain in his heart was the source. The change in Derek was driving a wedge between them, a space unwarranted and Stiles didn’t know how to fix it.

“Is it me?” Stiles choked despairingly, pulling away from the alpha’s hold to sit up and face the wolf.

Derek exhaled another heavy breath, rolled onto his back and threw an arm over his head, shielding his eyes from the human’s view.

“No,” Derek heaved.

“Then what is it? What’s wrong? Does this have something to do with the alpha business you’re always answering the phone for or leaving to handle?”

“No.”

“Is it the wedding? I can understand if it’s nerves. It’s normal to feel a bit—uneasy. Plus our marriage is somewhat…unorthodox…but we can talk it through, maybe that will help put you at ease.”

“It’s not the wedding.”

Stiles’ heart rate sped, pounding painfully against his ribcage and sent a pulsing throb to plague his entire body. His stinging orbs grew ever pestering and agitated, welling up and brimming over in salty liquid.

“What’s wrong, Derek? Tell me. I don’t like this. You’re cold and distant. I want to be able to help you, but I can’t if you won’t let me,” Stiles’ voice was waverering now and he was doing all he could to hold in his emotions.

Don’t cry, don’t cry, don’t cry, don’t cry, don’t cry, don’t cry, don’t cry, don’t cry—

When he blinked his eyes the first of the tears broke free and Stiles hated himself.

Derek’s nostrils flared, his arm resting across his face reached out for Stiles’ arm and pained hazel met teary b adious.

“I’m sorry,” Derek whispered earnestly, tugging Stiles back down and against his chest, wrapping his arms around the trembling human and cradling him soothingly.
“Derek,” Stiles mewed, blinking rapidly in an attempt to hold the dam of tears but it was futile as they defied his wish and trickled out of him.

“I’m sorry,” Derek puffed hotly against his ear, lapping at the flesh and Stiles choked back a sob, wrapping his arms around the elusive brute, clutching to him desperately and tucked his head in the junction of his neck.

“Tell me please.”

Derek didn’t reply, didn’t answer Stiles right away though he held him soothingly while running his hands over his back. He lapped at Stiles’ ear, nudged at it with his nose and bayed softly in accord, but he never spoke. Never opened up to convey what shifted between the two, why one moment he was completely docile and at peace only for the next to be reclusive and clandestine in his behaviorisms and thoughts.

Stiles wanted to be angry, to yell at Derek, tell him he was a right jerk, a bastard—maybe punch him several times until his frustrations left him, but he couldn’t. He couldn’t do any of those things because this was different. Before when he became upset with the alpha it was because Derek was being an arrogant ass, bossy, inconsiderate and stubborn. But this...Derek being withdrawn was because of some internal struggle, something was festering, deep, keeping him from voicing his thoughts, clouding his mind and stilling him of speech.

Stiles couldn’t be angry with him for that. He couldn’t argue, fight, or punch him to his senses. He could only wait for the alpha to open up to him and voice those concerns and worries. But Stiles knew he wouldn’t. Derek didn’t trust him and he couldn’t blame him. They were engaged and bonding, but that meant nothing to Derek. Derek didn’t love him and trust him enough to know Stiles would remain loyal and true to him, would willingly be his confidant. To Derek this was a proposition, not a proposal. This was an arrangement, not love. Derek would never let him in, never let him help, and this change (Stiles feared and dreaded) was here to stay.

Stiles wept in Derek’s open and tending arms, imagined the care, consideration and warmth placed upon him was out of love though he knew differently. Derek was only taking pity on him. Realizing how desperately alone Stiles really was. Stiles had no family, his best friend had abandoned him, and Derek was his only kin now.

Because Derek was claimed by him and he was to be Derek’s soon, the alpha felt the need to soothe and comfort him. It was his obligation as his mate and that broke Stiles’ heart. It broke his heart enough so he felt despair and grief take hold of him and wept profusely at the realization that all he would ever be to Derek was a forced upon obligation to ensure peace. Derek couldn’t ever see him for more than what he was—a responsibility placed onto his shoulders and weighing him down.

“I’m sorry,” Derek whimpered pleadingly when Stiles’ cries worsened and he shook terribly so against him.

Stiles strangled out a howl of sorrow at Derek’s remorse, felling guilt for placing such a heavy load on the alpha’s shoulders. He hated himself for it; hated himself for loving Derek.

Why did he let himself stray? Why did he allow himself to fall? Why?

This was supposed to be a marriage/mating of convenience, yet he foolishly allowed himself to feel more and now he was truly doomed. He was to spend the rest of his life married and mated to a man he could never truly be with though he loved with an ever constant heart and the purest of intentions.
When Stiles awoke the next morning he didn’t want to open his eyes and welcome the day for what it was—pained contemplations of a fiancé reserved, closed off and distant. Regardless of his wish to remain in bed and ignore the agonizing truth Derek didn’t trust him; he shifted and untangled himself from out of the thick bed sheets before he lumbered drowsily and dolefully downstairs.

As Stiles bounded the last several steps of the stairs the scent of appetizing food accosted his senses. The dull clattering and shifting near the kitchen alerted the Sheriff he wasn’t alone, yet not wanting to believe the only plausible reason for this; he slowly wandered towards the kitchen.

The moment he entered, he found Derek placing a plate of strawberry topped waffles onto the kitchen counter in the center of the room. Derek’s gaze rose to meet Stiles’, the alpha appeared off—troubled—perturbed.

“I prepared breakfast,” He replied in greeting, stepping away from the counter to retrieve a freshly poured cup of tea and set it near the plate. “How do you take your tea?”

“What are you still doing here?” Stiles demanded, far more coarse and defensive then he intended for it to be, but Derek never stayed the morning after bonding—except for the time he cried himself to sleep over the guilt of his father and the loss of Scott, when he asked it of the alpha, and apparently today—after crying himself to sleep once more.

“I—” Derek took several steps back and pressed himself against the sink, arms raising to grip the tiled counter’s edge, knuckles whitening as he dipped his head and inhaled sharply—almost as if building himself up for a bout. “I wanted to make sure you were fine.”

Stiles scanned the brute shrewdly, trying to size him up, detect the reasons for the man’s strange behavior. He was so tired of trying to figure the alpha out. One moment Derek could be the sweetest, kindest, sincerest brute, the next he was a defensive, aloof, possessive bastard.

For so long Derek had kept to himself, refused to talk and now he stood in his kitchen having prepared him strawberry waffles—Stiles’ favorite breakfast dish—as if the bastard somehow knew him well enough to know how to cheer him up. But this time strawberry waffles wouldn’t be able to brighten his spirits.

Stiles loved Derek. He’d only ever loved a handful of people, his family and closest of friends. Love meant something more than gooeyness in the pit of one’s stomach and the desire to be in that person’s presence. To Stiles, love meant friendship, consideration and sacrifices. Stiles viewed Derek as his friend—a close friend—one he felt he could truly open up to given enough time, he held great consideration towards the alpha—worried about him—wishing nothing but the best for him. He would even sacrifice his own happiness, give his blood, sweat and tears to appease Derek in any way possible, and if ever a time came in which he could give his life for Derek’s—he would willingly and without hesitation, because love meant more than roses, chocolates and kisses—it meant pursuit in the face of strife.

“Derek…” Stiles exhaled in an audible huff of agitation. “Why are you being like this?”

“Like what?” Derek quizzed, raising his gaze to finally meet Stiles’.

“The standoffish brooding in silence, the distance, the ignoring, then last night—you pulled away and reeled me back in with comfort—and now this—preparing breakfast and asking how I take my tea,” Stiles’ frustrations dulled, exhaustion taking root though he’d just woken.
He discontentedly approached the counter and sat himself on a stool, shoving the plate and tea away. He wasn’t hungry, Derek’s change in behavior and the events leading up to this moment ridding him of his appetite.

“Derek, please just talk to me,” Stiles lifted his downcast gaze and pleaded with the alpha.

Hazel depths became pained orbs of regret and shifted to the ground once more out of Stiles’ view.

“I’m sorry for how I’ve been—I just…I have some things on my mind and I’m trying to work them out.”

“What things? I could try to help if you would just give me a chance,” Stiles persisted.

“Stiles, you can’t help me with this,” Derek sounded so lost, exhausted, as if at any moment he’d break and it pained Stiles—truly pained him. His heart throbbed with soreness in reply.

“How do you know?” Stiles demanded affronted.

“I just do.”

“So you’re not even going to try.”

“I know what my dilemma means, I know all the outcomes and I know what I have to do,” Derek answered strong-minded.

“What?”

“Stiles, please, just let this go. It’s done with. I know what is and that I can’t allow myself to do anything to change things.”

“What do you think this is now? You’re doing it right now! You’re brushing off the issue, laying it in subtext that I wouldn’t be able to follow or make sense of!” Stiles simmered. Why couldn’t Derek trust him?

“That’s because it means nothing!” Derek bellowed, standing straighter, eyes brightening, gleaming madder as if in forewarning for Stiles to drop the topic and let it go.

“What means nothing?” Stiles exclaimed right back, never one to back out—even when it meant potentially angering an alpha.

“My issues are my own. I found out something I wasn’t supposed to. I can accept and confront those truths or not. Though I know its best that I just leave it be as it is now, so that’s what I intend to do. Don’t try to pry further, because that is all I have to say about it. So drop it,” Derek grumbled, rubbing a hand against his forehead and Stiles was surprised when a closer glance at the alpha revealed tremors that ran through his body. Though his words were razor-sharp and cold, his body seemed to say something else.

“I—Derek,” Stiles attempted to voice his thoughts, but couldn’t. He sensed the frayed alpha’s despair and desperate need for pardon and Stiles could no longer dispute with him. He couldn’t knowingly push Derek, stress him to his limits, not after seeing this, how painful whatever it was that plagued his mind was slowly destroying him. He only wanted to know all of Derek, but the alpha wasn’t ready for that. Right at this moment, all Stiles wanted to do was comfort him.

Stiles slid off of his chair and made quick strides to the alpha before his mind caught up with his body. He met Derek’s contemplating gaze with sincere consideration and embraced the alpha
tightly in his arms. His head dipped to nose at the alpha’s neck, inhale his manly scent and soothingly ran his hands over his back.

“Okay… Okay Derek,” Stiles gave in, murmuring softly against the alpha’s stubble jaw, pressing gentle and brief kisses upon the man’s cheek before pulling back and meeting tired hazel.

Stiles raised a hand to palm the alpha’s face, pressing his forehead against Derek’s and inhaled sharply. “I can try to understand. Just know I’m here if and when you need me.”

Derek shut his eyes and sighed heavily, his hands pawing the slighter man’s hips and brought him near, immersing himself in their closeness. Stiles continued stroking the alpha’s back with one hand, his other caressing the wolf’s face while his lips glided along stubble and towards Derek’s.

Stiles claimed Derek’s lips in several chaste kisses and exhaled contently by their closeness. Derek seemed to relax in his hold, the man’s thumbs brushing over his hips in a silent show of reprieve, acceptance and ease.

“Thank you,” Derek spoke with gratitude, voice round and deep with thickly laced emotions Stiles wasn’t sure he’d ever be able to distinguish.

Derek soon left after Stiles spent several long moments holding and soothing the alpha's worries away. When Derek pulled away from their embrace he stared unwaveringly and calculatingly before exhaling a huff of breath and nudging the human's nose. He cooed softly whilst kissing his nose, then the alpha was leaving him without a word.

Stiles spent the day in a daze. When Lydia called to confirm if Derek and he were still coming that night, he only then realized it was Halloween and he had yet to ask Derek if he would be interested in going with him. He called the alpha several times that day, but Derek did not answer.

Stiles was beginning to think their talk had amounted to nothing and Derek was still adamant in continuing his strange behavior. But a half an hour after his last call Derek texted him.

6:00PM

-Out on alpha business. I'll call you when I can.

Stiles felt relieved that Derek wasn't avoiding him purposely and texted back.

6:08PM

-Lydia's hosting a Halloween party tonight. I'll be heading over to her home after work. It'd be nice if you came.

Sparing a moment’s thought, he texted Lydia's house address just in case the alpha was unaware.

Derek did not reply and so Stiles assumed the wolf was busy with whatever it was alpha’s did.

When his shift came to an end he made a quick stop at home to shower and change into
comfortable attire. He decided on wearing a pale blue t-shirt, faded jeans, red converse and an olive imitation of an army coat. He didn't feel much into dressing himself in a Halloween getup, though he had plenty of old costumes to choose from. He was beginning to feel a bit too old for it so he thought it best to go as himself. If someone mistook his coat as him dressing as a renegade or soldier, he didn't really care.

When Stiles finally pulled up in front of the redheads home he could hear the blasting of music, took in the many costumed youths lounging about outside of the home, mingling and drinking from blue and red plastic cups.

Stiles exited the Jeep and proceeded towards the home and the opened door. As he entered the home, music playing from an upbeat song blasted through the speakers of the living room near the foyer. A DJ was stationed at the corner of the large room. Stiles took note that much of Lydia’s furniture had been taken out of the room to reveal hardwood oak floors, a dance platform for many of the attendant’s to use. Stiles wasn’t much of a dancer and the music was far too loud and upbeat for his taste.

Instead of joining the many youths dancing, he wandered further into the home, passed the living area, dining room and lounge. Every room was packed with people mingling and having a good time. He attempted to locate a familiar face, mainly Lydia, but couldn’t spot anyone he knew through a crowd of costumed villains, mystical creatures (some not so mystical) and idols.

Stiles could only assume Lydia was busy mingling somewhere out of view or attending to the duties of a hostess. He sought out the coolness of the backyard and wandered over to the table under a white canopy tent and towards the hired barmen serving an open bar.

Lydia made note to have the barmen serve at the back of the house and the DJ inside. When Stiles’ noted her preference she explained she wished to have the bumbling drunkards out back to protect the valuable antiques in the home. The ones prone to drinking never strayed far from the bar and it appeared evident now. Stiles noticed several men laughing uproariously, holding onto each other in a desperate attempt of keeping their balance whilst simultaneously trying not to tip their cups of preferred alcoholic brews.

Stiles passed the men lingering near the table and ordered himself an AMF. Once he received his drink, Stiles wandered over to one of the several tables set outside. He drank his drink in silence and slowly, the brew was strong yet held a hint of sweetness Stiles always loved. The drink was delicious, but he knew himself and the little tolerance he had for alcohol, two was his max for this specific brew. Anymore and he’d become a bumbling drunk and after his most recent drunken antics, he wished to stay sober—buzzed actually.

Stiles wasn’t sure how long he spent sitting at the table sipping his drink through the straw, but as the time went on and he drank half his beverage, he felt the buzz, felt the calmness take hold and his body heat due to the five different liquors coursing through him.

“Stiles?” came the call of his name and he smiled immediately recognizing the man’s voice.

“Matt,” Stiles greeted with a lopsided grin, raising his gaze from his drink and towards the photographer standing before him.

Matt grinned back his greetings and wordlessly took the seat beside him and set his own drink on the table beside Stiles. The Sheriff grinned amused; the photographer appeared to have ordered the same brew as himself.

“I almost thought you wouldn’t come.”
“I thought the same, but my mother reassured me she would be fine without me. After she went to bed I thought I should stop by,” Matt explained, a contented smile gracing his lips.

“I’m glad you could,” Stiles beamed, taking note Matt didn’t wish to embrace the Halloween tradition and dress in character for he wore a simple button up grey pinstriped shirt, dark denim jeans and comfortable vans similar to his own.

“Like the shoes,” Stiles chuckled.

Matt curiously glanced down at his feet then Stiles’ and snickered. “What can I say, I have great taste.”

Stiles smiled good-naturedly. “That you do.”

“So, do you plan on working for the local paper now that you’re back?” Stiles inquisitiveness worked through the fog of intoxication.

Matt nodded in confirmation. “I start this coming Wednesday.”

“That’s great; you’ll be continuing to do what you love.”

“I look forward to it. What about you? Sheriff Stiles Stilinski, never thought I’d see the day.”

Stiles frowned and flipped the photographer off jokingly. “Screw you; I’ll have you know I’ve done many great things since I took over.”

“Oh like what? Stop the juvenile youth from shoplifting?” Matt jested to which Stiles rolled his eyes and flipped both of his birds.

The two continued to talk for a long while, as they reminisced and caught up on each other’s lives. Matt told Stiles about first moving to London, the stories he helped uncover, the photos that made him and exhibits he showcased. Stiles in turn told Matt how he went to the academy soon after graduating high school and attended college, how he achieved his credentials in criminal law and worked with many of his late father’s friends to become the Sheriff of Beacon Hills.

Stiles wasn’t sure how long they spent outside, but after a while Stiles’ face pickled by the coolness of night, his nose numbed by the frigidity and the alcohol could no longer keep him warm. They noted the temperature dropping as it got late and Matt suggested they finally head back into the home.

The moment they stepped foot inside the home, they were warmed by the heater generating throughout the home and shuffled into the kitchen area, the least populated place.

The kitchen counter was covered in fake spider webs, several lighted smiling pumpkins were placed on the corners of the counter and in the center were snacks. The kitchen table further off was set out with fried, baked and roasted meats of all kinds with a smaller table beside it with drinks, variations of salads and fruits.

Stiles and Matt leaned near the stove and refrigerator, the room always catering to hungry patrons who helped themselves before leaving. Only two other groups of friends lingered along with them and conversed with their groups.

Stiles retrieved the bowl of pretzels for himself and Matt and set his drink on the counter, no longer wishing to finish it. The two ate from the bowl and continued conversing, joking with one another, divulging the most amusing of pranks they pulled in the past in an attempt to send the
other into pained stomach cramping laughter. Matt seemed to be winning the match by recounting amusing antics he enacted on fellow coworkers.

“Stiles.”

Stiles and Matt conversation fell away by the call of the Sheriff’s name. Stiles was mildly surprised to find standing before him the stoic alpha Derek. He didn’t realize how perturbed he’d been about the wolf’s absence; only now that he stood in front of him did he feel appeased by his presence. Though Stiles still felt troubled Derek was keeping something from him, he’d chosen to participate and attend a friend’s event for him. He knew the alpha didn’t have to, that all that was required of the man was to sleep beside him and to scent him, but the fact Derek still chose to do so was a reassurance to him that the alpha cared, no matter how small—there was consideration.

“Derek.” Stiles murmured low against the strumming music and knew the alpha could heard him as clear as day.

Derek glanced edgily towards Stiles and Matt, lips pursing in a set upon scowl. Stiles stared back at Matt with deliberation and apprehension.

“We were reminiscing about some pranks we’ve done in the past and...” Stiles felt the need to explain, though to anyone else what they were doing was hardly criminal or grounds for suspicion. He and Matt stood a good distance away from the other; Stiles’ bubble of space was undisturbed. Not breeched in anyway.

Still, Stiles felt a disturbance. Derek’s body was tense, eyes hard, lips firmly sealed, jaw flexing with restraint. Stiles set the bowl of snacks to the counter and hurriedly approached the alpha and clasped Derek’s arm while taking a half step forward into the wolf’s personal space.

Derek seemed to settle by the man’s presence, tilted his head low, his nose barely grazed the human’s forehead and inhaled deeply, “Stiles.”

When the alpha took hold of his wrist he removed it from his arm, spun on his heel and strode out the kitchen, jerking the slighter with him. Stiles glanced back at the analyzing Matt whilst mouthing a ‘sorry’ and gestured with his free hand he would call the photographer at a later time.

Matt comprehending such smiled good-naturedly and tipped his head with conformance, seeming amused.

Stiles followed Derek out of the kitchen, down a long hallway, passed a lounge, living area and living room. As they neared the foyer Stiles’ perked at the call of his name.

A glance towards the staircase revealed Lydia and Allison, both were costumed. Lydia wore a strapless red corset; the edges were embroidered with green ivy. Skinny black jeans were accenteduated by knee high boots. Red locks were curled into perfect ringlets and fell over her shoulders. Plastic ivy was pinned throughout her hair. Being a comic book nerd, Stiles could clearly see the beauty was dressed as poison ivy.

Beside Lydia, Allison stood in a pure white sundress that reached her knees. Her hair was French braided and a golden halo was strapped over her head. The white feathered wings she wore were strapped about her shoulders and arms. She wore light makeup and plenty of body glitter that had her glowing like an ivory tower of beauty.

Stiles was tugged forward by the harsh yanking of Derek as the alpha swung the front door open. Stiles glanced back towards the animated duo apologetically.
“Sorry, I stayed as long as I could. I’ll call you both!” Stiles hollered as he was yanked further out and into the coolness of night.

Stiles compliantly followed Derek out of the home and towards the Camaro parked far off and away. When they passed his Jeep he exhaled heavily, contemplating just how he was going to be able to get all the way back here and pick it up at a later time.

When they finally reached the Camaro, Derek unlocked the passenger side and opened the door for him. Stiles glanced with deliberation towards the silent brute before giving in and seated himself down with a sigh, praying for patience. Derek shut the door behind him, rounded the car and shifted to sit at the drivers end. Stiles expected Derek to start the car immediately after he buckled himself in, but the alpha paused after inserting the key and turned to face him with consideration.

“Have you ever harbored feelings for that guy?” Derek was void of any emotion leaving Stiles unable to read the brute.

“Matt? No. I actually didn’t like the guy much in high school. I don’t know what it was, but I just didn’t like the vibes I got from him at the time. Things changed in senior year, turns out the guy’s not all that bad. Even so, no, Derek, I don’t have feelings for Matt in that way.”

Derek didn’t reply, though his shoulders seemed to sag where Stiles didn’t realize they’d been tense. Bowing his head low Derek exhaled heavily.

“Stiles…” Derek sounded so frayed and lost in that moment and all Stiles wanted was to appease him and reassure him, though unclear as to how.

“What is it, Derek?”

“I…”

“Derek,” Stiles pleaded tersely.

“Forget it,” Derek heaved.

“Derek—” Stiles began, but the alpha ignored his attempts and started the engine and began their long silent journey back home.

All the while Stiles glanced over to the silent brute. Braving up, Stiles tugged on the closet arm to him and Derek gave, offering his arm for Stiles to caress and hold close. As Stiles fiddled with the alpha’s fingers, a thought occurred to him. He shifted in his seat and slipped a hand in his pocket retrieving his chain of keys.

Stiles glanced towards Derek when he felt the alpha gaze briefly in question, before the wolf’s focus was directed back to the road. Stiles fiddled with the keys, until he successfully unclasped the desired key. He shoved the bulk of the keys back in his pocket, flattened out Derek’s palm and placed a single copper key into that hand.

Derek’s fingers twitched while fiddling it with voiceless question.

“It’s the house key. I made a copy. I just…wasn’t sure when to give it to you,” Stiles didn’t want to voice he’d been anxious Derek would reject it and voice an unwillingness to want to live with him—after the way he’d been acting as of late.

“We’ll be married soon and living under one roof, so—I mean it’s a lot better than breaking in every night…so—yeah—like whatever—it’s not important or anything,” Though it was important
to Stiles. He was opening his home as he’d opened his heart to the alpha and so few had ever held a place within it. Derek was slowly becoming his everything and to accept him into his home was more of a commitment than any bonding could ever be. A home was a place of sanctuary—a place to raise a family—a place full of love.

Derek remained still in silence, eyes focused on the road, features leaving nothing for interpretation. Stiles stared on anxiously awaiting for some type of vocal response, an emotion to lay open for the viewing, but he was left with nothing. Moments became a minute and that minute became several, but even so…silence was his companion.

Stiles thought that this was his answer, Derek unresponsive, uncaring and unaffectionate. Derek didn’t care it seemed. If Stiles had been in Derek’s shoes he would have demonstrated some type of reaction, acknowledgement, understanding, gratitude, anything but this; fiddling with a key whilst driving and looking dead on at the road, refusing to meet the other’s gaze.

Derek didn’t care. His fears were being acknowledged now and all he could do was sit, his heart festering, stomach twisting about in painful bulging knots and look out the side window. Wishing to be free from the alpha’s presence, given enough time to lick his wounds, hide and salvage what was left of his heart, tend to his wounds and hope their union didn’t destroy him in the process.
Don’t Let Me Go

That night when the two returned home, no words were exchanged. Derek held the key with a fistened grip, shoved it in his coat pocket and exhaled heavily before removing his clothing one by one. As he folded them and set them on the desk chair, Stiles undressed and tossed his clothes into the hamper before tucking himself under the bed sheets.

He stared at the alpha’s broad shoulders, the thickly inked triskelion and fidgeted with his fingers. Stiles hated this, being open- vulnerable and continuously having to be disregarded, ignored and kept at a distance.

When would Derek ever let him in? When would Derek express his thoughts freely and with no reserve? When?

Never. That was when.

Stiles tried to ignore the truth, brush it off, look past it and at the rare occurrences. Those rare occurrences of a kind hearted man, someone with a need of their own instead of this brute’s coldness, aloofness and inability to give- to open himself.

Stiles was the true fool for ever having thought Derek could feel anything for him other than a sense of duty and obligation. How he must look to Derek. Stiles dipped his head low and forlornly gazed upon his hands, their fidgeting stilling as they collapsed limply onto his lap.

He was a right fool- idiot- dimwit.

He foolishly wanted to love, to fall, feel all those wonderful warm sentiments with another person-Derek. Derek wasn’t that person though. He didn’t want Stiles’ affections. This was business and a treaty to be enacted by mating. Though Stiles needed to realize this, he’d attempted to overlook that one painstakingly obvious fact.

But no more, he knew now for certain Derek didn’t care about him in that way.

Stiles averted his gaze away from Derek’s as he slipped in beside him and scooted in close, an arm coiled around his waist while another slithered beneath his lower hip and tugged him back and against the alpha’s well-defined form.

Stiles stared at the wall before him for… he wasn’t sure how long, but he felt the subtle change in the alpha’s breathing as he fell asleep and continued to stare at the wall. When sleep refused to claim him that night, Stiles continued to stare at the wall helplessly.

His eyes stung as the skies lightened to dull blue and a glance at the counter clock read 5:34AM. Unable to sleep and refusing to be in Derek’s arms any longer, Stiles unwound himself from the alpha whilst overlooking the projecting growls of the slumbering beast.

He shifted to the edge of the bed when a hand shot out and clamped around his thigh possessively, wordlessly tugging him back. Leaning in close, Stiles nudged the alpha’s forehead with his nose as Derek shifted in the fog of sleep.

“I’ve an early shift to prepare for,” Stiles lied and when Derek released him to bury his head against the human’s pillow he stared after him a moment longer. Stiles pondered if Derek was
overcome by the need to sleep and was far too drowsy to detect his lie, or if he didn’t care enough to call him out on it. Regardless, Stiles stood, grabbed his towel from the shelf of the closet and headed for the shower.

When he reentered the bedroom a towel wrapped about his waist, hair dripping wet and skin pleasantly flushed and heated from a temperate shower he found the room empty of the alpha’s presence. Derek had stealthily exited his home.

“Bastard,” Stiles grumbled softly, voice gentle and lacking any maliciousness, even though he wished he could have summoned the strength for such.

Stiles dressed in his uniform and exited the home just as the sun began to rise. The sky was the most welcoming and calming of blues, tranquil and the sun bright, warm, and welcoming. It was a clear crisp morning, the early chill bringing with it coolness and a drive to start the day as it always did for Stiles.

A taxi pulled up in front of his home patiently waiting. Because of Derek’s moody pushy behavior the night before, Stiles didn’t have his Jeep. He needed to take the taxi to Lydia’s so he could retrieve his Jeep. He had a long day ahead of him and knew the quicker he retrieved his Jeep the quicker his day would progress, unawares as to how his day would take a serious turn for the worse.

Stiles’ day started off well enough, he’d arrived at Lydia’s by 7:00AM and headed to work from there. He felt guilty at having not greeted the redheaded beauty, but it was still early and he assumed she must be exhausted after hosting the party the night before. He silently promised himself to meet up with her later, maybe invite her for lunch so he could explain himself and apologize for leaving without having spent some time with her.

Work wasn’t as hectic as it normally was. He was called up a few times for minor offenses caused by rowdy youths, a bar fight consisting of some enamored football fans drunkenly cursing and mocking another teams failures. Stiles didn’t care all that much for football, than again Stiles didn’t care much about any sports- other than lacrosse, of course.

After sending those a part of the brawl into booking, Stiles texted Lydia about having lunch together to which she consented and noted she’d call him when she was ready to meet up. Soon after receiving Lydia’s text Stiles was called out to handle a domestic dispute.

When Stiles reached the familiar home he met child protective services out front. Stiles had been called time and time again to handle the disputing couple’s issues. Janet, the case worker was already talking with the wife, Sophia Becker. Sophia didn’t seem to be fairing all that well, she was a trembling wreck of tears and bruises layered the whole expanse of her face and neck, a nasty gash on her forehead bled profusely.

Janet was currently attempting to calm Mrs. Becker while simultaneously holding the woman’s eight month old Lily in one arm while wrapping another on the distressed mother’s seven year old, Andrew.

As Stiles made his way over to them he distinctly noticed the always incensed and aggressive Jonathan Becker wasn’t present as he normally was.

Janet noticed Stiles first and spoke hurriedly. “Sheriff!”
“Janet, what’s going on?” Stiles quizzed, raising a hand towards Sophia and gently nudged her chin to inspect the injuries she’d received.

Sophia reminded him a lot of Lydia when she’d been mated to Peter, and for that reason he took great pains to help her in any way he could. He’d arrested her husband countless times though in the end not much could be done because Sophia dropped the charges far too fearful of her husband and wishing to make their marriage work for their children.

Stiles and Janet tried countless times to convince Sophia to leave her husband, reaffirming they would protect her from him if she ever chose to leave, but she was held back by fear.

“I came for an inspection and to check on the children. When I arrived, Mrs. Becker told Mr. Becker she’s going to leave him and he became violent. He came out a moment ago trying to get her and the children to go back into the home. When he couldn’t, he stormed back inside.”

Stiles raised a brow, staring into the tear stricken pale blue eyes of Sophia in disbelief. All their efforts seemed to be working in their favor.

“I—I—can’t risk Lily’s and Andrew’s safety. He…he was going to hit Andrew, but I stopped him and told him I was going to leave him. He’s…I’ve never seen him this angry before,” Sophia wept, trembling harshly, platinum blond bangs shielding her eyes as she wept all the harder.

Stiles heard the revving of an engine and glance over to his side, two fellow officers exited their vehicle and ambled towards them.

Stiles met Janet’s gaze to give her the okay to leave with the children and Sophia while he and his men arrest Mr. Becker for battery charges, but stilled when Sophia cried out a strangled holler of fear. He followed her terror stricken gaze towards their two story home and to the porch where the burly Mr. Becker stood, a gun raised.

Stiles body tensed for one moment before moving into action.

“Janet, get Sophia and the children out of here,” Stiles demanded whilst the two officers raised their guns at Mr. Becker and ordered for him to drop his weapon.

Janet quickly rushed the children towards her sedan and Sophia made to follow after her. Stiles reached out for his gun at his holster.

“I’ll kill you before I let you take the children!” Mr. Becker shouted.

“Drop your weapon!” Anthony, the youngest of deputies commanded.

Mr. Becker shouted an enraged roar of bravado as his eyes met Sophia’s and Stiles knew that look well. He’d seen it countless times in murderers he’d arrested and reacted in that moment, dropping his gun in his rush to shield Sophia’s body with his own. The cracking of gunfire sounded and echoed within the cul-de-sac.

The first shot clipped Stiles’ right ear, the next ripped at his collar, the third pierced his chest, and the last gutted his abdomen. Each hit shook his body with their power, each stole a gasp of air, and each shot evoked a painful jolt of agony to take root.

Stiles blinked sporadically passed the intense throbbing and spasms of pain, stared blankly towards Mr. Becker and watched in that very moment his men release fire and blood splatter all across Mr. Becker’s chest. A moment later the man slumped back and down against the frame of the doorway, dead.
Sophia was blaring, but her words were dulled out as Stiles’ body suddenly felt heavy, weighed down as if an anchor were pulling him downward. Unable to keep his legs locked he pressed his weight against Sophia, his legs losing their strength to hold him up any longer. He met her worry consumed gaze before collapsing to his knees. His hands sliding with him down her arms and clutched loosely to her calves.

Stiles raised his gaze to scan her body for any notable wounds and felt relief claim him when he found none. He’d managed to keep her safe using his body to shield her own.

When he was reassured of Sophia’s safety he found only then did the pain accost him and he gasped past the suddenly rapid pulsing of his heart. Sophia’s hands were on his face attempting to keep it upright as it lolled back and his body swayed.

“-iles, Sti-, St-, -tiles, Stiles!” Sophia bawled, not of the grief that was her dead husband and fears, but for Stiles.

Stiles strained to show no distress, but it soon was replaced with a grimace as he struggled to breathe. Breathing was suddenly far too difficult. His lungs burned with each inhale and seized with every exhale. Not wishing to alarm her, Stiles fought through the agony and flashed a sideways smile.

“Ssssa’okay,” Stiles wheezed, before he felt a stranger’s large hands grasp him from behind and rest him back and against the asphalt of the street.

Stiles stared up past the blur of slowly forming tears and into Anthony’s panicked orbs.

“Sheriff, the ambulance is on its way,” Richard reassured and knelt beside him.

Anthony pressed his hands against Stiles’ collar and chest while Richard hard-pressed both his hands against his abdomen. Stiles choked out a sore cry as the pain doubled tenfold at the pressure overlaying his wounds. He knew his men were trying to stop the bleeding, but all Stiles wanted now was to leave his wounds alone, the pressure was excruciating, unbearable.

Sweat materialized at the crown of his forehead as Stiles’ breathing became piercing gasps attempting to endure the agony, though his eyes felt heavy and drooped. He was drained. He’d had a restless night and now was struggling all the more to remain awake- through the pain, the loss of blood and the sharp lungfuls of air. It was all too much.

Stiles only wanted to shut his eyes for a few moments, rest, though he knew he shouldn’t. Even though he knew what he should do; stay awake, refuse to fall into the darkness that was beckoning for him, he gave. He shut his eyes, heard the frightened call of, ‘Sheriff!’ and ‘Stay awake!’

The sorrowful heart-wrenching howl that rung in his ears startled Stiles in the darkness and he fought against the weakness and lulls of sleep, opening his eyes, met his officers gazes before they were looking all around them as if having heard the howl too.

Stiles swallowed thickly, choking past saliva when his body protested at the action and coughed feebly, red liquid projecting outwards. Tilting his head to the side blood poured out of him and slid along the side of his mouth to pool on the asphalt. A throbbing soreness pulsed at the left side of his chest as he struggled to breathe and his eyes once more struggled to remain open.

Another howl erupted, this time closer, louder. Stiles wasn’t sure if he was imagining it but it almost sounded distressed, for at the end of the howl came a rasped whine.

“What the hell was that?” Anthony asked on edge, confirming that it wasn’t just a part of Stiles’
imagination.

The distant sounds of a siren wailing alerted them the ambulance was near.

“Stiles,” Came Sophia’s sob and Stiles struggled to raise his head up once more to meet her stare.

His right hand twitched as he raised it out to her and she immediately kneeled to take hold of it. He tightened his grip in encouragement and sought out all his will to speak.

“The children?”

“They’re okay, they didn’t see. They’re in the car with Janet,” Sophia explained, knowing Stiles worried of damaging Andrew’s fragile state with the sight of himself and the now dead Mr. Becker.

Stiles nodded as best he could, but it came off as a jerk of his head.

“Go to them…they need you,” Stiles exhaled heavily.

“No, I can’t leave you like this,” Sophia broke out in a sob.

Stiles smiled softly and with a slight quaking hand released his hold on hers.

“Please,” Stiles didn’t want Sophia to see him like this, he wasn’t sure how bad his state was, but the call for darkness was near and it was no longer beckoning him, but demanding he join.

Sophia choked out a whine as she took hold of his hand once more and planted a kiss of gratitude. “Thank you,” She breathed before placing his hand to the ground with all the care she had and palmed her mouth, silencing her sobs as she rushed off to where he assumed Janet and the children were.

“Sheriff! Stay awake,” Richard shouted when Stiles hadn’t realized he’d shut his eyes and opened them once more, swallowing back blood past the pain it brought.

He couldn’t fight the darkness anymore, even as his eyes remained open, spots of black materialized in his sights. He knew he didn’t have much time left.

“I can’t,” Stiles admitted distantly, his hearing was fading as too was his vision, he could hardly hear the sirens of the ambulance or his own breathing. “I…can’t anymore.”

The third howl was the loudest, so near Stiles could feel the vibrations rumble against the earth and course through him. His hearing was fading, but he still felt the howl and could only imagine its true power if not for his swaying conscious.

Stiles recognized that howl only now and the dampness of his eyes overwhelmed him. Derek. It was Derek. It had to be. The alpha was reserved and cold, but those howls they were the most painful and destroyed of cries, the cries of a wolf. Derek knew, somehow he knew Stiles was hurt, maybe he could smell the blood, the blood that was soaking his clothes and the graveled road it red.

Stiles sobbed helplessly, fearing the darkness now when the call of the alpha made everything oh so clear. Derek was crying. Stiles knew it as much as he knew this darkness might be endless. Derek was all Stiles had left and Stiles was all Derek had, they were kin no matter if their bonding wasn’t complete. They were true mates.
He stared at the clear blue sky; tears slipping passed his waning will along his temple and dampened his hair, “I—I don’t want to die,” Stiles wailed with panicked grief, fearing the darkness that was so near.

He didn’t want to leave this world just yet. He had so much he wanted to do. He wanted to travel through Europe, watch every James Bond film, make fire the old fashion way, sleep outdoors and stare at the stars, enact peace for werewolves and human’s, reconcile with Scott, and to finally confess to Derek, tell him just how much he was loved.

The world was fading out so swiftly now and the darkness was shadowing his waking sight. “I… I-don’t want to die.”

Stiles’ eyes fluttered shut as the last of his sobs broke free in a heavy exhale and the darkness stole him from consciousness.

Richard and Anthony stared in disbelief at the motionless man before them.

“Sheriff… Sheriff!” Richard pleaded, removing one of his hands from applying pressure on the wound and shook his shoulder, but Stiles remained ever still.

As Richard reached out to feel for a pulse another howl sounded this one far too close. The officer’s raised their gaze, for before them stood the alpha Derek Hale, eyes gleaming madder as he stood in his full werewolf alpha form.

The beast’s muscular hind legs flexed when it took several seemingly vacillating steps toward the immobilized human. Its body contained that of a human figure, yet its limbs and head resembled a wolf. It possessed oversized paws and its razor sharp claws curled just slightly. The beast’s extensive jet-black mane glistening, bellowing in the gusty winds, sheltered its entire body and concealed its manhood. The beast had an elongated snout; its lips blackened and coiled back panting heavily.

Richard and Anthony released their hold of the Sheriff when the beast growled towards them and they cautiously took several steps away. The alpha edged closer and sniffed at the motionless Sheriff, whimpered as its damp nose nudged the human’s forehead before lapping at the flesh almost pleading.

Richard and Anthony stared on in disbelief as the alpha whimpered continuously, his whimpers breaking deep in his throat and shifting into a choked bark that morphed into a howl as the alpha lifted its head to the sky.

The ambulance swerved down the neighborhood, passed the neighbors who’d left their homes to survey the scene and pulled to a stop near the Sheriff and the alpha. The paramedics exited the vehicle and rushed towards the two. Richard took note when the paramedics bowed low to the alpha, not daring to touch the Sheriff without permission. The alpha’s head dipped slightly and he took several steps back allowing the paramedics to quickly tend to the Sheriff.

“They’re werewolves?” Anthony whispered in question.

Richard nodded in conformance.

“I’m not hearing a heart beat,” One of the medics noted, relying on his wolf hearing. “I’ll administer CPR while you get the kit set up.”

When the CPR didn’t seem to be working the other paramedic ripped open the Sheriff’s uniform top, stuck plastic pads at his upper pictorials and switched on the heart monitor. The dull droning
of an inactive heart sounded on the monitor beside the medic.

“Clear!” The medic called, raising two metal plates and pressed a trigger when pressing them against the Sheriff’s chest.

Stiles’s chest rose before slamming back down frailly and his head lulled to the side.

The medic stared at the inactive monitor for a moment before shouting again, “Clear!”

Stiles’ body jerked again, though with no activity of the heart monitor.

“Clear!” Nothing.

“Clear!” Silence.

“Clear!” Worry.

“Clear!” Fear.

“Clear…”

The alpha whined piercingly, falling back onto all fours and prowled near the motionless Sheriff, pacing back and forth, whimpering and whining each and every ‘Clear,’ that came with no response of the heart monitor. When the eleventh ‘Clear!’ came and the heart monitor remained inactive, the alpha howled as it collapsed to the ground, and dampness soaked the fur near cardinal depths.

The alpha nudged Stiles’ hand lying limply on the asphalt as the medic with the plates paused while the other retrieved a lengthy syringe and vial. Filling the syringe with clear liquid he slammed it into the center of the Sheriff’s chest and injected the fluid.

“Again,” The medic spoke as he removed the syringe and the alpha pulled back and watched with intensity.

“Clear!”

A jump in the heart monitor sounded before droning.

“Clear!”

Another jump, that turned to two, then three, before beating a constant pulsing.

The medics let out a breath and moved into action. One went to retrieve the gurney while the other tended to patching up the bleeding out wounds.

Richard dispatched to headquarters alerting them of the situation and watched as they rolled the Sheriff into the ambulance.

The alpha shifted and morphed then into his human state, completely bear. Sweat layered the alpha’s body whilst his face was smeared in a mixture of sweat- and those close enough to see were startled to find remains of tears. A paramedic retrieved a blanket, offering it to the alpha. Derek took the sheet and quickly covered himself up, swiftly entering the back with the Sheriff and one of the medics.

Derek’s body shuddered noticeably as he reached out to grasp a hold of the unconscious human’s hand and raise it to his lips, kissing and nudging it with his nose. The tender moment was shielded
from view as the other medic shut the door and rounded to the drivers end. Revving the engine before speeding towards the hospital, the sirens fading as the ambulance disappeared, rounding a corner.

When Stiles woke soreness plagued him, his head clouded over, as if coming out of a deep sleep induced by a ton of sleeping aid. Moaning in discomfort, his eyes fluttered attempting to make sense of the lethargic confusion that was him. He felt overheated— he was burning up, sweat lining his body, soaking him in clammy perspiration.

_How could it possibly be this hot in early November?_

A strangled groan escaped dry slips and suddenly pain was overpowering heat as his consciousness became all the more lucid with agonized throbbing all about his body, lungs feeling weighed and straining to breathe properly.

Stiles felt as if he had a mouthful of cotton balls. As he attempted to swallow spit his tongue smacked dryly against the roof of his mouth.

“Wa—water,” Stiles croaked in the darkness surrounding his squinting eyes, attempting to arouse, shifting his legs he found them pinned by something, arching his back following a whine of protest - there was a weight there too. Something was hard-pressed against him and no matter how he tried to open his eyes fully they stung from exhaustion and refused to comply.

All at once the weight shifted and a moment after the edge of a plastic cup was pressed against the crease of his lips. He raised an unsteady hand through the haziness of consciousness, his fingers brushed against another’s, folding over it and the cup he assisted in tipped it to some extent and drank.

The cool liquid coursed passed his dry mouth, rejuvenating his sore throat and filling his stomach, quenching his thirst.

Stiles’ hand fell away when he’d had his fill and slumped further in what he now realized was a bed if not for the plush pillows supporting his head then the layers of blankets keeping him well heated. He gave up the struggle of remaining awake and conscious and fell back into the restfulness of sleep where the pain would be dulled.

The next time Stiles awoke to the sensation of something pressing against him, nudging his jaw then the junction of his neck.

Stiles whimpered as pressure was placed over his legs and wrapped itself about his chest. Blinking his eyes in an attempt to clear his vision, he was finally able to affirm he lay in a whitewashed room, in a bed tucked under several layers of blankets. Derek lay beside him, a leg strewn around his thighs and arm protectively pawing the expanse of his chest as the alpha nuzzled his neck.

The distant call of a woman paging doctors’ through an intercom alerted Stiles he was in the hospital.

Stiles breathed deeply and whined at the soreness of his chest, and forced himself to breathe slowly, not wishing to agitate his lungs.

“Derek,” Stiles called at the realization he was awake, he hadn’t died, thankfully he’d only passed out due to pain. He was alive, Derek was here now. The alpha must have arrived when he’d been unconscious and followed him back to the hospital.
It was late now, it had to be; the lights of the room were switched off. The window to the left of
the bed wasn’t drawn all the way and Stiles could make out through the darkness, street lights. To
the right was a shut door and next to it was a slightly ajar door leading to a restroom, the light
inside was switched on to illuminate the room just barely. A heart monitor attached to his chest
was beside his left and beeped every several long moments. The colorful array of numbers made
little sense to him.

“It was late now, it had to be; the lights of the room were switched off. The window to the left of
the bed wasn’t drawn all the way and Stiles could make out through the darkness, street lights. To
the right was a shut door and next to it was a slightly ajar door leading to a restroom, the light
inside was switched on to illuminate the room just barely. A heart monitor attached to his chest
was beside his left and beeped every several long moments. The colorful array of numbers made
little sense to him.

“Stiles,” Derek murmured; his voice hoarse, thick with emotion.

“Derek,” Stiles cooed gently, raising a hand to pet at the alpha’s mane, felt the tug of his IV drip
and disregarded the discomfort.

“Derek,” Stiles breathed when the alpha shuddered against him, nuzzling his neck further and
refusing to raise his gaze to meet the human’s.

Stiles for the first time took notice Derek wasn’t wearing his usual leather coat, tight t-shirt, fitted
jeans and boots. Instead he wore pale blue scrubs and white slip-on loafers.

“What are you wearing?” Stiles couldn’t help but ask, momentarily distracted.

“It doesn’t matter,” Derek inhaled Stiles’ scent whilst tenderly caressing the human’s sore chest,
almost to reaffirm his existence.

“I’m okay,” Stiles reassured several moments later, threading his fingers in silky curls.

“No you’re not,” Derek hissed angrily, nudging Stiles’ neck and exhaling a shuddering breath that
closely resembled a breathless sob.

“Derek, look at me,” Stiles implored.

Derek didn’t budge.

“I’m okay. I’m alive,” Stiles attempted to put the alpha at ease, but this didn’t seem to be having
the calming effect he thought it would, instead Derek tensed.

“But you weren’t.”

Stiles fell silent at this.

“What do you mean?”

Derek did not reply, only tightened his hold of the human’s legs by curling his knee and bringing
the slighter closer and whined piercingly.

“You- When I arrived…your heart…the silence… I wanted death because you weren’t… I wanted
dead.”

Stiles breathed faintly, exhaled the breath softly as he made sense of Derek’s wounded expression
of a grief almost attainable and unbearable. The darkness really had been death and he…would
never have been here, never have felt Derek’s possessive, desperate pawing and nuzzling.

Stiles swallowed thickly, winced as his exhale of a breath seared his lungs and patted Derek’s head
much in the way his mother had done for him when soothing his pains and worries.
“I’m sorry.”

Derek didn’t reply only held him close and Stiles fought against the soreness of his body to immerse himself in the warmth and care of Derek’s hold.

“I don’t want you to feel obligated to say anything. We can pretend later, when I’m not so weak and vulnerable that I never said it. But… I almost…and I need you to know. I need to say this. Derek…” Stiles shut his eyes and tilted his chin against Derek’s ear, pressing fond kisses at the patch of hair near him.

“I love you… I’ve been trying not to say those words, keep it in, bury it and hold it to myself, but I can’t. I love you,” Stiles paused, swallowed tears and winced at the discomfort of his lungs before voicing that which he’d held for too long.

“You make loving you easy, because you’re just…like, wonderful. So wonderful. Sure you’re an ass, a moody jerk and extremely pushy, but you are always there when I need you. I love you,” Stiles felt the tears overwhelming his sight and laughed through the pain for finally having the courage to confess.

“God, I can’t stop saying it. I just… I didn’t want to die because I was afraid I’d never be able to tell you…and I just—just—” Stiles felt tears dampen his lashes as they were barely holding back from flooding the brims of his lids, his voice wavering on so many emotions.

“I love you. I can’t stop thinking about you. I can’t sleep without you… You’re always in the back of my mind, and I… I just… love. I love. I’m just so in love with you,” Stiles expressed the tidal wave of emotions he’d kept buried for too long, his breathing uneven as his nerves shook him.

Stiles waited for a response, any; though he told Derek he didn’t need one, he really did. Derek lay still, still and stiff throughout the whole of his confession and Stiles swallowed thickly as the silence became deafening.

Then something happened, Stiles hadn’t expected it and was surprised when Derek took hold of the left hand contentedly stroking his hair and brought it to his mouth. Heated breath ghosted over the flesh of his knuckles as Derek planted his lips against them in a firm and lengthy kiss. When Stiles’ fingers twitched from nerves they brushed against the alpha’s stubble chin and felt the trail of damp voiceless tears there.

Stiles shut his eyes and strived to remember this moment. When he opened his eyes once more, it was morning and Derek was gone.
When the nurse found Stiles was conscious, she’d paged the doctor who’d given him the overview of his health. The shell of Stiles’ right ear had been nicked by a bullet and the doctors were able to repair it enough so it would only leave minimal scaring. The gunshot wound to his collar was a clean shot, and the bullet hadn’t managed to hit anything critical. The gunshot wound to his chest had managed to rupture his spleen and it had been removed. The gunshot wound to his stomach didn’t hit any vital organs or arteries and the surgery to remove it went rather well, there were no signs of infection, but the doctors thought it best he remain under observation for the next week or so.

All it all, Stiles was one lucky bastard who must have a hell of a guardian angel on his side or so the doctor joked, and Stiles wondered if it were true. He wasn’t all that religious, but he did believe in a higher being. Maybe his guardian angel happened to be his mother. Stiles smiled at the thought. She sang like an angel, she might as well be an angel in the afterlife.

Stiles spent the morning going under further tests and examinations. When he finally was rolled back into his room a nurse informed him his breakfast was on its way and Stiles could hardly wait. He was starving. He’d skipped breakfast the morning everything went to hell and he’d been shot.

When there was a knock at the door, Stiles perked.

The door opened a moment after and the nurse carrying a tray of breakfast entered. Stiles stared in bewilderment when faced by the sight of a frayed Melissa McCall. Stiles really shouldn’t have been surprised. Melissa worked as a hospital nurse; of course she would be there. She must have heard what happened soon after Stiles was admitted in the hospital due to Beacon Hills being a small city and that he tended to be the forefront of all gossip since he was soon to be Derek’s mate.

“Stiles,” Melissa called anxiously setting the tray onto the table to the side and enfolded her arms around his frail bandaged frame.

“Hey, longtime no see, thought I’d admit myself so I could have you as my nurse. You know… I think it’s just about that time for my bath,” Stiles jested and received a light smack to the head.

“Dirty boy, how old are you again?” Melissa teased, grinning good-naturedly.

“A twenty six year old man and of consenting age,” Stiles answered huskily and wiggled his brows playfully.

“Stiles,” Melissa laughed and took a seat beside Stiles’ bed. All at once her laughter died and her features tensed in a concerned frown.

“I was in the ER when they brought you in. I’ve been waiting to see you.”

Stiles sighed knowing all joking now put to the side their conversation was headed for some serious contemplation.

“Yeah, it’s just another part of the job I guess.”

“What happened?”
“Domestic dispute turned bad.”

“Stiles,” Melissa breathed gently.

“Well, it’s not all that bad. Just going to take some time to heal is all.”

“I told Scott and Allison,” Melissa confessed. “They should be here soon.”

Stiles stared blankly at the woman before him before forcing out a harsh laugh. “Allison should be here soon you mean. Scott could give two shits.”

“Stiles,” Melissa reprimanded. “Allison explained the two of you are having some issues right now, but you should know better than that. Scott loves you like a brother.”

Stiles shook his head disputing those claims for truth. “He could care less.”

“Stiles—”

“Anywho, could you call Lydia for me? I was supposed to meet her for lunch when… I’d like to talk to her, but my cell is back at the precinct.”

“Allison said she’d call her.”

“Then I guess she’ll be here soon, that girl is the fiercest mama bear known to man. She’s probably salivating at the mouth and just wishing she could have been the one to get her hands on the perp,” Stiles grinned halfheartedly, thoughts of Scott plaguing him, and he truly hoped even though he hated himself for it, that Scott would come with Allison. He missed his best friend a great deal.

Melissa smiled at the imagery. “True, just don’t let her hear you say that.”

Stiles pursed his lips at this. “I’m not that crazy, woman!”

Stiles’ stomach growled from hunger in that moment and Melissa smiled amusedly before sliding the table and tray over Stiles’ lap. Stiles glanced down at his tray of breakfast and scowled; a package of vanilla yogurt, orange juice, and some type of frozen fruity juice.

“What the hell is this?”

“Breakfast?”

“This is not breakfast.”

Melissa choked out a bark of laughter; apparently Stiles’ expression was cause for hilarity.

“For the time being, you are on a strict diet of liquids.”

Stiles blinked. “For how long?”

“Normally a week, maybe more.”

“I want bacon!” Stiles whined.

“Sorry love.”

“This sucks,” Stiles grumbled dismayed.
Stiles begrudgingly unsealed his yogurt and spooned a mouthful, spoon upturned and still in mouth whilst glaring accusingly at the widely grinning Melissa when the door of the room opened and in came barreling a wild-eyed Lydia.

Stiles smiled in the sights of his most beloved friend and just the person he needed beside him, his substitute mother. He choked on his spoon when the frantic mama werewolf sped towards him and wrapped him in a painful bear hug. Stiles groaned at the pain that befell him, Lydia squeezing too tight about his sore chest.

Lydia stiffened and immediately released the human to survey him. “God, sorry, I just sort of—”

“S’alright,” Stiles smiled encouragingly through his spoon, slipping it out and placed it on the tray before opening his arms for her once again. “Gentle this time.”

Lydia smiled, laughed edgily, voice a bit too high in the starting of a sob and encased him in her far more tender hold, nuzzling his patched up ear. Stiles’ smile faded as she shook against him, a sharp chirp was inhaled as she shook all the harder and Stiles felt his own eyes dampen as the redhead beauty began to weep.

“Don’t cry, Lydia. I’m fine, really. The doctors say I’ll be good as new in a few weeks time.”

Lydia whimpered, running her hands over his back and slipped onto the bed next to him to curl up close.

“You’re resigning from the force. I’ll hire you as my law firm’s private investigator, pay you double—triple the amount you’re making now.”

Stiles chuckled softly patting at the emotional woman’s back in comfort.

“Don’t laugh. I’m serious.”

Stiles smirked. “I know, but I’m quite at peace with my job.”

A feral growl of annoyance sounded as Lydia pulled away from nuzzling to sneer angrily.

“Aw, don’t be like that; you know how important being the Sheriff is to me,” Stiles became the Sheriff because of his father, wanting to make his father’s hard work at sustaining order a reality and he knew Lydia was aware of this, for he’d said it countless times.

Lydia pouted her lower lip childishly and ran her finger flirtatiously over the man’s chest teasingly. “Even if I say pretty please with whip cream and a cherry on top.”

Stiles snickered. “So barking up the wrong tree.”

Lydia snorted and patted Stiles jaw in the softest of slaps. “Well you’re missing out.”

“Ew—just ew. You’re like a mother to me.”

Lydia glared murderously. “Take it back.”

“Hell no.”

“Take it back,” Lydia barked.

“Nein.”
“Take it back.”

“I’ll say no in Spanish; no.”

“Stiiiiiles!” Lydia whined.

“Lydiiiiiiiia!” Stiles whined back.

“Why do you hate me so much? And why in the hell am I always referred to as your mom? Do I look old enough to be a mother? I’m a sexy bitch! I deserve to be drooled at not to clean up drooling babies!”

Stiles laughed unsympathetically and groaned after every cackle of a laugh, palming his abdomen and chest, sore.

“Sorry,” Lydia apologized.

Stiles smiled weakly, leaning back on the bed. He had a long morning with the testing and now forcing himself to be entertaining for his friends.

Glancing towards Melissa, Stiles spoke. “Doesn’t Lydia make the perfect mother figure, warm and fierce?”

Melissa nodded in agreement and Lydia groaned exasperatedly finding no help. Melissa stood to her feet then and informed them she was still on the clock, promising to return when she could and left soon after.

Lydia sat up on the bed, retrieved the yogurt and spooned a large scoop.

“Heeeeeey!” Stiles whined.

“Hey yourself, I drove here as soon as I found out and skipped breakfast, thank you very much.”

“You’re horrible.”

“Not mothering in the least,” Lydia’s eyes sparkled with a cheeky grin.

Stiles glared at the woman, reached out for the frozen pink package of juice, tearing it open and sucked up the strawberry flavored liquid. It filled him in ways he hadn’t realized he needed and his stomach ached for more.

The two ate in silence Lydia enjoying her yogurt whilst Stiles lay tiredly in bed, sleepily sucking his juice and fighting back the rest that wanted to claim him. He was absolutely exhausted and just wanted to sleep. Maybe it was the fact that since his surgeries his body needed the rest, yet his mind refused to give into those needs that now it was far more difficult.

“You should rest, you look ragged,” Lydia noted, worry once again lining her voice.

“Yeah, but Allison’s on her way,” Stiles yawned and placed his half eaten juice onto the table.

“Rest, Allison will understand and I’ll keep her company.”

“Thanks,” Stiles smiled as his eyes shut and he began drifting off to sleep.

Stiles heard Lydia shift, the clang of the spoon hitting the tray before she nestled close to his side and placed her head against his shoulder minding not to put too much pressure on his sore body.
Stiles blindly palmed the werewolf’s flaming mane, petting it soothingly much in the way he’d done to pacify Derek.

“I’m not going anywhere.”

“Promise?” Lydia sighed softly.

“Yeah, mom, you can count on my promises.”

Silence followed before an agitated. “I hate you.”

“That’s to be expected, mother and child relationship dynamic and whatnot.”

“Stiles, shut up and sleep.”

Stiles smirked. “Now you sound like Derek.”

“He’s a smart man.”

“You know you like my ramblings.”

“Sorry love, can’t say I do, though I’d assume Derek would, what with you two being true mates and all, he’d have to learn to be accustomed to it.”

“Oooo, burn.”

“Yuuup.”

“You’re such a bitch.”

“And you’re such a fairy.”

“Really? Insulting the wounded patient now, Lydia?”

“Yuuup.”

“My God, I can’t sleep with you next to me.”

“I’m not the one who can’t shut up.”

“It’s the ADHD, I tell you!”

“Ugh! Shut up and sleep before you die of sleep deprivation.”

“You can’t die of sleep deprivation unless you’ve gone months without sleep.”

“Oh. My. God. Do you ever stop talking, like really.”

“No.”

“You’re something else.”

“Yuuup,” Stiles mimicked Lydia.

“Okay. Sleep. Now.”

Silence filled the room for little over a moment before, “Lydia.”
“Jesus! Stiles, sleep already.”
“I will, I just want to say one thing.”
“What is it?” Lydia groused.
“I love you.”
Stiles felt the smile gracing Lydia’s lips against his shoulder and grinned in reply.
“I love you too, Stiles.”
“You’re awesome.”
“And you’re still not sleeping.”
“Fine, yeeesh!”

Stiles woke later that afternoon to find Lydia was no longer lying beside him. Glancing about the room his eyes set on Allison sitting near the foot of the bed shifting through an aeneous frayed leather bound hardback with interest.

The hunter, as if sensing a pair of eyes on her, set the book onto her lap and raised her gaze to meet Stiles.’

“A bit of light reading I see,” He jested.
Allison smiled softly, though the smile did not reach her eyes- could not when they were suddenly tearing over and a choked, “Stiles,” burst forth. She stood, book completely forgotten fell to the floor as she rose and leapt to embrace the frail man.

Stiles raised a hand and stroked at lustrous melanic tresses, his other running comforting circles about her quaking shoulder blades.

“Don’t cry Allison, I’m okay, really. Just need a bit of rest before I’m back to my old neurotic ADHD self.”
“I know, but…”
“I understand,” Stiles conceded, resting his chin against a lanky shoulder and released a breath of grave consideration.

When Allison calmed enough, she pulled back enough to survey him with concern. “Did I hurt you?”

“No,” Stiles reassured when Allison planted a hand to palm his patched ear and the bandaged collar peaking through the neckline of his hospital gown.

“Allison, I’m not going to lie, it hurts like a mother hmm-hmm, but they’ve got me on the blessed morphine and I’m riding it out with smiles.”

Allison expelled a breath of relief, nodding in conformance and crawled up to sit beside Stiles and
resting her head against his shoulder her arm wrapping about his waist as she exhaled once more.

“It’s okay I hold you like this?” Allison asked softly, worried she’d inflict pain.

“Knock yourself out. I feel like I’m a life size teddy bear, first it was Derek, then Lydia, and now you,” Stiles chuckled and felt the curve of amusement against his body from the hunter.

“That’s because you are. You’re far more comfortable than Scott any day,” Allison teased.

Stiles’ smile faded at the mention of Scott. Allison was the only one in his room, Scott… didn’t care. He’d almost died and Scott truly could give two shits.

Allison seemed to sense the shift in Stiles and quickly spoke, “Scott was here, he really was, but…”

Stiles shut his eyes not wishing to have this conversation.

“It’s just when he saw you… you know, fear and grief influences everyone differently.”

“You don’t have to lie. It’s… I get it.”

“No, Stiles, Scott was here. I swear—”

“Allison… don’t bother.”

“Stiles.”

“I don’t care.”

“Stiles, don’t say that. Scott’s just… he’s… I honestly don’t know what, but we’ve been talking and I think—”

“Where’d Lydia run off to?” Stiles deflected, needing to talk about anything but Scott, think of anything else.

Allison exhaled another breath, full of frustration before giving into Stiles’ need. “She left to get coffee.”

Stiles chose then to bring up as many distracting topics of conversation, straying far from or relating to Scott. Allison spoke of her training with her father, some new books her father had given her to research and further gain knowledge in different types of species and their related mythologies.

By Allison’s prompting Stiles discussed the events that which led him to hospital. It hadn’t been as difficult as he’d thought it would have been, but to recall the pain and darkness that called to him had sent him a bit on edge at the realization of just how close he’d been on deaths door. Allison seemed to realize this and soon changed the topic.

They argued on menu ideas for the wedding. Stiles was adamant they order doves to be released after they exchanged their vows to which Allison whined, bemoaning how cheesy and clichéd the idea was. Stiles was less than willing to give up on the idea and they finally agreed to release several dozen Papilionidae butterflies during the ceremony. It was still cheesy but with the outdoors location they might be able to pull it off.

That was the moment in which Lydia reappeared nursing the last of her brewed coffee. She soon joined the two and shuffled in to Stiles’ open side and Stiles couldn’t help noticing if he weren’t
homosexual this could easily be a dream come true. Allison laughed whilst Lydia rolled her eyes, remarking she was way, way, way out of Stiles’ league and so too was Allison.

The three talked about everything and nothing, laughed till tears gleamed in their eyes and—Allison and Lydia from joy and Stiles from pained amusement, his stomach sore and aching with each vibration of a laugh.

Far too soon Lydia and Allison noted they had to go back to work, having put their schedules on hold for as long as they could. They’d both promised to stop by later on that night and Stiles was sorry to see them go.

Soon after the two left, Stiles finally allowed himself to give into the pain. He didn’t want to worry those he loved; he didn’t want them to see just how much pain he was enduring. The morphine was a great assistance but it wasn’t nearly as enough as he wanted in his system. His body ached, if he moved an inch in the wrong angle hot white agony flared and his breath stilled, tender lungs fighting back a sob. Stiles found his only solace when asleep and so when he was finally left alone he gave to the lulls of slumber.

Stiles woke later that evening to agitated hisses of irritation, voices low as if not to wake the already alert Stiles.

“What in the hell are they doing outside of the room?” Jackson snapped.

“Like I’m to know?” Allison answered bitterly. “They won’t say nor leave.”

“Call Mr. Argent,” Lydia suggested.

“Like that’s going to do anything,” Jackson shot back.

“What’s that to mean?” Allison snipped hotly.

“Uh, I don’t know, Derek’s Stiles’ fiancé, put two and two together.”

A moment’s pause followed before Lydia groaned restlessly and there came a stomp of a heel on tiled floors.

“You can’t be saying this is because of Derek?” Allison contemplated.

“I don’t know, but do you honestly think Erica, Boyd and Isaac would willingly want to spend their Friday night standing outside of the Sheriff’s door for kicks.”

“So they’re his bodyguards now?” Allison suggested with a frown.

“Apparently,” Lydia groaned. “How could Derek assign that bitch as Stiles’ guard.”

A bang against wood broke free and Stiles’ eyes opened then, glancing about the room. Jackson was leaning alongside the farthest wall, arms folded about his chest, glaring at the shut door of the room and apparently beyond it to the disturbance.

Allison and Lydia sat beside Jackson. Lydia growled at the door. “Bitch, wake up Stiles and your dead.”

Then Lydia made to glance towards Stiles and he immediately shut his eyes and feigned sleep, though unsure why. He should just pretend that he’d woken from the disturbance, the obvious
bang of the door coming undoubtedly from the eavesdropping Erica. He’d loved to see Lydia go homicidal on the blond witch, but he didn’t.

“Can we really blame Derek?” Jackson sighed.

Lydia seemed to choke on spit, “You’re really taking the alpha’s side on this?”

“Well, yeah. I mean think about it. Stiles almost died, the alpha wasn’t able to protect him and he’s got a lot on his plate as the leader of werewolves. He can’t possibly spend all his waking hours beside Stiles, no matter if his instincts drive him to do so. So what better way to keep his future mate safe than sic the three stooges on him.”

Silence followed as the others contemplated Jackson’s very astute observations. Stiles could hardly believe it; Derek was so worried about him he’d assigned bodyguards. Stiles wasn’t sure he liked the idea of being followed around with the three stooges, he guessed having Boyd and Isaac as bodyguards wasn’t so bad, but Erica, really? Ugh! Anyone else but her!

Stiles couldn’t feign sleep any longer and opened his eyes, shifted in bed and hummed drowsily as if waking. The werewolves clearly too distracted to even notice he’d been awake for the duration of their conversation.

“Stiles, how are you feeling?” Allison greeted rising and made her way to stand at his side followed immediately after by Lydia.

Jackson pushed back and away from the wall and ambled to stand at the foot of the bed, folded arms sliding down and shoved into his front pockets.

“S’up,” Jackson nodded in acknowledgement.

Stiles smiled at the discomfited Jackson, obviously caring for his wellbeing but always having difficulty expressing himself where personal sentiments were concerned.

“Hey,” Stiles welcomed the trio.

Stiles chose to give nothing away to the trio, slipped on a smile and attempted to lighten the tension.

“Let me just say, being shot is so not what the movies make it out to be. It hurts like a mother fudger!”

Jackson choked a surprise chuckle, shaking his head in disbelief whilst grinning at the sudden declaration. Lydia and Allison didn’t seem to find much amusement from the deflection of what could have very well killed Stiles. Regardless, Stiles didn’t want to think about how close he came to never seeing the light of day and chose to talk about anything less serious.

“Hey, have any of you seen the latest transformers film?”

Apparently, transformers came as the escape route.

Jackson gave in to Stiles’ attempt and the two began discussing the pros and cons of the series made whilst they were still in high school and the latest installments. Lydia and Allison both frowned at the men who seemed to be ignoring the very reason why it was Stiles was being hospitalized.

Jackson’s and Stiles’ conversation strayed as they made references to other series and the aspects
of each that made them so popular. Stiles spoke of Star Wars, recalling his date with Derek, and noted the futuristic styles that made that movie what it was. Jackson brought up, Lord of the Rings, Allison choosing to speak up and noted, Harry Potter, and Lydia finally giving in to the ‘Ignore all things potentially life threatening’ referred to, The Chronicles of Narnia.

They bickered on just which series of films was in fact the greatest of all time, each having defended their choices and refusing to back down that it was in fact their choices.

Melissa later joined them; looking over Stiles’ chart even though she wasn’t his doctor or nurse and seemed relieved by what she read. She’d relayed it would be sometime before Stiles would be able to go back to the force. Stiles wasn’t surprised though, the conversation he’d had with his doctor had been much the same, but regardless that it would be near two months before he could officially start working, he was alive and that was all that really mattered.

Meanwhile, he’d have to assign a fellow officer to take his place, maybe Richard. The man was older, had served with his father and helped him in becoming the Sheriff. If anyone truly deserved to be the Sheriff it was Richard, but the older man didn’t feel the same. He knew the stress of the position, the sacrifices one needed to take in order to be placed in that role and chose against it. His wife was suffering from stomach cancer and his teenage daughter was going through an, I-hate-everyone-life-sucks phase.

When it was getting late, Melissa noted visiting hours were just about over and that the gang should come back in the morning. Lydia promised to bring his cell from the station while Allison promised to make him some chicken soup, Jackson garbled out he’d come again on a later date, and Melissa assured him when she started up the morning shift to stop by for a visit.

Stiles once more was left alone and it didn’t take him long to wander off to sleep.

He woke later that night to a shift in the bed and when he opened his eyes and met hazel depths he smiled softly in the fog of drowsiness. Scooting closer to the edge of the bed and leaving more room for the larger of the two.

Derek pressed a hand against Stiles’ opposite hip and brought the slighter near the center of the bed, his other arms slid under the bow of Stiles’ neck and offered up his bicep for the human to use as his pillow.

“You came,” Stiles breathed, nudging the alpha’s chin with his nose and inhaled the heartening potent and sweet scent of mint, vanilla, hazelnut and cinnamon. Stiles raised a hand, grasped about a toned arm and tugged the alpha closer before stroking over leather.

“You came,” Derek’s words were firm, hedging on the edge of remonstration, voicelessly abolishing the assumptions he would abandon Stiles.

“I didn’t mean it like that,” Stiles attempted remedying the abrupt tension. “It’s just…I’m bedbound and after what I said last night… I…well I’d understand if you wanted to spend a night away or something,” Stiles eluded, contemplating his confession and knowing he had no right to pressure Derek.

Just because he loved him and confessed, he didn’t want Derek to feel like he should return those feelings. If his confession the night before caused Derek to want some distance, he couldn’t hold it against him. Truthfully, he could understand Derek’s position in all of this. Derek became alpha in order to rid them of Peter and somehow instill harmony in the world of chaos Peter had left. The
only way happened to mean wolf/human marrying Stiles who also just so happened to be his true mate.

Their situation was confusing and understandably so. Regardless, Derek was doing all he could to make the bonding pleasant and gradual. He was even giving Stiles the chance to prepare himself for the day they would officially mate.

Derek never promised to love Stiles, never promised to make this marriage anything but that of a marriage of convenience. For Derek, this was business, just another part of becoming an alpha and ensuring peace. This wasn’t anything but a union. But for Stiles… for Stiles it was more, infinitely so, it was love.

Stiles was weak, he’d fallen, given way to emotion. He’d tried. God, how he tried! But it was useless, when each night he spent in the arms of the alpha he learned to appreciate the hard edges of the wolf. Look past the glowers and snarls and find beauty, kindness, loyalty, compassion.

How could Stiles not fall? How? If there had been a way, he’d have taken it. But no… he was weak and he’d fallen so deeply in love, if one were to open up his heart there would it be- love for Derek Hale. And God did that sound like the most clichéd of expressions, but God help him it was true. This was love, the love he’d always wanted and never fully comprehended just how powerful it could be.

“Stop thinking; idiots such as yourself should never use their brain, it leaves room for daftness,” Derek murmured, lips pressing into his temple as he buried his nose against fuzzed hair and inhaled sharply.

“Heeey!” Stiles groused, pouting childishly, the ends of his lips twitching in a faint smile that slowly grew in brilliance. “I resent that.”

“Hmm, duly noted,” Derek whispered, his voice seemingly bright.

The alpha planted chaste kisses, sprinkling them all about Stiles’s forehead as if frenzied and eager to lay affection onto the wounded Sheriff. These tender moments left Stiles puzzled. Derek didn’t have to be like this. He didn’t have to show so much care, but he did. He’d even gone so far as allowing Stiles to claim him, but then again Stiles knew that werewolves mated to show dominance and maybe allowing Stiles to dominate Derek was a show of the alpha’s wolf submitting to the human’s will and accepting him as his mate. All in all, being perplexed where Derek was concerned would remain a constant.

After long moments came and went - where Derek bestowed many kisses and soothingly rubbed at the human’s chest - Stiles recalled what he’d overheard from the trio earlier that night.

"Derek, why are there guard dogs outside of my room,” Stiles wanted to hear Derek explain it himself.

"But I didn’t." 

"And you won’t now that you have protection."
"Who says I need protection? This shooting was of extenuating circumstances and won't happen again. Next time, I'll be ready for it."

"Next time, you'll have protection."

"Derek, how will that look to my men? A Sheriff having three werewolves following his tail everywhere he goes, because God forbid he has a violent perpetrator to ascertain. What? Are they going to arrest the perp just so I don't break a nail?" Stiles grumbled unhappily.

"They can remain out of sight if you'd like. I've given them strict orders to only intervene if the situation is life threatening."

"Derek, I'm a cop. There is always a risk with this line of work."

"Exactly," Derek huffed tersely.

"Derek." Stiles whined jadedly.

"Stiles, I'm willing to give and back down in whatever it is you want, but not this. No, Stiles. No matter what you say, I won't back down this time."

"Derek! Why are you being like this?"

A harsh growl sounded, graveling and deep, pulsing against Stiles' body as the alpha tightened his hold on the human and Stiles winced when soreness took hold of him.

"You don’t know what it was like."

"Derek—" Stiles started with an aggravated objection, but the alpha quickly cut him off.

"Because of the mating ritual, I’ve been keeping near to you, but I left to finish my rounds of Beacon Hills when I smelled your blood…” Derek halted in his speech, dipping his head into the crook of the human’s neck and nuzzled the flesh, a piercing whine escaped followed by a harsh huff of breath, almost like a breathless sob—but Derek didn’t cry. The night before he’d foolishly allowed himself to believe the dampness on Derek’s chin had been tears—it must have been sweat, the room must have been hot, the blankets only adding to Stiles' own heat so he couldn’t differentiate one from the other. That breathless huff was just… It must have been a sigh.

“I tried to get to you as fast as I could… I could hear your heart slow down as I neared you...but then…it stopped and I…” Derek’s voice was waverind now and Stiles could no longer remain in denial, Derek was just barely holding on.

“I don’t ever want to feel helpless like that again. They’ll watch you only when I’m away, so please, try and bear it,” Derek implored.

Stiles remained still, silent as he took in the truth before him. Derek was terrified- terrified of losing Stiles and being powerless to save him. He couldn’t stay by Stiles’ side twenty-four seven, he was an alpha who had alpha business to attend to. Sooner or later he would have to leave Stiles, like he’d done that one night to go out of town and handle another alpha, meet with his pack, make his rounds of Beacon Hills, and who knows what else.

“Okay…” Stiles gave, not wishing to worry the alpha and cease the quaking of the alpha’s body against his own. “Okay, Derek. I’ll bear it… for you.”

There came an exhale of relief before the alpha’s lips were pressing appreciative kisses about the
length of his neck and repeating breathlessly deep. “Thank you, thank you, thank you, Stiles.”
That week spent in hospital turned into two weeks. Throughout his stay, Stiles spent his mornings going through routine check-ups and recuperated. Lydia and Allison would stop by every morning and every evening, before and after work, bringing with them homemade soups of various kinds. The two would then shower Stiles with motherly love and affection. Melissa would stop by to check up on his progress and spent some time conversing with Stiles over various things, all of which not concerning the elephant in the room which came in the form of Scott’s absence.

Scott had not visited him once. Allison was adamant Scott cared and would come soon, but he never did and Stiles could hit himself for actually believing Allison’s words. But in all fairness she seemed so sure of this fact; Stiles couldn’t help but believe her. The truth of the matter was Scott did not come, he did not care and Stiles was left with the sense of abandonment.

Sophia came several days later with a large basket of fruits. She’d spent much of her time lamenting, apologizing for what her late husband did and Stiles reassured her that this wasn’t her fault. Stiles told her that he wouldn’t have changed anything, he would have done the same thing again without a seconds thought. When she left, Stiles was put at ease knowing that Sophia was ready to start her life anew and at peace. Jonathan Becker would never hurt Sophia again or hold her back from starting her life over.

Stiles was heartily amazed when the whole taskforce of Beacon Hills came to visit him with plenty of cards, ‘get well soon’ balloons, gift baskets and flowers. He’d spent a great time with his officers, all having plenty of amusing stories to recount to their Sheriff and cheer him up.

Stiles offered to appoint Richard as the Sheriff for the time being because Stiles would have a long way to go before he was reinstated back into the force. He still needed time to heal and of course would have to have his psych evaluation done by a therapist before he could be approved to start working once more. Richard had the most experience on the force and knew the ins and outs about what being a Sheriff meant. He’d been the one to train Stiles, but the older gentleman didn’t feel up for it. He had other things on his mind; his wife’s health and rebellious teenage daughter. So Stiles appointed Anthony as the deputy sheriff in training. Richard would take Anthony under his wing and train the young rookie as he’d done for Stiles. This way Stiles was reassured if something like this ever happened—if he were to… die, Anthony would be ready to take over for him.

Jackson visited a handful of times, each time he’d sat himself at a distance and the two talked about anything and everything but the reason he lay in a hospital bed. Stiles understood Jackson; he was a private sort who never was open to expressions of emotions. Since he’d found out he was
adopted he’d created a barrier around his heart as to not let anyone in and to keep himself safe from being hurt. Stiles knew, whether Jackson admitted it or not, he cared, cared a great deal for his friends and certainly for Danny. Jackson was just too stubborn and just a bit frightened to show it.

Chris Argent even paid Stiles a visit. Many things had changed since high school. After the death of his wife, he’d sought vengeance on Peter. During that time he’d had his disputes with Allison and Scott’s relationship, but he’d softened when he’d fallen in love again—in love with Melissa McCall that was. This development had caused a huge outburst from Scott, one that entailed a lot of shifting and attacking of Chris. Chris held his own, though Allison and Melissa had to intervene several times when their fighting became violently dangerous of seriously causing great harm to the other.

Chris and Scott were effectively separated for several weeks whilst Allison and Melissa talked both men down and the two were forced to settle their differences, once and for all, for the women they loved. The first few months had been tense, but they’d managed to find some common ground when they came to realize just how deeply they loved their partner and their willingness to protect them from all harm. A year later Chris married Melissa, which made Allison and Scott step siblings which was strange and disturbing. Scott and Allison refused to ever refer to each other as such or let anyone else to do so either, especially when, several months after their parents married, Scott and Allison were wed.

Every night Stiles woke from a rejuvenating sleep to Derek lying beside him. Though visiting hours ended at eight, Derek didn’t seem to follow them and the nurses who came every several hours to monitor his status seemed to turn a blind eye. It probably had something to do with the fact Derek was the alpha of Beacon Hills and the leader of werewolves of the nations, but Stiles tried to limit his full comprehension at just how much power Derek held to only the surrounding town of Beacon Hills. Thinking that Derek controlled the governments of the nations and was the sovereign alpha to just about every other alpha in the world was a bit too much to handle.

Derek spent long moments nuzzling and scenting Stiles, and he’d come to realize that because of his daily visits from friends and their comforting embraces his scent must have changed. Derek didn’t reprimand him as he’d done the time he spent sniffing out the human. Stiles supposed it was probably because Stiles’ loved ones needed the comfort just as much as the alpha did.

Derek spent every night after the first taking great pains to remove Stiles’ hospital gown, discarding it on a table nearby so he could slip under the sheets in his boxer-briefs and caress the human’s flesh with his own. He sniffed at the bloodied bandages, bayed gently and mouthed Stiles’ neck with need. Stiles would hold Derek close, stroke his hair and arm and enjoy their closeness of bonding. Apparently Stiles being in hospital was no reason to stop their process of bonding and he assumed nothing would until he was claimed.

Thanksgiving was near. Every Thanksgiving after the death of his father he’d spent with Scott and Mrs. McCall. Mrs. McCall became his parental advocate when Stiles was left with no family and raised him until he was eighteen. When he turned eighteen, Stiles was entrusted with the money left to him by his mother and father. His family home was already paid for and the money left to him was more than enough to take care of him for several years—the years he’d spent going to school and becoming the Sheriff.

After Melissa remarried and became Mrs. Argent (Stiles was still adamant on referring to her as Mrs. McCall), he’d spent holidays at the newly wedded Argent’s home with Scott and Allison. Later the three would leave Chris and Melissa and attend Lydia’s own Thanksgiving dinner. Lydia didn’t enjoy spending her Thanksgivings with her family; her parents could hardly be in the same room without chewing the others head off, no matter if that was all Lydia wanted. So after she
spent the day with her parents, separately of course, she went home and set up a Thanksgiving dinner for her closest of friends to join in on the celebration.

Jackson, and later Danny, would join them. After they’d officially gained several pounds the group of friends would lounge about the home. Jackson, Scott and Danny would watch a recording of the game whilst Lydia, Allison and Stiles remained at the dining room table nibbling an array of desserts and chatting about the most silliest of things.

Only now that Scott and Stiles were on the outs, Stiles didn’t feel so keen on spending either of his Thanksgiving dinners at the Argents or Lydia’s. Derek was a part of his new life, his true mate and fiancé. He wanted to spend his Thanksgiving with him and he didn’t think that going with Derek would roll all that well with Scott.

Stiles had come to his decision soon after this realization. He thought it best he and Derek spend their Thanksgiving alone. Stiles was to be discharged the day before Thanksgiving and he thought a nice holiday trip together, spent eating a wonderfully prepared Thanksgiving dinner was the best choice.

When he brought up the idea of renting out a cabin in the forest to spend Thanksgiving alone with the alpha, Derek shrugged his shoulders and affirmed he would do whatever Stiles wanted. Stiles smiled with triumph as if he’d gotten the last cookie in the cookie jar and set about planning their trip. He’d made arrangements and had Derek pack their bags and grocery shop from the list he’d made. Derek did as he was told and affirmed everything was ready for when Stiles would be discharged.

Several days before he was discharged he’d finally mustered up the courage to tell his friends of his plans. Jackson seemed a bit put off, but noted Stiles’ life was his own and he could do whatever he wanted. Allison, although upset understood Stiles’ reasons, though she’d been adamant Scott wouldn’t mind if he attended. When he expressed he wanted Derek to spend Thanksgiving with him and Scott absolutely would mind his date for the night, Allison couldn’t dispute the truth. Lydia glared murderously at Stiles and cursed him and Scott for being stubborn fools. Though she’d gone off on a cursing tirade about Scott’s lack of intelligence and wish to knock some sense into him. In the end she’d given into Stiles’ reasoning with much pouting and had Stiles promise to have dinner with her once he returned. Stiles had given into Lydia’s request not wishing to upset her anymore.

The day he was discharged it’d been a foggy morning. Melissa wheeled him outside the hospital entrance in a wheelchair - as was hospital regulation - and waited with him for Derek to arrive.

“So, spending Thanksgiving in a cabin that’s…” Melissa began.

Stiles tensed as if ready for her to object to his plans.

“Utterly romantic,” She sighed dreamily. “Did you plan this all so you could get some? Because I should remind you Stiles, with your injuries, you are not allowed to perform any strenuous activities…that would include sex.”

“Mrs. McCall!” Stiles whined, palming his face, shielding it from view, mortified.

“I can’t believe Derek Hale’s your true mate…it’s just—wow,” She contemplated in astonishment, the ends of her lips curled upwards.

“I can’t believe Lydia told you. I seriously have to buy a muzzle for that woman.”
“Aw, don’t be like that Stiles. She’s just happy for you. It’s not every day you find your true mate.”

“Apparently it’s simple for the citizens of Beacon Hills; Scott and Allison, Jackson and Danny, whose next?” Stiles jested

“Chris and I, apparently from what Lydia can scent.”

Stiles’ eyes bulged at this. “Come on!”

Melissa cackled uproariously at Stiles’ grimace. Stiles’ sights shifted from Melissa to the midnight Camaro as it pulled up in front of them and Derek Hale exited the humming vehicle to approach the two.

“Hey,” Stiles greeted awkwardly. Having just spoken with Melissa about true mates left Stiles feeling just a bit guilty and insecure, but he wasn’t sure as to why. Maybe it was because Derek didn’t realize Stiles knew they were true mates and also the painful fact that Derek remained unforthcoming of this truth.

Derek rose a quizzically brow sensing the change, maybe he could smell it, hear it in the unsure greeting and irregular pulsing of his heart.

“Hey,” The alpha acknowledged; voice reverberatingly deep and fluctuated with a note of query.

“Well, I’m sure you spoke with the doctor already, so you know what Stiles can and can’t do,” Melissa broached, breaking the tension and the couples strange stare-off.

Derek gave a curt nod of conception. Stiles was flabbergasted. When had Derek spoken with his physician? Derek only arrived late at night to bond with Stiles, unless…Derek was checking in with his physician unawares to Stiles. No, that couldn’t be…but…Derek seemed to know the confines of his current health.

“Be sure he comes in for a checkup in a week’s time. The doctor will be able to remove the staples to his incisions and further examine his health.”

“I’ve made an appointment for the following Friday,” Derek voiced. Something about Derek’s sureness and having taken the time to set an appointment - unawares to Stiles - caused butterflies to flutter in the pit of his stomach.

Melissa appeared amazed by the alpha’s follow-through where Stiles’ health was concerned and lowered her gaze to Stiles, grinning vibrantly, thoroughly pleased.

Stiles could just about die of embarrassment and quickly rose to his feet, swaying slightly with the swiftness of his movements and the pain it flared. His hand went to palm the arm of the wheelchair as he slumped back and inhaled sharply when all at once the alpha’s hands went to grasp a hold of his hip and arm, steadying and offering him balance.

“Stiles,” Derek huskily cooed, nose pressing into Stiles’ temple, scenting the human as he stepped close and gently tugged Stiles against his chest, “careful.”

“Uh—sorry,” Stiles mumbled; his head bowed low, face glowing, averting his gaze far too flustered by their closeness in public where all could see them.

“You don’t have to worry yourself over Stiles. I’ll care for him,” Derek assured Melissa, causing Stiles’ flush to intensify.
“I bet you will,” Melissa grinned and Stiles silently cursed her to hell and back.

“I’ll be off then. If you do have any questions, Stiles has my number,” Melissa assured, clasping ahold of Stiles' shoulder and squeezed it in a voiceless parting.

Stiles stared after Melissa’s departing form, wheeling the now vacant wheelchair into the hospital before she was gone.

When Derek kindly drew him back and towards the Camaro, Stiles allowed the alpha to guide him. Derek escorted Stiles into the passenger seat, using much consideration and caution as to not agitate the human’s frail form and enflame any of his injuries.

Stiles felt like an invalid, having Derek show such consideration and worry over his wellbeing, as if he were frightened Stiles would break from one wrong move. When Derek strapped and clasped the seatbelt across Stiles’ form, he spared a glance towards the human trying to read his reaction for any discomfort.

Stiles raised a hand and palmed the alpha’s jaw, meeting his gaze head-on and smiled tensely.

“Derek, I’m not going to break.”

Derek's relaxed features tensed and his open pools of hazel hardened as he pulled back and away from the human’s touch.

“I know,” Came his gruff reply as he shut Stiles’ door.

Stiles frowned. What had he done to warrant such coldness? It wasn’t like he was telling Derek he shouldn’t express concern. He’d only wanted to affirm he wasn’t greatly ill and Derek didn’t need to worry about unwittingly causing him pain. Stiles improved greatly and he was growing stronger every day. Soon, he’d be able to move about with little thought or worry of flaring any of his wounds.

Stiles stared absentmindedly out the passenger window as Derek drove them away from the hospital. The alpha’s eyes were ever fixed on the road as they drove onto a deserted street leading up an extended track towards higher ground, the mountains of Fergusons’ lodge.

This was going to be a long trip.

When Derek pulled up in front of the deserted lodge it was late afternoon. The lodge was crafted of dark wood, trees and shrubs bordered the home encasing it in foliage. The first story of the home was bordered in arched windows, the top floor held a chimney and several more windows. The steps leading up to the home were handcrafted of cherry wood; the doors of the home were painted lush scarlet, welcoming and warm.

The journey there had been long and although Stiles hadn’t done much of anything but sit, he was exhausted. He assumed it had to do with the fact he was still healing and the best and quickest way to heal one’s self was plenty of sleep.

Derek seemed to notice and was at his side, opening his door for him and assisting him out, paying mind to his injuries. Stiles allowed Derek to lead them to the lodge and open the door. Once inside Stiles felt a sense of nostalgia.

“I’ll bring our things,” Derek declared; a hand placed on Stiles’ lower back used to guide him fell away as he backtracked and exited the lodge.
Stiles spent many holidays and summers in the lodge with his parents. After his mother passed, he and his father never came back. Stiles thought it had something to do with all the memories this lodge held for them.

As Stiles took in the lodge, recalling everything about it, he felt its homey warmth and recalled many of those fond memories. When stepping into the lodge, it led one to the spacious living room, decked out in handmade furniture and draped in rustic woodsy couches. A flat screen television hung on the wall opposite of the furniture.

Derek entered then, one hand carrying a dozen or more grocery bags, whilst balancing the alpha’s strapped suitcase and wheeling in Stiles’ own in his other hand. Derek spared a moment’s glance at Stiles, before shuffling past and down a hall which Stiles knew led to the bedrooms. A moment later he reappeared with the groceries now in both hands and the suitcases nowhere in sight. Stiles could only assume he’d placed them in one of the three bedrooms.

Stiles slipped further into the lodge as Derek shuffled through a swing door and vanished from his sights. Beyond the living room was the dining room, and although not as large as the living area, it was still spacious enough to host a group of people. Stiles almost wished Scott hadn’t been such an ass; it would have been wonderful if everyone could spend at least one Thanksgiving out in the mountains in such a homey lodge.

Before his parents passed, Stiles could recall many Thanksgivings spent on the same mahogany dining table. Brushing a hand along the smoothness of the dark wooden chairs as he ambled out of the dining room and through the swinging door Derek disappeared through and entered the kitchen.

This area held less of the authentic rustic feel and more of a contemporary one. The appliances were all of the latest brands, a pan rack hung over the center counter with an electronic stove set at the heart of it. Surrounding the opposite side of the center counter and away from the stove were six handcrafted wooden stools, painted burgundy and matched the tiled counters. A large sink, dishwasher and refrigerator bordered the center counter on the farthest walls of the kitchen. Several wooden cupboards and cabinets were placed above the walls of the sink, dishwasher, and refrigerator.

As Stiles neared the sink and threw open the peach colored drapes of the window there, Derek set the groceries on the center counter and proceeded to take the items out of their bags. Stiles offered to help him, but Derek clasped a hold of his hand to still him of his silent offer.

“You should rest. I’ll take care of everything. Your luggage is in the bedroom.”

“I can really help, so long as it’s not anything too arduous,” Stiles remarked.

“I know, but I’d feel more comfortable if you were resting.”

Stiles frowned. “I’m not incompetent. Putting away groceries will not kill me.”

Derek’s features were suddenly solemn. “Don’t joke about that.”

Stiles bit the inside of his cheek, holding back a curse of annoyance. He didn’t mean it like that, but apparently Derek was more sensitive to embellishments of an imaginary and figurative death since he’d almost died. Stiles really shouldn’t take out his aggressions on the alpha that seemed to be just a bit thin-skinned where his health and wellbeing were concerned, it was understandable.

“Fine,” Stiles gritted, slipping his hand from out of the alpha’s caressing hold, spun on his heel and
quickly exited the kitchen.

Stiles knew it would be significantly cheaper to rent out a lodge with one room, but this particular cabin held sentimental value to him. Unsure as to which room Derek set their things in he’d peeked through all of them and found theirs in the master bedroom, the room once inhabited by his parents.

Derek had set their bags at the foot of the bed. Stiles didn’t feel like changing, he was quite comfortable in black sweats and a loose t-shirt and opted to rest in such. He took great care in lying on the queen-sized bed and draping the cobalt comforter over himself. It really didn’t take all that long for Stiles’ exhaustion to become a constant and his eyes to droop in the fog of sleep.

Stiles wasn’t sure what time it was when Derek came to bed, only that the lights of the room were off and the sun from the open drapes was replaced by a half moon. On further examination, Stiles realized Derek was wearing jet black boxer-briefs and was preparing for bed.

Stiles edged closer to the alpha and attempted to wrap his arms around the larger when Derek bypassed his hold and tugged at the hem of his shirt.

“I need to scent you,” Was the alpha’s only explanation.

Stiles tipped his head in understanding and yawned heavily. When he slowly sat up his wounds throbbed in protest. Derek rose up to his knees and removed the shirt with caution. Once removed, Derek discarded the shirt somewhere in the darkness of the room with an effortless toss and pressed Stiles flat against the bed.

Stiles stared up intriguingly at the alpha; the moons glow shining a blue hue of light, illuminating Derek in the coolness of its glow. Stiles couldn’t suppress the hitch in his breath as the alpha straddled his thighs and hooped his fingers through the waistband of his sweats, tugged and revealed white briefs.

“Derek,” Stiles murmured headily, arousal awakening in that moment.

The alpha inhaled sharply through flaring nostrils, hazel depths transitioning into vibrant coccineous orbs as if scenting the human’s excitement.

“Don’t Stiles,” Derek groused, jerking away uneasily and yanking hurriedly at the sweats.

“I—we can still—but I just can’t do much moving,” Stiles offered, voice fluctuating in the haze of stimulation and sleep before he reached out to palm the alpha’s jaw with his needy hands. “I want to.”

Stiles guided Derek’s head down and raised his an inch closer so that their lips briefly grazed. Derek’s breathing was harsh as if fraught for some semblance of control.

“Come on, Derek. Who’s my big bad brooding wolf? I’m ready for the taking,” Stiles baited and daringly swiped his heated tongue across the alpha’s mouth, slacked with winded panting.

“Fuck, Stiles stop,” Derek urged, wrenching back and away, shuffling further back on the bed, throwing the sheets off to yank Stiles’ sweats completely down and chucked them to the floor.

The alpha took several shaky steps away from the bed, palmed his forehead and lapped at his lips as if tasting traces of Stiles.

Stiles whined helplessly, his arousal pulsing with need.
“Derek, I’m just—can’t you smell how much I want to?”

Derek took several more steps back and nodded briskly, madder depths scanning Stiles’ revealed form, the bulge of his briefs ever prominent.

“Come back to the bed,” Stiles pleaded, edging back against the headboard to rest comfortably.

“I—no Stiles. You were just discharged from the hospital and…you need time to heal.”

“I’m better now. I can do this,” Stiles lied, he knew he wasn’t completely ready, but if they took their time they could still get each other off without seriously hurting Stiles in the process, or so he hoped.

Derek seemed to hear the irregularity of his heart and shook his head in disagreement. “Not until the doctor gives his approval.”

“Derek, it’s my body, I know what I can and can’t do, and believe me, I so can.”

“I won’t risk hurting you.”

“You won’t.”

“You can’t even remove your own clothes without being in pain, how can we… No, Stiles.”

“Please.”

“Stiles.”

“What if we don’t go all the way, just touch?” Stiles offered desperate, his erection begging him to get Derek back, maybe straddling him like that again—because the image of Derek in those tight boxer-briefs astride him was just about the hottest thing Stiles ever did see.

“No.”

“Derek!” Stiles whined petulantly.

Derek pursed his lips in a tense glare. “Not until you’re fully recovered. I should check on the turkey.”

“Derek!” Stiles bleated. “What am I going to do about mini Stiles?”

“Figure it out!” Derek boomed, slamming the bedroom door shut behind him.

“I hope you get a hernia!” Stiles snapped and glowered at the door in frustration, unsure if it even was possible for a werewolf to become injured in such a way. Most likely, if they did, they’d just heal with their freakish healing ability.

Stiles was horny and his stupid true mate or whatever wasn’t even going to offer to take care of it. “Bastard.”

Stiles wished he could take care of it himself, but the act was just… impersonal as ironic as that sounded. Touching himself wasn’t something he found great interest in doing. There had been that one time when he first began to mature, but it didn’t quite work for him and he’d stopped mid-experimenting. He didn’t see how the act of pleasing oneself could be enjoyable.
Stiles attempted to think about the most disturbing of things in an effort to rid his hard-on; breasts (ew), the hideous vava (Stiles refused to refer to the scientific reference of a females lady part), infected teeth, hairy moles, hairy chest, a hairy alpha with bulking muscles, Derek with bulking muscles, a sweaty Derek, a sweaty-panting-clawing at the sheets-biting through mattress-growling-whimpering-needing to be plowed and properly mounted—

“DEREK!” Stiles keenly mewled, in need, adulthood seeping hot release.

There came a crash of pots and pans far off in the kitchen, as if the alpha could scent the juices of yearning, yet the alpha did not come in and Stiles whimpered helplessly. Once more he attempted to rid his arousal with thoughts of everything hideous and having no relations to the gorgeous alpha currently brooding somewhere in the kitchen.

Stiles wasn’t sure how he managed to fall asleep with a raging hard-on, but thank God he did because when he did wake his arousal had left him and mini Stiles was flaccid. Stiles’ senses were filled with the pleasant aroma of baked turkey, stuffing, sweet roasting yams, and so much more Stiles was having difficulty placing it as it all mixed together in one scent. It could only be classified as the scent of a Thanksgiving feast.

Getting out of bed to shower and dress took Stiles longer than it ever had being that his injuries prevented him from moving freely. When Stiles had finally managed to slip on a pair of comfy tan slacks and v-neck cesious sweater he exhaled a lengthy breath of reprieve. The hardest part of his day was over, now he could enjoy his Thanksgiving.

Stiles weaved a path through the home and paused for a moment when entering the dining room. Derek had taken the time to not only begin preparing their Thanksgiving meal but also set the dining table. A large chrysochlorous basket was placed as the center piece with various sizes of pinecones and filling the room with its sweet woodsy scent. Two vinaceous tablecloths were placed on each end of the table and contrasted the gamboge plates. A glass cup and wine glass were set to the right of the tablecloths and the silverware appeared freshly polished.

Acceding past the swing door of the kitchen Stiles was astonished at the sight that beheld him and couldn’t suppress the laughter that burst forth, groaning painfully after each choked cackle, but it was so worth it. Derek stood before him in a flower and food stained tutti frutti pink apron, the center of the apron held a white embroidered head of a cat and under the smiling feline read in torrid red, ‘I’m not perrrrrfect, but what I prepare is.’

Derek peered up towards the hysterical Stiles whilst stirring a simmering pot of gravy. Following Stiles’ line of vision his features soured into the always brooding scowl that had been patented long ago by the elusive Derek Hale.

“Hahaha, really Stiles, act your age.”

Stiles hurriedly sat on one of the stools to steady his balance as his laughter grew all the more prominent. Seeing Derek in a kitchen cooking with a tutti frutti pink cat apron was just too good. Stiles recalled his mother wearing the very same apron set out for the renters of the lodge to use and it never seemed as amusing as it did now.

“You done yet?” Derek quizzed bristled, leaving his gravy to stew while retrieving a glass and filling it with water.
“Ptsssh—noooot!” Stiles snickered, singing the last part in falsetto whilst palming his sore abdomen wincing only slightly, too caught up in the hilarity of Mr. Sour Wolf currently turned Mrs. Betty Crocker.

When Derek set the glass of water in front of him and retrieved an orange pill capsule from his pocket Stiles’ laughter died with a raised brow in question.

“It’s about time you take your medicine.”

“Oh,” Stiles interjected with consideration and uncapped the bottle, taking two as were the instructions and swallowed them down with the glass of water.

“Are you hungry?”

“I could eat,” Stiles acknowledged.

Derek went the microwave opposite of the refrigerator and opened it to reveal premade scrambled eggs, biscuits and bacon. When Derek set it on the counter in front of a salivating Sheriff, Stiles’ stomach knotted in hunger for the juicy and mouthwateringly flavorful scent of breakfast mixed with that of the already prepared Thanksgiving meal.

“I love you,” Stiles beamed cheerily, though this ‘I love you’ wasn’t so much of a confession than of gratitude that the alpha knew his love for bacon. The hospital refused to feed him such for the duration of his stay.

Stiles chewed his bacon contentedly, smiling doughy eyed at the alpha before him who’d begun stirring the gravy once more. Stiles watched Derek move about the kitchen like a natural, checking various items baking in the oven, tending to the gravy, and preparing and seasoning chicken. Derek truly appeared in his element and Stiles couldn’t help but voice his contemplations.

“Did you prepare Thanksgiving meals with your mother?”

Derek faltered mid stir by Stiles’ observation, momentarily met his gaze before switching the burner off and began basting the turkey.

“Yes,” Came the soft reply.

“Did your sister help?” Stiles didn’t know if he was crossing the line, never having mentioned Derek’s late sister Laura Hale, but he hoped that after so much time, Derek wouldn’t be offended or closed off.

Derek slammed the stove shut, tossed the turkey baster in the sink and opened the refrigerator, searching for something unknown to Stiles.

“Sometimes,” Derek’s voice was void, edged on cold and though Derek didn’t tell him to back off on the mention of his late sister, Stiles interpreted it in the subtlety of the alpha’s behavior.

“So you’re mother was a chef,” Stiles deliberated a fact he’d known for some time now and something he didn’t think Derek would find offense in speaking about.

“Yes,” Derek simply replied.

“Did you enjoy cooking with her?”

“Yes,” Simple and easy once more.
“What’s your favorite dish to prepare?”

“Coq au vin,” Derek spun to face him, carrying salmon in hand and shut the refrigerator with a kick of a boot.

“What’s that?” Stiles’ brows furrowed.

“Coq au vin, is a French braise of chicken cooked with wine, lardons, mushrooms, and the optional choice of garlic—which my mother and I used most times. It’s one of the most difficult cuisines to prepare, but also one of the most delicious. It took my mother weeks to perfect and she taught me. My first several attempts were an absolute bust,” Derek smiled subconsciously as he reminisced all whilst setting the salmon on an oiled pan and switched the burner on low.

An amused chuckle spilled from out of Derek in that moment, “It was horrible, really. My father —”

Derek halted midsentence, features tensing as if recognizing his unexpected candidness.

Stiles slid to the edge of his seat, leaned against the counter and lowered his gaze catching Derek’s from across the counter with warm consideration.

“Go on Derek. I want to know,” Stiles encouraged the alpha.

Derek glanced down to the simmering pan and sprinkled seasoning on the flush fish. “He…I asked him to be my food critic and to give his honest input and…even when he knew by the scent of the thing it would taste god-awful, he still ate it, not just a bite, but the whole thing. He was—supportive, I guess.”

Stiles smiled at the modest and slightly unsettled alpha before him. “It sounds like he really cared for you.”

Derek’s lips pursed and he shrugged his shoulders as if not wishing to take into consideration just how much.

“What did your father do for a living?” Stiles broached cautiously.

“He was a court judge, as was my grandfather.”

“What about your grandmother?”

“She was the head alpha for many years, other than that, she didn’t work—a stay at home wife and grandmother, tending to the children of the house.”

“My mother was a homemaker. She was extremely shy—like if she was stopped in front of a grocery store and asked if she wanted to sign a petition, she became a hot mess of nerves, bumbling and stammering bashfully,” Stiles laughed fondly at the innocence and meekness of his late mother.

Derek smiled kindly at this, nodding in understanding. “I remember.”

Stiles was astonished by this. “You met her?”

Derek seemed to tense all at once, coughed to clear his throat and raised a hand to rub the back of his neck. “I—I’d seen her around town a bit. She was… timid at best.”

Stiles smiled brightly. “Yeah, she was an only child and her parents were quite overprotective of
her. My dad was her first boyfriend and apparently my grandpa was really intimidating. He drove off any potential suitors, only wanting the best for his daughter and I guess that was my dad. I don’t remember my grandparents; they passed away soon after I was born.”

“My grandfather passed a year after I was born and I can only vaguely recall my grandmother.”

“Who became the alpha after your grandmother?” Stiles deliberated inquisitively.

“My mother became the head alpha. My mother and sister were born alphas,” Derek explained, barely voicing the last part above a whisper.

“So… there can be more than one alpha in a pack?”

“Yes, in some cases there can be a whole pack of them. Some rely on a unity of leadership while others appoint one alpha as the pack leader. My sister was still too young to be a leader herself, so my mother led the pack.”

Stiles ate the last bite of his meal and smiled cheerily at the scowling brute, wondering if Derek would ever just drop the frown. Had he always been such a sour wolf since birth?

“Thank you for the breakfast, it was scrumdiddlyumptious.”

Derek gave a curt nod, one end of his mouth twitching in a scarcely visible smile and flipped the salmon. Leaving the stove, he retrieved a bag of potatoes from one of the cabinets.

“Would you like some help?” Stiles offered, feeling guilty for inviting Derek to spend Thanksgiving with him and schlepping all the work on him.

“You shouldn’t. Just rest.”

“You would think I’d know what I’m capable of doing without having others tell me, being it’s my body and all,” Stiles puffed restlessly; he was getting really annoyed at being babied by everyone.

Derek unloaded the potatoes in a large bowl filled in water within the sink rubbing at the rough skins, drying them with a paper towel and placing them in another bowl. He craned his neck to flash a knowing smirk.

“It’s because you don’t know when to stop and relax.”

“Don’t act like you know me oh so well. I can relax. I’m the king of relaxville!”

Stiles winced by just how stupid he sounded and sneered at the amused brute as the wolf placed the bowls of potatoes before him. Stiles glanced at the bowl suspiciously as if any moment the potatoes would grow into mutant-like beasts and set to eating his flesh.

“What? You said you wanted to help. I’m not going to make you run around the kitchen cooking or baking. But, you can still help me with the vegetables; skin the potatoes for me,” Derek ordered, retrieving a potato peeler and offered it to the Sheriff.

Stiles took the offered peeler and began peeling the skins in silence, glancing over to the alpha curiously as he finished off the salmon.

“So, I take it salmon is something you prepare for Thanksgiving, since it wasn’t in my list I gave you.”

“No, it’s not.”
“Then—”

“It’s for lunch.”

“Oh.”

“Stiles…” Derek spoke softly, raising his gaze to meet Stiles’ whilst placing a bowl beside Stiles and retrieving the already skinned potatoes and began compressing them with the potato masher.

“Yeah,” Stiles mumbled distractedly, not wishing to cut himself with the peeler.

“Besides myself…have you ever been involved with anyone else?”

Stiles choked on spit, coughed raucously and set the peeler down to retrieve what was left of his water and swallowed the remains. He coughed several more times attempting to clear his throat and glanced towards the brute beside him, currently finding great interest in what he was doing, mashing potatoes.

“Der—wha—I—why do you want to know?”

“It’s just a question,” Derek remarked, but the power in which he used to pulverize the potatoes said more than words.

Was Derek curious for personal reasons? Could he be jealous at the possibility Stiles had been with another person? But how could that be when all they were doing was marrying one another to enact a treaty. Personal relationships held no power.

Regardless, Stiles didn’t see why he should be affronted by the alpha’s curiosity and answered honestly. “No. There was never anyone.”

Stiles peeked through the fringe of his lashes and thought it a trick of his eyes when there was a succinct twitch of the alpha’s mouth.

“Well…” Stiles deliberated honestly and took note when the alpha tensed. “There was that one time in high school, where a very drunk Lydia attempted to kiss me to make Jackson - who’d she’d been dating at the time - jealous.”

But you already know about that, don’t you?

“I think you were there that time,” Stiles baited, wanting to know more than anything why Derek had been at a teenager’s party and what had caused him to react so violently. Had it been the sight of Lydia pawing him up or something else Stiles hadn’t yet deliberated.

Now it was Derek’s turn to clear his throat and shuffled to the cabinet to retrieve some seasoning.

“I don’t recall.”

Bastard, don’t lie.

“Really? I think I recall something causing you to injure your hand,” Stiles edged, guiding, praying Derek would follow his lead and reveal the occurrence for what he hoped it was; jealousy.

Derek’s back stiffened; his features were hard and unsettling as he rounded the counter and seasoned the mashed potatoes. Stiles sulked when the alpha said nothing. He’d hoped that since the alpha was in such good spirits and conversing so easily he might explain his actions that night, but he didn’t.
When Stiles finished skinning the potatoes and Derek had ceased his mashing of them, he’d given Stiles carrots to skin and a knife to dice them. When Stiles finished his task the alpha moved him to preparing the salad and Stiles totally felt used. He wanted to be at the stove, hell the oven, seasoning, simmering, grilling—doing the real cooking, but no, he was assigned to vegetables.

They spent several hours in the kitchen, Stiles tending to the peeling, cutting, and sometimes even drying washed vegetables whilst Derek tended to the stove and oven, cooking and baking.

When the stove clock read 12:00, Derek served Stiles salmon, some of the salad he’d prepared and leek soup. Stiles had to admit, Derek could have made a thriving career as a chef and Stiles would have gladly gained the well deserved pounds as a chef’s spouse with no complaining and blaming.

Derek ate the left over soup rather than the salmon. When Stiles asked why, the alpha simply replied he was more of a red meat eater and that got the Sheriff pondering if it was a werewolf thing. Stiles ate his fill and admired Derek’s work.

The alpha’s body was flushed more than usual and he could only surmise it was due to constantly moving within the heated kitchen. His prominent cheeks were rosy; beads of sweat layered his toned neck and the crown of his forehead. Every once in a while, the alpha’s tongue would peek through full lips to drag over the flesh as he put all his attention on whatever it was he had sizzling on the stove and Stiles couldn’t look away. He so badly wanted to drag his lips across Derek’s own, taste the alpha, scent him, run his hands across the alpha’s sweaty forehead and grasp tightly to nigrine tresses.

“You’re beautiful,” Stiles acknowledged unequivocally, not even embarrassed at stating what was so evidently clear.

Derek stilled his movements, the creamy golden hued sauce bubbled, completely forgotten. Derek scrutinized Stiles as if to assess what the human’s motives were and audibly sniffed at the air, endeavoring to thread through the scents of food and scent Stiles, probing for a possible arousal he might have overlooked in his distraction of cooking, but found none.

Stiles was memorized by Derek’s beauty, loved his vindictive scowls, the tension of his lips when sneering, found them all oddly endearing as the brute analyzed Stiles further.

“What are you playing at?” Derek voiced calculatingly.

Stiles grinned childishly, flashing pearly whites and leaned against the counter and planted his chin against his folded hands.

“Nothing.”

“I don’t believe you.”

“Does my heart sound like I’m lying.”

“You’re hiding something.”

“You know everything, so why should I be hiding something,” Stiles flashed a coy smirk, contradicting his words in that moment.

“Hmmm,” Derek deliberated, not sounding too sure about that.

“You know how I feel about you.”
“I thought you weren’t going to bring that up again?” Derek noted crossly.

“When I’m not so weak anymore, yeah, I guess I won’t”

“You’ve been helping me around the kitchen for hours.”

“Still haven’t gotten the okay to start working—therefore, still not completely healed, not to mention no romps in the sack definitely mean’s I’m still not up to par.”

“Is that right?” Derek exhaled, glancing back to his pot and blended the boiling sauce.

Stiles shut his eyes and inhaled sharply, his chest only throbbing slightly. “I love you.”

When there came a clang of a pot and a curse, Stiles opened his eyes and found the alpha nursing a burned finger in his mouth, lapping at the reddened flesh and glaring accusingly at the human.

“Don’t say that.”

Stiles’ smile broaden as Derek removed his rapidly healing finger from his mouth and took a step back as if those three words held imminent influences over him.


Derek’s features hardened, becoming cold with frustration. “Stiles,” Derek warned.

“I don’t feel like it. Do you know how long I’ve wanted to say those words? How hard it was keeping it to myself? How it hurt not being able to let you know just how much I love you?”

“Damn it, Stiles!” Derek growled, shutting the burner off and spun away, placing his attention to the dishes in the sink and began scrubbing them clean, body wired much like a caged beast.

“I won’t stop, Derek. I love you. I really love you. You can’t make me, I won’t let myself. Not until I’m sure you comprehend just how much.”

Derek cursed a slew of profanity, slamming a pot against another as his hands worked furiously at scrubbing them clean.

“Why are you making things so much more difficult?”

“How am I making things difficult? This is how I feel. I can’t stop myself from feeling the way I do and it really shouldn’t bother you. If you don’t care, just brush my confession aside, it holds no power over you regardless of how many times I wish to say it.”

“You’re the kindest, most caring person I know. You’re the man I’ve been waiting for, and it’s funny, you know? Because I would have never thought that man could be such a brooding, moody brute, but hell—I still love you for it,” Stiles chuckled at the irony that led him to fall for Mr. Sour Wolf. “I truly love you.”

“What if I do care!” Derek suddenly snapped and Stiles stilled in puzzlement.

“What?”

There was a brief moment of silence and Stiles watched the alpha wilt with defeat, against the sink.

“What if it does hold power?” Derek sounded so crushed, fosset streaming steaming water, running in a never ending supply. The alpha’s sodden and suds soaked hands stilling their vigorous
scrubbing as he gave in to the consequences of his confession.

Stiles’ brows knitted in contemplation, recalling his previous words and felt his stomach ache though not from his wound as it flopped with apprehension.

“Derek…are you saying…are you saying what I think—”

“Forget it.” Derek rasped, surged with a boost of energy as he once again polished the dishes.

“Derek, don’t shut me out after—after saying that you might—”

“I don’t. It was a mistake. I could never love someone like you!” Derek barked and Stiles’ heart constricted sorely, ached and pulsed painfully, bled as if the alpha had stabbed him with his razor-sharp claws and left him to slowly bleed out.

Stiles lowered his gaze to the counter, feeling the pain of the alpha’s words double—those words held power unknown to him.

“Right…of course you’re right. I mean… I’m nothing to you, just an obligation,” Stiles nodded, trying to accept the truth that was so evidently expressed in the alpha’s callous disregard for the human. His eyes stung bitterly by the unwarranted viciousness of the brute. Derek’s words had been used to attack him and a piercing breath dispelled from sore lungs, on the edge of a sob.

“You’re such a bastard,” Stiles hissed, glaring at the alpha’s back, the brute having stilled his movements, arms flexing as if to hold a bout of displaying rage within. Stiles couldn’t tolerate being near the alpha any longer.

“I don’t feel that up to celebrating. I mean, what the hell is there to be thankful for?” Stiles laughed, filled with resentment and acrimony.

“Because of you, I’m the talk of Beacon Hills! Because of you, I lost my best friend! Because of you, I’m subjected to live my entire life alone and unloved!” Stiles’ voice broke on a incensed and exasperated cry.

“Scott was right. I should never have agreed to this! You really are a bastard. I hate you, I really— hate that I love you even now when you—God!” Stiles slid from off the stool and staggered.

He took two steps before a soapy hand grasped his wrist, stilling him and met contrite hazel orbs of grief.

“Stiles… I—” Derek stammered.

“Forget it. I get it. I’ll never say those words to you again. Don’t worry, we will finish this bond and I’ll help enact the treaty, but I don’t care to live harmoniously with you. Do your thing and I’ll do mine, stay out of my business and I’ll stay out of yours.”

“Stiles, that’s not it! I—I—It’s because I—” Derek was bumbling on his words, so unlike the heartless and self-assured alpha Stiles knew him to be.

“Leave, I really don’t want to be near you right now. Call the three stooges if you like, but I want you gone. Give me the rest of the week alone; no contacting, no bonding, let me have at least one week to myself before I’m forced to marry and mate a bastard such as yourself.” Stiles pleaded tensely and grasped the alpha’s hand holding firmly to his wrist and yanked at it.

He tugged against the power of the brute's force, met pained hazel depths with one of sorrow and
inhaled sharply past a whine when Derek finally released him.

Stiles rushed towards the room, hurriedly grabbing the alpha’s suitcase he tossed it into the hall, slammed the door shut and bolted it locked. He slid against the slab of wood, palmed at his mouth with both hands, attempting to muffle the sharp inhales and exhales of earsplitting breathless cries.

He’d screwed up. His life was one mistake after another and it all started with Peter Hale. If Stiles had taken Peter’s offer, became his mate, his father wouldn’t have died. He’d have become a possessive lunatics mate, but maybe he could have appealed to Peter, because as odd as it was, the alpha seemed temperate when near Stiles and in his presence. Maybe he could have broken through the mad alpha’s barriers and controlled his bloodlust as he’d done with Derek. If so, Derek would never have gained Scott and the rest of the gang’s assistance in bringing the psychopath Peter down, Stiles would never have been propositioned and would never have fallen for Derek.

He’d probably be living in the dreaded Hale manor with Peter as his mate, not being all that overjoyed with the circumstance, but he’d still have his father and wouldn’t be suffering such heartbreak.

But that wasn’t the case. Instead he was mating with Derek, bonding with the bastard, a cold brute that showed little consideration for him and would live the rest of his life painfully miserable and alone.
After Stiles’ Thanksgiving was officially ruined he spent the duration of his stay in the lodge within his room playing games on his cell, texting Lydia, Allison and even Jackson to see how their Thanksgivings were going. After, he spent the later part of his evening watching films. He stayed up late into the night, curled up on the couch holding a pillow he’d sprayed with Derek’s cologne the alpha had forgotten. He hoped it would deceive his drowsy state into believing it was Derek. He’d managed to get some sleep in the week Derek had given him to sulk and lick his wounds, but not enough by a long shot.

When his week ended and he’d been ready to leave the lodge he realized Derek had driven him, but when he’d attempted to call a taxi service there had been a knock on his door. When he opened it Boyd, Erica and Isaac stood before him. Isaac had chosen to speak for the preoccupied werewolves; Boyd distractedly glaring with warning towards an unresponsive and agitated Erica. Isaac explained Derek called the three over and Isaac drove his Jeep there - with a key he’d received from god knows where since Stiles’ was with him.

Stiles had no reason for a taxi service now and canceled his order. As Stiles drove back homewards he took note of the silver Mitsubishi Eclipse following him in his long journey. He felt disturbed having agreed to have the stooges watch over him as if he were some misbehaving youth. He’d done it for Derek, but the bastard didn’t care about his wellbeing so much as he did in keeping Stiles safe to withhold their treaty and protect the bond they’d started.

When Stiles arrived back to Beacon Hills, he’d been thoroughly surprised to find Lydia and Allison waiting within his home. Stiles gave Lydia the key to his house several years back, so that she always had a place to stay if ever Peter became violent and she needed some time for herself. He’d never thought to ask for the key back and never would. His home was open for the redhead, day or night, whenever she felt the need to use it.

Lydia and Allison brought leftovers from their Thanksgiving dinners and Lydia mentioned jokingly that instead of taking Stiles up on the promise for dinner, she’d much rather have a belated Thanksgiving lunch. Stiles felt grateful to have such wonderful women in his life. He loved Allison greatly, but held a deeper bond with Lydia. The werewolf reminded him so much of his mother, the same strawberry blond locks, same piercing gaze; even their scents closely matched one another. But mostly, Lydia and he knew one another so well, knew just what the other needed without prompting of any kind. Now more than ever, he needed his friends and would forever be grateful the redhead thought to do something like this.
The three ate and laughed over the events Stiles had missed. Allison recounted through a fit of giggles having Thanksgiving with Scott and their parents. Scott was adamant he prepare the turkey this year and try something new, frying the turkey. Apparently Scott read the directions wrong, left the turkey in the fryer too long and burnt it to a crisp. After which Chris and Scott argued over what went wrong; Scott adamant something was wrong with the fryer and Chris remarking that nothing was wrong with it but with Scott.

Regardless of their arguing, Melissa sensing something like this might happen stowed away a backup turkey. When she attempted to prepare it, Scott intervened and set about preparing this one for the oven. After it was baked they moved it to the already set table. Chris cut into it with a slew of cursing directed towards Scott, as the turkey although appearing to be cooked on the outside bled from the inside out. Suffice to say, with no other turkeys on backup, Chris called Won Wang Dragon Dynasty and ordered take out.

Lydia recounted when everyone came to her home she’d prepared a tasty brew of sherbet punch and went heavy on the alcohol, being werewolves couldn’t get drunk but could still at least taste it with potency this way. She’d made another batch with less alcohol for Allison and Danny to enjoy, but after Danny had his fourth the group only realized then he’d been drinking from the wrong punch bowl and was now highly intoxicated.

Lydia at this point was holding onto her side screaming in laughter whilst Allison choked on her turkey and drank a glass of water to clear the cloyed passage, though breaking into hysterical mirth soon after, recalling the events at they’d occurred.

Danny could hold his own when drinking, but with the amount Lydia had poured into the werewolves brew it appeared to be a bit too much for any human. Danny was smashed. It seemed when Danny was highly intoxicated he became quite touchy feely and rather doting of the ones he loved, which happened to be a sober and off put Jackson.

At this point, Allison had tears in her eyes and squirmed in her seat gasping out, “I’m going to piss myself!”

Lydia choked on air and leaned against Allison, trying to anchor their frenzy whilst recounting the events. Stiles smiled cheek to cheek at the women who were barely hanging on enough to clearly vocalize what had been uproariously entertaining.

Allison took over when Lydia began groaning, stomach spasms leaving her unable to carry on.

Danny went and sat between Jackson and Scott who’d been intensely watching the game. There in front of all of them, he’d held Jackson close and began sucking on his neck, moaning his name. Jackson went rigid at this point before endeavoring to unwind himself from out of Danny’s firm hold. Danny wasn’t having any of it and when Jackson made to question the human’s sudden and bizarre touchy feely behavior, Danny pounced on the werewolf. Danny claimed Jackson’s lips in what – Allison blushed embarrassedly – was by far the most heated kiss she’d ever did see.

Lydia recovered enough to interject. “Jackson was blushing—blushing! And he groaned! Scott and I heard it, no matter how soft it had been—we could smell him—he was aroused!”

Allison screamed a high octave hoot as she finished the recount of the events.

Scott jumped off the couch, perplexed and anxious, demanding Jackson to get a room. At this point Lydia and Allison couldn’t contain themselves and fell to the ground in hysteric, clutching their sides as they watched Jackson attempt to break the kiss. When the werewolf finally did so—here was the kicker that sent Allison and Lydia over the edge—Danny shoved a hand down Jackson’s
pant, grasped a hold of his arousal and Jackson…Jackson…Jackson…

Allison was wiping tears from her eyes attempting to explain what came next to an equally amused and choking with hilarity Stiles. Stiles peered up to Lydia for an explanation for Allison couldn’t project clear words through tears and a gigglefest that claimed her.

“Jackson.” Lydia moaned as the pain of her seizing abdomen flared and she struggled to finish the rest in a strained and breathless projection of speech. “Jackson whimpered like a bitch in heat!”

“Ooooohhhhh—Aaaaah!” Allison squealed a pitchy howl and fell right off the dining room chair, smacked hard against the floor and rolled on her back, clutching to her abdomen and cackling in amusement.

“You crazy bitch!” Lydia screeched shrilly, laughing just as hard and clutched to Allison’s now vacant chair to steady her pleasantly aching spasms.

Stiles wiped tears from his own eyes, face burning hot as he struggled to control his breathing, his wounded stomach seized in protest, but the merriment was far too powerful to overcome or bury down.

“I can’t believe I missed that!” Stiles whined and sent the girls into hysteria.

When the three finally got control of themselves, they’d relished the embarrassing show of Jackson and his now out-ed relationship with Danny. Whether Jackson wanted to acknowledge it or not, Danny had displayed their bond. The trio agreed not to bring it up in front of Jackson, feeling embarrassed for him and not thinking they would be able to do so without bursting with mirth.

Stiles was sorry to see the women go, but they’d made plans to meet bright and early the next day. Stiles’ wedding was soon and they still had to go hear the bands perform a test run, make the final decisions at the floral shop, approve and send the invitations, and so much more.

That night as Stiles undressed for bed and slipped under the sheets he waited for the alpha to make his grand appearance after giving the human a weeks time alone. When there was the distant humming of a car and moments later rattling of keys, Stiles knew Derek had arrived. Several seconds later the creaking of the front door opening and shutting sounded.

Stiles sat up in bed and stared at the shut bedroom door awaiting the alpha’s presence. When the dull clattering of boots hitting the ground stilled and the door swung open, Stiles met Derek’s cold gaze with one of inquisitiveness.

He really didn’t know how to react. What he should say or do. The last time they’d been together it had started out so wonderfully—then went straight to hell and he’d said some callous things in his anger he didn’t mean. But it was too late to take them back and even if he wanted to, he really didn’t think it would roll over all that well with the way Derek stared at him—as if all their time spent bonding hadn’t even occurred—as if he were some stranger, when he knew out of everyone on this earth, he was the only one who truly understood the alpha.

Derek broke their gaze and strode to the desk and began removing his clothing as he’d always done before. Stiles couldn’t help but stare at the alpha with contemplation. That day—Derek was trying to tell him something, but Stiles shot him down each time—refused to listen to the brute after Derek had said such hurtful words. But Stiles couldn’t—he wouldn’t allow himself to let Derek speak, so afraid he’d say something else—something that would break him further.

Stiles was so weak of heart and so very tired of trying to pretend he was alright. He wasn’t alright.
He’d lost his mother and not long after that, his father. He would forever have to live with the guilt and knowledge that because of him, his father was dead. Scott, the only person who knew him as well as Lydia was gone—had deserted him.

Derek…Derek was easy to talk to—maybe it was because Derek was more of a listener than a talker (which Stiles did more than enough of) or maybe it was because Derek simply didn’t care—he couldn’t place why, but it was. He’d allowed Derek in and slowly thought he’d come to find a friend in the alpha, someone he could let loose with, someone he could open himself to, because Derek was always there when he needed someone.

When Derek was bare, the only garment was that of his pavonated boxer-briefs, Stiles shifted further away from the center and turned his back to the alpha. He felt the brute slip in behind him, shivered when cold hands coiled around his exposed waist and breathed on edge as the alpha nuzzled his neck, his hand grazing the gauzed wound of his abdomen.

“What are you doing?” Stiles whined helplessly, breathless.

“Stop talking for once.” Derek huffed, blunt teeth nipping his jaw and Stiles could no longer suppress the moan of, “Derek.”

The tip of Derek’s thumb brushed the seam of his briefs on its path down and to the inner part of his thigh.

“I—can’t.” Stiles gritted, arousal kindled and growing ever prominent, his breathing fluctuating.

“I know.”

Stiles eyes widened at the realization Derek was playing him. The bastard was trying to get a rise out of him and make him suffer.

“Bastard, you’re playing with me? Seriously? I should be the one who’s angry—Fuck!” Stiles bickered and cursed when Derek slid a cool hand through the folds of his briefs and cupped his sack, meticulously caressing his family jewels.

“I’m not playing with you.” Derek answered simply and as if to prove his point he pressed his hips forwards and against Stiles’ buttocks, making Stiles feel the truth of his words.

“Derek.” Stiles groaned, over-stimulated.
“Don’t move.” Derek commanded, free hand descending beneath Stiles’ waist, glided under the waistband of his briefs and curled over his shaft, stroking to match the tempo of his hand fondling his sack.

“I can’t breathe.” Stiles gasped, panicked by the arousing sensations and smacked his hands over the alpha’s wrists, his chest heaving strident pants of air he couldn’t seem to keep a hold of.

“Yes you can.” Derek countered, his strokes picking up tempo.

“No—no, I—Derek,” Stiles wheezed, his lungs blazed, each sharp inhale and heavy exhale enflamed them, agitated his tender abdomen and pulsed against his chest.

“Follow my breathing.” Derek rasped, nosing Stiles’ cheek, tilting forwards and nudged Stiles nose with his and claimed his lips.

Stiles whimpered, parting his mouth when Derek’s tongue rubbed the crevasse of his lips. The alpha’s breathing was somewhat irregular; a humming of a growl ensued, purring out of him much like a content cat. Twirling their tongues about in a heated tug-of-war to seek which won out in the end was dizzying. Each exhale of the alpha sent Stiles to inhale piercingly and with every inhale the alpha made Stiles whined a winded exhale.

“Phuck, gonnnna k—kcummm.” Stiles murmured around Derek’s insistent tongue and kisses.

A rumble of a growl lowered several octaves as if voicing Stiles to do so and when Derek constricted his hold of his sack and rubbed his thumb firmly against the slit of his arousal Stiles came with a wrecked sob, arching into Derek’s chest as the alpha pressed down onto him and swallowed his cry within a kiss.

Stiles panted greatly, let out strangulated noises in the back of his throat as Derek continued his movements, hands pumping out of him the last of his release. When Stiles was spent and sagged back into Derek, the alpha broke their kiss, removed his hands from out of the human and pulled away.

Stiles watched as the alpha brought his fluid coated hands to his mouth and drank the liquid, suckling the remains.

Derek grasped at the bed sheets and pushed them further down, past their knees and went to straddle Stiles’ lower legs. Stiles stared curiously at the alpha as he lowered himself and bit back a groan as Derek sniffed his soaked briefs.

When a heated mouth enclosed the damp spot of the head of his manhood, Stiles arched completely off the bed and gasped in revelation.

“Derek!” came the startled cry.

“Don’t move.” Derek ordered when a moment later Stiles was groaning, having pulled at his stapled incisions.

Derek sucked at the damp spot, whining in the back of his throat when he sucked beyond the cloth and tasted Stiles’ release. Stiles breathed large laborious bouts of air, his sensitive member twitching with newfound life and groaned at the thought of coming again, inside that perfect and fiery mouth.

“Derek.” Stiles moaned headily, tossing his head to the side and grasping a hold of Derek’s pillow to clutch onto like a lifeline. “Derek, why are you doing this?”
Derek didn’t reply, but whether it was because he was currently distracted or refused to answer the question, Stiles was unsure. Derek hooked his grip on the waistband of Stiles’ briefs and removed them. Stiles whimpered when the coolness of the room hit his responsive organ, the cool sensations exciting his stimulations.

Stiles fastened his grip on the pillow when he peered down and watched Derek shift, eyes slowly darkening to gleaming coquelicot, jaw slackening revealed blunt teeth that lengthened to thick sharp canines, brows and cheekbones growing prominent, fur lengthening into sideburns and a widows peak whilst his ears sharpened into pointed flesh.

When Derek dipped low Stiles held his breath, stiffened considerably with the knowledge that if he made one wrong move those canines could very well send mini Stiles to an early grave. He quite liked mini Stiles, would love to spend the rest of his life attached to mini Stiles.

Stiles worries and fears were swiftly pushed into the fog at the back of his mind when Derek lapped his hardness, tasting his fluids with interest and keenness. As the alpha mouthed the length of his manhood and with it eating away his release, smooth canines nudging his length bringing him that much closer to danger—Stiles was gone. He became a pool of sweat and shivers, groaning and gasping for more.

Once Stiles was thoroughly clean and then some, mini Stiles was perky and pulsing for round two, he was urgently digging his fingers into the pillow and smothering himself with it. His attempts at silencing his cries were useless and only caused his body to quake when the scent of Derek became ever strong.

Removing the pillow from where his nose could smell the potent scent of the alpha, he cradled it much like a child would their favorite stuffed animal. He met Derek’s gaze and groaned in the back of his throat, something about watching Derek lap at his length like some kind of kinky werewolf made for a very randy Stiles.

Derek raised his hand up to Stiles and the human stared at it warily. Derek’s claws slowly retracted as he offered his hand with an impatient twirl of his wrist. Stiles continued staring at it, knowing exactly what Derek wished and not quite feeling confident enough.

“You’re going to hurt me, right? This is what you wanted? To claim me?” Stiles snapped edgily, biting into his bottom lip when Derek suckled the slick head of his erection.

“Stop being an idiot and trust me.” Derek grumbled distractedly, continuing his leisure mouthing of Stiles’ flesh and focused his attention on the human’s sack.

“Christ!” Stiles bleated, tugging the pillow against his chest in two different directions and heard the seams of the pillowcase scream in protest.

“Stiles.” Derek growled agitatedly and no longer giving Stiles the option, shoved two fingers within Stiles’ parted lips as he exhaled a moan.

Stiles made a stifled noise of disconcerted objection, but Derek didn’t seem all that bothered and swallowed the tip of Stiles’ spouting head. Stiles bit into Derek’s fingers and projected a broken shout of delight when the alpha bobbed frenziedly, past the head and took him fully within his mouth.

Stiles didn’t care anymore—not when Derek could do that with his mouth and those thick canines dragged against the borders of his length. He downed the alpha’s fingers earnestly, voicelessly accepting the third Derek offered up. Stiles laved with great care, weaving his tongue between each
digit as Derek sucked with intent, almost as if trying to pinch out his release in that moment and lost control.

Stiles thrust his hips upwards, despite the flaring discomfort of his sore wounds. Derek hard-pressed Stiles’ hips against the bed with his free hand; he kept them there, stilling their movements, regardless of Stiles’ sobs of disapproval.

Derek deliberately hummed and with it sent a current of tingling and vibrating satisfaction to course down Stiles’ length, constricting his lower abdomen, bursting with searing need and prompting muscles to seize as his toes curled inward. A violent shudder broke free followed swiftly with a piercing nasal whimper of, “Derek.”

Derek’s hand slid away from Stiles’ hip, down his thigh and brushed the base of his erection, enclosed a firm grip about his girth and massaged, sucking thoroughly, his tongue caressed and prodded about the sensitive trickling slit before frenziedly rubbing the underside. Derek sucked with involuntary power. Was it even possible for werewolves to have super-sucking abilities? It seems that it was possible and Stiles was overcome. A strident shout of bliss forged through tightening lungs and breathless gasps, filling the room in the groans and sobs that followed the cry. Desperate jumbled and incoherent pleads for the alpha to give him more, bring him that much closer to the edge. Stiles was just barely straddling the lines—about to burst forth and cum and Derek sensed it somehow. The alpha mouthed Stiles’ length rowdily and with urgency. With no warning, Derek removed the hand from out of Stiles’ stuttering gibberish mouth.

The width of Derek’s fangs lightly grazed the spongy moist tip of his erection sending Stiles’ legs to lock and his back to arch once more, though Derek didn’t hold him down this time as his hips squirmed.

Stiles’ hips jerked forward and the head of his cock jabbed the back of Derek’s throat sending trills of pleasure and shudders to rock him. Derek inhaled deeply through his flaring nostrils, scenting the heady aroma of near completion. Stiles’ teeth chattered, the bones of his toes popping by the tightness at which he curled them.

When all at once Derek was pressing a sopping wet finger against his puckered entrance Stiles fell stiff, tensing up and whined.

“No. Nononononono, don’t. I’m not ready for this.” Stiles pleaded fearfully.

Stiles didn’t want to be claimed like this. They’d just had their first real argument and Derek had done a complete 180 on him. He wasn’t sure why Derek was doing all of this, especially after what they’d said to each other, but no. He wouldn’t be swayed by pleasure into letting Derek claim him.

“Relax. I won’t force you to do anything you’re not ready for. Trust me.” Derek huskily grated, flexing his jaw several times before mouthing the base of Stiles’ shaft and worked his way back to the head, rolling and twirling his tongue, mischievously.

When Derek’s finger prodded past his firmly taunt muscles, Stiles squawked an unmanly sound between a yelp and a bleat. Derek made obscene wet sounds as he licked his shaft and nudged his finger passed the protesting walls of Stiles’ sacred place. When Derek shoved another with far less gentleness Stiles grunted and barked out a noise of perturbed and undermined protest.

Stiles was torn between moaning with pleasure and grimacing in discomfort; Derek’s mouth was doing things to him he never imaged or thought would feel this good—Derek’s fingers, however, felt foreign and unwelcomed. Derek pressed a third finger through and Stiles winced, his tense walls giving way to relaxing just a fraction in the hopes the soreness of being stretched would
lighten and it did, but not by much.

“Out, get them out. I don’t like this, Derek.” Stiles implored, squirming in his discomfort.

Derek’s brows furrowed with contemplation and his fingers twisted at an odd angle. Curving upwards they dragged the length of his inner most private of areas. Stiles bit into his bottom lip when Derek struck something. Pressing into it experimentally caused Stiles to whine and when Derek massaged it, Stiles sobbed. His head banged back against the bed and he clutched frantically to the pillow, mewling lewdly.

Derek hummed and Stiles shivered by the chilling electrical pulsing of enjoyment. The alpha feverishly mouthed Stiles, licking, sucking and humming. Derek stroked his tongue hurriedly over the slit of the head, sucked with unintentionally bruising force and Stiles cried out audibly with unmistakable gratification.

Stiles couldn’t hold back. The shockingly electric pulsing of his over stimulated bundle of nerves mixed with Derek’s hot mouth working his length to the brink sent him over the edge and he was coming, clawing at the pillow, arching, hips squirming all the more and toes snapping.

Each pleasantly painful pulse of his arousal sent heated release to coat the sweltering cavern of Derek’s inner mouth, and every unrelenting jab at his sensitive spot of joy evoked a stuttering moan that grew ever boisterous.

Stiles sagged onto the bed a pile of tremulous and twitching nerves, spasms of elation running through him, his lungs attempting to reenact a steady pace, heart pounding so loudly Stiles heard the drumming in his ears—he could feel it thump through his eardrums, along the pulse point of his neck and pound against his ribcage.

Stiles groaned as Derek drank away any remains of release, his flaccid length jolting every so often, receptive to the alpha’s attention. The beads of sweat dribbling about the whole expanse of his body were effectively licked away by an attentively affectionate alpha. Stiles purred in the back of his throat, tossing the pillow away from his chest and raised unsteady hands to thread his fingers in the wolf’s dark mane.

Derek peered up from where he was currently mouthing away the perspiration of the human’s chest with a questioning gaze.

“One of Stiles’ hands fiddled with melanic tresses whilst his other unraveled and glided down a toned neck, chest and made to slide through boxer-briefs when the alpha took hold of his questing hand.

“You don’t have to.” Derek exhaled against Stiles’ lips, kermes orbs half lidded and smoldering with hunger.

“Shut up and kiss me.” Stiles groused, yanking the alpha back down, taking control of the kiss and shoving his hand down the alpha’s boxer-briefs.

Taking hold of the hardness that was there, Stiles stroked a steady rhythm, swallowing the growl of the werewolf with an eager and searching tongue. Releasing his hold of the alpha’s head of hair he used his other hand to shove the alpha’s briefs down to his knees and sat up slightly, cursing his body when it flared with protest.
Derek pressed him back onto the bed and leaned back away from Stiles’ reach. He removed his undergarment before realigning himself to lie against the human. Stiles’ hand once more fastened a firm grip on the alpha’s arousal and moaned with accord when Derek took possession of his lips and this time he gave into the power and control of the alpha.

Stiles’ fond gentle caresses soon altered to rushed and fervent pulls and tugs at the realization Derek was already just barely hanging on; having thoroughly pleased the human, tasted him and no doubt scenting his past arousals had done a number on him.

“Come on, wolfie, scent me.” Stiles baited, longing to have the alpha’s spunk absorbed into his pores, wanting to smell only of Derek.

Stiles’ words seemed to affect the alpha greatly as a feral snarl escaped the beast followed by a hissing, “Yes.”

Stiles bit into the alpha’s bottom lip, growled a meager imitation of Derek’s own and whined, “Mark me. I want to be yours.”

That did it. Derek roared a primal alpha’s call, arching, pressing his chest into the human’s own and sprayed Stiles’ abdomen and bandages in his release. Stiles exhaled heavily, as if finally put at ease when the alpha hummed satisfied and made quick work of coating Stiles’ body in his essence.

Stiles eyes drooped heavily, suddenly far too exhausted to talk. He didn’t ask Derek, what changed? Why he’d done what he did? So worn out he couldn’t contemplate why he himself allowed all of this to happen. Instead, he enjoyed the calming caress of Derek’s large hands rubbing release into his skin, feeling it seep through his pores and knew he was Derek’s.

Stiles woke the morning after alone and wasn’t the least bit surprised. He didn’t know what the hell last night was. Could it have been makeup sex? They hadn’t even spoken really, so they never made up officially. Could it be to rid them of the tension? No, Stiles didn’t think it was that. A pity fuck? Angry sex? No and no.

Stiles pondered over his dilemma as he took his time readying himself for the day. Once he sat freshly washed and refreshed within his kitchen sipping his strong and rejuvenating brewed tea Stiles came up with the only explanation.

Derek had been scenting him because of their long absence. Even so, it still didn’t explain why Derek was refusing to have sex with him one moment to all but throw caution to the wind in the next. He was at a complete loss and grumbled agitatedly unable to fathom any solid foolproof reason as to why.

To say Stiles was not in the mood to finish the final plans for his wedding would be a major understatement. Stiles begrudgingly met Allison and Lydia at Brady’s Pub. The family run business had kindly offered their services to host the bands they’d arranged to meet with that day, to hear the groups perform test runs on the stage usually reserved for karaoke and special events.

It was early, precisely 8:00AM when Stiles sat himself in the nearest table to the stage and between a haggard Allison and energetic Lydia. Brady’s Pub officially opened at six in the evening which gave them more than enough time to sift through the many bands. Stiles had his suspicions that the only reason Brady O’Connell – the owner of the pub - had been open to hosting to Stiles and the girls was because he was Derek’s fiancé and soon to be mate. But at this point Stiles was becoming accustomed to being treated different. He knew it would likely never change, no matter how much
he wanted it to.

Stiles stared at the chirpy Lydia eating from a pink box of donuts set in the center of the three and didn’t feel all that hungry. Allison didn’t seem to possess much of an appetite either; the dark-haired beauty was slouched on the table using her arms to keep her head upright.

“You look horrid.” Stiles droned dully.

Allison spared a lazy glance towards him, dark bags under her eyes and let out an unenthusiastic, “Eh.”

Lydia swallowed a mouthful of her cinnamon roll and explained with an amused gleam in her eyes, “Don’t worry about Allison, she’s just exhausted from turning down her horny husband all night.”

Stiles cringed and groaned, shaking his head trying to rid the images. “God, I hate you so much right now.”

Lydia laughed whilst Allison raised her gaze to meet Stiles with earnest support. “I did it all for you.”

“Allison, just have sex with the poor lad, it’s been two months already.”

“No. Scott needs to accept his assness and apologize to Stiles. I think I’ve almost broken him.” Allison sounded ever confident, almost as if trying to convince herself.

“Well, keep up the good fight sister. I’ll be here to rub it in your face when you do cave.” Lydia quipped.

“Bitch.”

“Let’s see who’s the bitch when Scott finally mounts you,” Lydia laughed and both Allison and Stiles groaned, Allison from fear and Stiles from disgust.

“Shut up Lydia!” Stiles groused.

“What side of the bed did you wake on this morning?” Lydia replied hotly, sensing the shift.

“The side where Derek’s a jerk and leaves before we can talk?” Stiles hissed snatching the folder resting on the redhead’s lap with the listing of the bands.

“What happened?” Allison perked.

“Nothing, I don’t want to talk about it. Derek and I will handle it.” Stiles really didn’t want his friend’s advice on his personal relationship with Derek. Some things were meant to stay between a couple, while other things didn’t necessarily have to be. Only this wasn’t one of those things he’d want Allison’s or Lydia’s input on.

“Well we’re here if you need us.” Lydia interjected and Allison nodded in approving consent.

Stiles gave a slight tilt of his head validating their consideration and glanced down at the folder, listing the bands in order of appearance and called the first onto stage.

It seemed like a never ending ordeal to watch each band shuffle their equipment up the stage and shuffle them off once they’d finished performing. Allison fell asleep with her head burrowed deep in the curves of her arms against the table sometime during the sixth band. The donuts had caused Lydia to turn into a hyped up jittery werewolf on crack as she’d clapped before the bands went up
and as they left the stage, commenting on their talent as all were rather excellent. Stiles wasn’t even really paying attention after the tenth and when the final band left, Stiles told Lydia to choose.

Lydia explained from Derek’s preferences expressed when they first met over the wedding; the band, Clear Waters seemed the best of choices. Lydia couldn’t stop raving how phenomenal the female vocalist was. Stiles told her to book them and gently set into motion waking the grumbling and whining Allison who pleaded for several more minutes of sleep.

When Stiles finally roused the hunter, the three took their separate cars to the floral shop. There they discussed their ideas of what they wanted with the florist. They made their final arrangements with them and headed out to the restaurant and caterers. Lydia and Stiles bickered over menu choices. Lydia mentioning Derek’s preferences and Stiles shooting down each one of the suggestions. He was just a bit sensitive where Derek was concerned. Every time Lydia brought up Derek’s suggestions, Stiles became all the more agitated and soon began arguing against everything, just for the hell of it. Lydia was far too stubborn to back down and Stiles relented on many of the issues, giving into Derek’s preferences and Lydia’s fortitude.

By the time they finished all their errands it was late and Stiles felt a bit unnerved as all the preparations for the wedding was over. Now all Derek and Stiles needed to do was get fitted and retrieve their suits from the tailors the day before the big day and they’d be hitched.

Lydia invited Allison and Stiles for dinner at her place. Stiles was far too eager to get home where he could talk to Derek about what last night meant, so he promised to have dinner with the two on another night. They seemed to sense his need and understood.

When Stiles pulled into his lot, he’d hurriedly shut the engine and exited the Jeep. Wishing to prepare himself for their heart to heart. Knowing the alpha would be home any moment, he bounded the steps of his porch and came to a halt with alarm when nearly knocking over the person before him.

His eyes bulged in disbelief and a strangled outcry broke from his lips of, “Scott!”
Love to Hate

Color Adjectives:

Albicant: White
Beige: Light creamy whitish brown color
Nigrine: Black

Stiles gawked at the beta before him in disbelief. Scott stood at his porch hands shoved gawkily in his front jean pockets, eyes downcast and posture slouched awkwardly. It was evident in the man’s posture he didn’t want to be there, felt out of his skin, uneasy as he swayed back and forth on the heels of his feet.

Stiles glanced towards the ground and rubbed at the back of his neck, suddenly feeling self-conscious himself.

“Um,” Stiles started, voice breaking and cleared his throat before voicing a sturdy greeting of, “Hey.”

Silence followed in which Scott raised his gaze briefly to scan Stiles’ body and prompted Stiles to glance at himself, curious if he had a stain he hadn’t noticed—no; just a plain white elbow length sleeve cotton shirt, black sweats and his beloved navy blue vans.

“They’re okay?” Scott finally spoke, low, mumbling his words, but Stiles heard him.

Stiles’ brows furrowed, What the hell was Scott talking about?

“Your…injuries. Are they healing properly?” Scott clarified.

Stiles flashed a halfhearted smile, stomach knotting painfully. “Like you care?”

“Of course I care!” Scott met Stiles’ gaze with incredulity.

“You could have fooled me,” Stiles grumbled, suddenly feeling a bout of weariness, scuffed his feet against cement and sat on the top step of the porch.

Scott paused a beat before slumping down next to Stiles. The two stared out at the neighborhood, still and vacant. The porch lights glowing from the homes of the block were the only illumination lighting the street, though everyone had long since gone to bed. There came a soft breeze and it sent pleasant chills of the frigid night to sting at Stiles’ face.

“Allison and I came to the hospital as soon as we found out,” Scott broke the silence.

So Allison was telling the truth.

“I’m sorry I left. I just…it was hard to see you like that,” Scott glanced at Stiles then and the human lowered his gaze to his knees and palmed them while leaning forwards and sighed heavily.


Scott ran a hand through his hair and stared up at the moon. “I felt horrible. Allison was right when
she called me dense. I—seeing you like that—I felt like a fool. I’ve wanted to apologize since that night I said such cruel things, but I just…I felt so ashamed and like a complete ass.”

Stiles smiled at this, met Scott’s apprehensive gaze and elbowed the beta. “You’re a right ass, a complete dumbass, but I will always forgive you if you acknowledge your faults.”

Scott smirked for one moment, though his features shifted with solemn consideration in the next.

“I am sorry for everything. This has always been your choice and I need to accept that. I guess I just…after your father passed and my mom took you in—I thought you more of a brother than a friend, and I only wanted to protect you.”

Stiles chuckled then, suddenly coming to understand Scott’s assness with a new light and accepting it for the love of a stubborn and misguided best friend.

“What’s so funny? Dude, I’m like bearing my soul here?” Scott demanded. His brows furrowed with frustration but his lips twitching in a smile that grew in brilliance as Stiles’ laughter progressed.

Stiles winced only slightly when there was throbbing of his abdomen, protesting his joys.

“I’m not laughing at you. I’m just—I’m so happy right now,” Stiles beamed, his chest filled with the overwhelming swell of compassion and contentment.

Scott laughed then, raised a hand and clasped a hold of Stiles’ shoulder. “I’ve missed you.”

Stiles tipped his head in concord. “So have I.”

Their eyes sparkled with joyfulness when there came a piercing and strangled whine, breaking through the stillness of the neighborhood and causing Stiles to tense. Scanning the deserted neighborhood Stiles’ brows knitted closely together with deliberation.

“What was that?” Stiles contemplated.

“Oh!” Scott exclaimed with sudden recognition, releasing Stiles’ shoulder and hurriedly bounding the steps of the home and towards his cherry red truck.

“You’re leaving!” Stiles demanded hotly, rising from the porch gaping at the beta with incredulity. Scott hadn’t even given him a proper goodbye!

Scott spun, flashed a mischievous smile and opened the passenger door of his vehicle. Stiles’ eyes widened when a fuzzy oversized ball of beige and albicant fluff leaped out of the car. It hopped and waggled beside Scott, sniffing his shoes raucously before bounding about all over the place.

Stiles got a closer look at the thing as it neared him, sniffing at the grass with great interest and when it bent on its hind legs and urinated on his grass—Stiles was in love.

Ever since high school Scott worked for Dr. Deaton. Soon after graduating he’d shown an interest in working with animals. Several years later, Scott became a veterinarian and worked with Dr. Deaton at the clinic. Throughout the whole time Scott worked at the clinic Stiles would visit for a good laugh and to share lunches together.

“ASPCA found this poor pup abandoned near the highway. I felt terrible for the pup when she came in covered in dirt. I cleaned her up and fell in love with this sweetness,” Scott explained when the puffball bounded the steps of the porch and pawed at Stiles’ legs, panting and pleading for
“I thought if you refused to accept my apology, I could bribe you with a puppy’s cuteness.” Scott jested, though remaining honest.

“Aw, you’re too cute!” Stiles cooed, bent low and lifted the squirming pup close to his chest. He laughed heartily when the pup sniffed him and bayed, lapping frenziedly at his face, sharp fangs nipping at his jaw, chin and nose.

“She’s mine?” Stiles chirped, grinning toothily, childishly, pleasantly surprised and thrilled.

Scott’s smile brightened when he nodded in conformance. The pup barked and Stiles strangled out a pitchy whine imitating the pups own.

“Who’s my puppy wuppy? You are! You are!” Stiles tweeted in a singsong manner and pressed a firm kiss at the damp snout nudging his cheek.

Stiles spent great many hours volunteering at the clinic, assisting Scott. He loved animals, was more of a cat person, but he loved the whole lot of them. He’d talked with Scott about adopting a pet, but never seemed to follow through with those thoughts. He’d been so busy with work (the chaos of rebellious werewolves) and driven in his cause of ridding the world of Peter Hale. Now, however, Peter was gone and chaos was no more. Stiles had nothing stopping him from adopting.

“She’s a full bred borzoi,” Scott noted as Stiles made strange pitchy sounds in the back of his throat imitating the pups.

“I wove you!” Stiles squealed an unmanly vocalization of glee, but he didn’t give a shit when the pup nuzzled the underside of his neck and yowled in concurrence.

Stiles sat back onto the porch and grinned wildly whilst scratching the back of the pup's ears and it growled with enjoyment, sniffing at him with great interest. Scott shut the door of the truck and sat beside Stiles once more before he clipped a hot pink leash to the pale pink collar attached to the borzoi.

“So what are you going to name her?”

“What? You didn’t name her yet?”

“No. I thought that you’d want to.”

Stiles deliberated and chuckled when the pup licked his good ear.

“Fierce chica?” Stiles offered and Scott frowned.

“How about Sugar, Bambi or maybe Callie?” Stiles debated aloud and Scott made unenthusiastic facial expressions to each.

“Okay. What would you name her?” Stiles grumbled.

“Amber?”

“Hell no,” Stiles deadpanned, that was too common.

“Cupid?”

“Eh,” Stiles pursed his lips while he squint his eyes. The name was unique and adorable, but he
still wasn’t all that sure about it. “Perhaps.”

“Dasher?”

“Oh, I like that!” Stiles piped up.

“Dasher! Who’s my puppy wuppy?” Stiles tested out the name, kissing the pup’s ear and earned a cheerful whine.

“Seems like she likes it,” Scott observed.

“Now for a last name,” Stiles contemplated.

“Why not Stilinski?”

Stiles glared at the beta. “I won’t let my baby suffer the teasing.”

Scott rolled his eyes. “Who’s going to tease her? I don’t think Milo or any other dog will take notice.”

Milo was Allison’s and Scott’s one year old longhaired German Shepherd.

“I will notice.”

“What’s it to be?”

“Hmmm,” Stiles debated.

“Dasher Wizzard, Dasher Sugar Burgar, Dasher Snickerdoodle, Dasher Shenanigans,” Stiles reflected with hilarity.

“Like those won’t entail plenty of teasing,” Scott remarked.

“Okayokayokay, seriously now,” Stiles mulled over all the possibilities, pulling Dasher away from his chest to stare into honey tawny depths and grinned when a tongue lapped over her snout and she yipped. He knew exactly what he wanted to name her.

“Dasher Hale.”

Scott choked out spit and gaped at Stiles as if he’d done lost his mind.

“You can’t be serious.”

Stiles glared. “What if I am?”

Scott’s lips twitched in a somber scowl. “Allison told me the two of you are true mates but…you don’t love him do you?”

Stiles stared into Dasher’s innocent pools and sighed heavily. “Scott. I’m tired of denying how I feel. He…he means everything to me. I don’t want to feel ashamed for loving him.”

Scott leaned back and laid himself on the porch and stared up at the dark sky.

“Scott, say something,” Stiles pleaded when the beta remained in silence, Dasher calmed as if sensing the tension and stared from the beta to the human.

“I—I wish you didn’t, but I have no right to judge you. I just worry, because we know next to
nothing about the alpha.”

Stiles tipped his head low and scented Dasher’s soothing aroma of wilderness and fruity shampoo.

“He’s a good man,” Stiles confessed. “He’s only ever been considerate towards me and I feel safe with him. Sure he’s a moody ass, but, even if he won’t say it—I think—I know he cares.”

“How can you be so sure about that? It could be the cause of bonding.”

“It’s not.”

“But how do you know?” Scott persisted.

Stiles hesitated, shut his eyes and felt a soreness claim his heart. “I don’t, but…I have hope.”

“You know he’s going to break your heart, don’t you?”

Stiles opened his eyes and flashed a weary smile of acknowledgement. “He just might destroy me, but Scott, he’s the first man I’ve opened my heart to since my parents. I might be crazy, but I think I can open his heart too.”

Scott sighed and sat back up and cuffed Stiles’ back. “Okay, man. I’ll support your choice this time, but if that bastard hurts you, don’t bother stopping me because I won’t.”

Stiles snorted, removing an arm from Dasher to clasp the beta’s shoulder. “Thanks. I love you, man.”

Scott smiled and handed over the leash. “Here, I’ve already walked Dasher so she should be good to stay indoors. I need some alone time with the misses, if you catch my drift.”

Stiles made a sour face and groaned with displeasure, “Dude! T.M.I!”

Scott only laughed and Stiles cursed him to hell and back.

“So that’s why you came here? Where’s the love man? I’m just a means to your hanky panky with the wife?”

“Do you know how difficult it was going without for two months?”

“Shuuut uuuuuup! I don’t want to know. Lalalalalalalalalalala!”

Stiles watched the beta laugh uproariously all the way to his truck. When the engine revved and he pulled into the center of the road, Scott waved his farewell and drove off, just slightly over the speed limit, withdrawal of the hanky panky pushing him to speed.

Stiles smiled contentedly. Scott was trying to understand and be supportive, though he knew it would be difficult for him, he was doing it all for Stiles. He promised himself to treat Scott out for being so accepting.

Stiles heartedly snickered when Dasher bounced on his knees and pawed his face and neck. He petted her eagerly and couldn’t stop smiling as she yipped like the rowdy pup she was.

“Hey snookums. I’m Stiles, I’m your awesome class A daddy. We’re going to have so much fun. Yes we are.” Stiles spoke in a deep and round childish voice and Dasher’s flopping ears perked, her wispy tail wagged and she yowled.
Stiles spent several long moments stroking her silky fur before deciding a little stroll around the block might calm the hyped pup that was undulating and pulsed with volts upon volts of energy.

Stiles walked her to the corner of the block, crossed the street adjacent to them and trailed back to the other end of the block. He crossed the street one last time to stroll up the path and towards their home, walking in a rectangle rotation of the two strips of homes. As they’d strolled the block, Dasher stopped to smell the trees and patches of grass, enjoyed scratching at the wooden lamp post near his home and sniffed it with far more intent than anything else. Stiles knew many of the neighborhood dogs enjoyed sniffing at the post and marking it and smirked when Dasher attempted to do the same with an empty bladder.

“Come on sweetie, daddy’s got a nice lamb chop with your name on it. You can thank aunty Lydia and Allison for bringing it over next time,” Stiles knew Lydia and Allison would fall in love with Dasher as soon as meeting her.

Dasher wasn’t so pleased leaving the post and whined her protest. Though her displeasure was soon wiped clean and focused on a wilted leaf as it blew about the sidewalk. She tugged on the collar attempting to catch the leaf and when she did she sniffed it with curiosity.

As they weaved past it and started up the trail leading home, Dasher stilled before going wild. She bounced on the balls of her paws, tail wagging speedily, body jittery. She outstretched her front paws, bent her head low and wiggled her bum. Stiles knew the stance well; it was a show of playfulness, an eager attempt at prompting a good chase.

When Stiles followed the line of Dasher’s intent gaze he stared before him and towards the broodingly ominous brute, Derek.

Stiles swallowed thickly, tightening his hold of the leash when Dasher tugged against it in her hopes of playing with the alpha. She didn’t quite seem to sense the danger of the alpha before them, not like Stiles could.

“Hey,” Stiles greeted and took the several steps separating them.

When he stood no more than a foot away, Dasher bounced on her hind legs, her front paws up and curled in a show of begging for the alpha’s attention.

Derek spared the pup a glance before meeting Stiles' gaze with curiosity.

“Scott was here. We worked through our differences and he got me a pup. Derek, meet Dasher,” Stiles added the last part with a forced upon smile, feeling a bit off, not sure what to expect from the hormonal alpha who was always blowing hot and cold.

Derek glanced back down at Dasher and Stiles’ mouth fell ajar when Derek lowered himself and began stroking the back of the pup’s neck and Dasher whined, nuzzling the alpha’s arm.

“She’s already identified us as her parents,” Derek noted thoughtfully, a brief smile sprouted upon his face before it was replaced with a frown known as ‘Sour Wolf frown’.

“What?” Stiles was thoroughly confused.

“Dogs are the canine cousin to wolves. They can scent an alpha. I can smell her all over you. She scented you because you smell like an alpha’s mate. You accepted her, when you scented her in return. Therefore, you’ve acknowledged her as your pup and she’s acknowledged the both of us as her parents.”
“Are you shitting me?” Stiles blurted by the absurdity of the alpha’s explanation.

“It’s the way of animal customs. Why do you think male dogs are protective or territorial of their owners? Because they’ve scented them as kin, it’s not all that surprising when you really think about it.”

Stiles looked away when Derek met his gaze and stood back up. His features became warm in the frigidness of late November and he couldn’t explain why. It was just…something about Derek saying Dasher was their pup and they her parents that caused his insides to turn to mush.

“We should get inside. You must be chilled to the bone. Why don’t you have a coat?” Derek reprimanded with his trademark sour face.

“I didn’t think I would need one.”

Derek stepped close, wrapped a warm arm around Stiles’ waist and led him up the steps of the home, Dasher following eagerly and barking merrily.

When the three reached the bedroom, Derek began removing his clothing; Stiles shut the bedroom door and released Dasher from the leash, then he set into motion of undressing himself. As the two removed their articles of clothing Dasher sprinted from one side of the room to the other, exploring. When she’d finished, she pranced from Derek to Stiles, smelling their shoes, pawing their legs in an attempt for their attention. The two ignored her attempts and she set about trying to get up on the high bed.

Derek finished undressing first and scooped Dasher into his arms. As he shifted under the bed sheets he set her over them and she set about lapping at the alpha’s hand that patted her head comfortably. When his eyes flashed scarlet and a soft humming erupted from deep within his chest, Dasher’s frenzied energized self calmed and she curled herself near the foot of the bed, her back pressing into Derek’s sheeted knees.

Stiles watched intently, completely mystified at just how quick Derek managed to pacify Dasher’s frenzied state and send her to a peaceful sleep. After Stiles removed his clothing he only felt a brief discomfort, his abdomen and chest stung only a fraction. Though as time was steadily passing, Stiles was starting to feel more and more like himself. He moved around with far less caution than he’d done when first being discharged from the hospital and that was wonderful.

As Stiles slid under the sheets he hesitated pressing himself against the alpha’s chest and instead lay several inches away. Derek exhaled heavily, as if frustrated with the human and his uncertainty. The alpha curled an arm about his waist and slid him against his chest.

Stiles remained tense in the alpha’s hold. Derek’s hands ran along his back, stroking and massaging the tension whilst he dipped his head and nuzzled Stiles’ exposed neck. Hot breath brushed over cooled flesh, heating it and sending pleasant tingles to course down his spine.

Stiles mentally shook his head. He couldn’t fall prey to Derek’s craftiness, his devious and wondrous hands that worked magic on the tense muscles of his back—or that tongue—**Derek’s tongue!**

Derek laved the tendon of his neck, rubbing into it, swirling about, smacking and lapping so loudly Stiles could hear the grating of it with his sensitive ear.

“Derek, stop,” Stiles whispered waveringly, a hand rising to palm the nape of the alpha’s neck as blunt teeth grazed sensitive flesh.
“Why?” Derek simply questioned, shifting Stiles further against him and pressed him into the bed, nipping fervently.

“Because…” Stiles swallowed thickly. “What’s going on? What was last night? Why are you acting like this?”

“Stop talking,” Derek drawled, distractedly mouthing up to Stiles’ ear as a hand strayed south and grazed the hem of his briefs. “I’ll make you feel good.”

Stiles whimpered, arching into the alpha’s hand as it slid past the waist band and grazed his aroused head.

“No!” Stiles belted, in the fog of bliss, releasing Derek’s neck and tugged at the alpha’s questing hand and successfully removed it from out of his briefs.

Derek rolled off Stiles and onto his back, one arm tucked under Stiles’ lower back, his other moving to rest over his forehead.

“Why can’t you just let it happen?” Derek exhaled heavily, glancing accusingly at the human.

Stiles’ lips pursed, finally grasping Derek’s sudden need to copulate last night and even tonight. He was trying to work him up to being claimed, sooner rather than later, probably even before they were to be married.

“So the reason you’ve been so pushy…is because you want to claim me—before the wedding?” Stiles contemplated aloud, voice rough with agitation.

Derek glanced up at the ceiling and sighed. “It’s for the best.”

“No. What’s for the best is waiting. What’s for the best is giving me the time I need to prepare myself. What’s not for the best, is trying to jump my bones after having an argument,” Stiles gritted, barely keeping his voice down as his anger built.

“You don’t understand how difficult it will be for me to control myself,” Derek warned, eyes hardening forebodingly.

“What are you talking about?”

“I’ll just deal with it somehow,” Derek grumbled sliding the arm over his forehead to palm at his face and rub it, perturbed.

Stiles couldn’t take this. Derek always blowing hot and cold, kind and cruel, open and closed, yin than yang; it gave Stiles emotional whiplash. He never knew which side of the alpha he’d get. Derek was his Jekyll and Hyde.

“No matter how much I want to let you in, you won’t open up. No matter how much I push, you will never budge,” Stiles said all of this whilst his voice wavered and his eyes gleamed.

Derek only stared at Stiles blankly as if unfeeling and Stiles barked in laughter, hating how Derek could make him feel so many things, but it meant absolutely nothing to the emotionless and cruel beast.

“I—I want to hurt you, like you hurt me.”

Derek unexpectedly rose and took hold of the human’s shoulder, prompting Stiles to raise his gaze
and meet the alpha’s. Derek seemed almost guilty—ashamed.

“I’m sorry, Stiles. I really am. You were never supposed to like me.”

Stiles blinked rapidly, abstaining from allowing his emotions to spill over and have the alpha see them.

“It’s more than just liking,” Stiles mumbled disheartened.

Derek’s grasp softened to stroke the length of his arm and pulled him in close, enveloped Stiles within his embrace.

“I know,” Derek breathed.

“I can’t stop the way I feel. If I could, I would,” Stiles conveyed with desolation, craning his head in the curve of the alpha’s neck.

Derek swallowed harshly, tipped his head and nosed Stiles’ wounded right ear with placidness.

“I’m sorry,” Derek rasped and Stiles broke a little at the tone of remorse coating the alpha’s words.

Derek was apologizing for Stiles’ love. Taking the blame, as if it was his fault, but it wasn’t. It was all Stiles’ fault. He was the weak one, the one who couldn’t differentiate kindness from duty, marriage from treaty, comfort for pity, and love from union.

*I’m the true fool.*

Stiles couldn’t hold it in anymore, the tears broke as his arms wrapped around the alpha’s back and clawed at flesh and muscle, pressing the larger forcefully against him as a sob slipped free.

“It’s my fault. I’m the fool who fell. *I’m so stupid!*” Stiles cackled a rough bitter laugh, laughing at the fool he had become. “It’s just that I’m weak. You were so kind and I—I’m such a pathetic fool!”

“No, Stiles,” Derek hoarsely protested, followed by a strained and overwrought, “Don’t.”

Stiles inhaled Derek’s aroma and tried to place the wavering he’d heard in the alpha’s voice for anything but grief.

“I want to hate you…but I can’t.”

“*Stiles…*cry about anything else…but for me,” Derek’s voice cracked, shifting to a whimper as he nuzzled the human’s fuzzed head of hair and trailed a path of soothing kisses to his temple.

Stiles raised his head as Derek’s kisses continued their path, layering about damp lashes, cheeks and to the edge of his mouth. He lapped at the tears and Stiles whined against the kind brute’s affection.

As Derek grasped a hold of his flushed face and grief-stricken hazel met tender honey brown, Stiles whimpered, “*I love you, so much.*”

The alpha exhaled a quivering breath as he pressed a final kiss upon Stiles’ lips and the human shattered, a disjointed sob muffled against the alpha’s tongue when it slid through the passage of his lips and loved his own with such gentleness. It left Stiles feeling bare and open, feverish as his heart thrummed its accord.
Derek pressed Stiles against the bed and towered over him, kissing away his sobs. Stiles’ hands ran over the alpha’s toned shoulder blades and stroked the beast as he quaked. When the alpha broke their kiss, Stiles’ eyes opened lazily and stared with disbelief. The sight of shimmering hazel evoked a corded vice to compress his throbbing heart.

Derek was—Derek—he was just barely holding on. He seemed tattered with torment as if there was a weight unbeknownst to Stiles that the alpha was forced to carry.

“I—Stiles,” Derek heaved a frayed breath, a sharp disjointed sound erupting from deep in his chest and closely resembled an anguished whimper.

“Derek,” Stiles gasped and tugged the alpha back down, claimed the wolf’s lips, kissed away a whimper, past a huffed howl, muffling the sobs as the alpha fell to pieces and dampness pelted his cheeks.

Stiles clamped his eyes shut, the knowledge that the dampness was not of his own—that the wolf was crying—actually *crying* ruined him. He couldn’t understand the alpha—most likely would never come to understand the brute, but he knew—knew that whatever happened—no matter how angry he became with the alpha—he could never hate him—never abandon him.

Derek was his everything and he’d spend the rest of his life tending to the damaged alpha, nurturing the brute with love and kindness—and maybe one day—days, months, even years from now—Derek might just open his heart bare and reveal all the pain and sadness that dwelt there.

When he did—if *he* did—Stiles would love him for it, accept him for all his faults, all his mistakes—and maybe then Derek would allow himself to care for Stiles—allow himself to need and want, to accept Stiles’ love and give it in kind.

Stiles broke their lengthy kisses to mouth at the wetness of the alpha’s rosy cheeks, blinking back his own when Derek whined a throttled cry—pained by Stiles’ tenderness. He laved a trail across rough stubble as it scrapped against his smooth tongue and towards the alpha’s ear and nibbled the lobe.

“You’re mine, Derek, *my mate,*” Stiles panted hotly, commanding the alpha’s respect and Derek shivered against him, barring down unreservedly into him, dipping his head to nuzzle his neck and whimpered in accord. “So please trust me.”

“Stiles.” Derek croaked, nudging Stiles’ neck with his nose and pressed his full weight into the slighter.

Stiles tucked his head into the alpha’s neck, inhaled sharply of his scent and massaged the wolf’s back, his other hand rising to pet the beast’s dark mane. Shutting his eyes, Stiles relaxed against the alpha’s weight pressing him deep into the mattress and soothed his hurts—so much like the way Derek had done for him time and time again.

He knew his life was a mess. He first came to realize just how much so after their argument, but he also knew that life wasn’t always easy. His just had more dilemmas to resolve, but that didn’t matter when Stiles had Derek.

Derek cared about him—whether it was because he’d taken the responsibility of bonding with the human or not. There was consideration and Stiles would always hang onto that knowledge. It didn’t matter if Derek wasn’t in love with him, because Stiles could accept that. He could accept the fact Derek didn’t love him, saw him as a duty, a obligation, a responsibility, because he knew—knew that whatever happened Derek would never betray him, never desert him, would protect him.
because they were bonded—true mates.

True mates were made for the each other—Stiles still couldn’t fully understand the ties that this meant or brought with it, but he knew that nature had created them for each other, that they were soul mates. Soul mates of friendship or love, he wasn’t sure, but this bond—he knew would always tie the two together and Derek would value him because of it.

Stiles loved Derek. It would be painful—agonizing and excruciating at times. Unrequited love would destroy him, but he’d have to pull himself through it. He could make this work. He had to make this work. Friendship was all Derek could offer him, a companionship never ending and binding with their marriage and wolves mating matrimony.

Stiles would have to make it work. He couldn’t force Derek to love him, but being friends, having a close bond—he could do this. He’d be able to be close to the alpha and give him his support, loyalty and compassion and receive the same in kind.

Yes, this was the right thing for the both of them. Stiles realized he could not have Derek’s love, but what he’d be getting in the end was more important than that. He’d have instilled peace and a treaty would have been enacted with their union. He would gain companionship and someone driven to protect his wellbeing. He would have a family. Derek would be his kin and he wouldn’t be alone. He’d never have to live the rest of his life lonesome. This was better. He had to make this work—he just had to.

Derek hummed drowsily against him, his breathing evening as he slipped in and out of the fog of sleep, pleasantly content against the human and being calmed with strokes of his mane and kneading of muscles across his back. Stiles nuded the ear closest to him, dipped his head and buried his nose into the alpha’s dark tresses and sniffed audibly.

“You’re everything to me,” Stiles murmured huskily and planted a kiss against silky nigrine and felt contentment fill him as the alpha groggily purred, wordlessly acknowledging the human’s words.
When Stiles woke the next morning, Derek was gone and Stiles wasn’t feeling all that chipper. He’d promised himself he would never tell Derek those three powerful words after the stupid sour wolf hurt his feelings—*On Thanksgiving to boot*—but it appeared Stiles had no sense of follow through or self-restraint when faced with the tender gaze of one Derek Hale.

*Ugh!* He really hated Derek’s mood swings. Stiles was fairly certain they could equally contend with a pregnant woman’s hormonal tantrums. It always seemed that Derek would be a contentedly docile wolf only for the next moment—he morphed into a raging were-hormonal alpha.

Not to mention the leaving Stiles whilst he slept, like *a-mother-fucking-thief-in-the-night!* Was it really that hard for Derek to spend the whole night with him? Like *really—seriously—in all truth and sincerity.* Especially since the two had been a mess of emotions and there were shared tears, comfort and kisses. Apparently it amounted to shit since Derek didn’t feel the need to console him that morning.

Derek had cried—*repeating for emphasis*—Derek *mother-efing* Hale had *cried!* What the ever-loving *hell* did that mean? Did it mean the brute actually had a heart under all the tin metal and empathized for Stiles—had felt his pain equally? Or did it mean something else? Did it mean there was something buried deep inside the wolf that Stiles would never be able to understand fully—until the brute actually opened up?

No—it had to mean nothing—just—just whatever! Derek was an ass, but Dasher—Dasher was so damn cute! Stiles woke to plenty of lapping and sniffing at his face—knowing it had to be her rather than the hormonal fiancé. The pup would whine for attention and Stiles would give it to her wordlessly.

That first morning together, he fed Dasher the lamb chop he’d promised, a day late, but with Derek in his presence he tended to forget things like that. No matter, he was positive Scott fed the pup before dropping her off—knowing Stiles wouldn’t have any puppy chow in his petless home.

After Stiles fed himself he’d taken Dasher with him to the pet shop and bought her puppy chow, yummy snacks, squeaky toys and an awesomely fluffy pink and white dog bed. Stiles didn’t have much to do since he was off work recuperating, so he took Dasher to Lydia’s and the redhead proclaimed she was Dasher’s godmother and promised to spoil the pup. She even retrieved a steak from the fridge and let Dasher go to town with it—chomping and growling as she gnawed the fresh meat happily.

Allison was called over and squealed with glee when meeting Dasher. It seemed Scott hadn’t told her about the surprise gift; most likely too busy wooing his wife, but that was a thought Stiles tried to erase from his mind.

As the weeks came and went much didn’t change. Derek would arrive late and slip under the covers beside Stiles. The two wouldn’t talk much. It was usually Stiles who spoke. He would tell the alpha what he and Dasher did that day and Derek would silently listen, stroking the human’s flesh, nuzzling his neck and breathing him in.

Dasher didn’t much like her dog bed. She took to resting in it during the day, but at night she rather enjoyed snuggling close to the alpha and Stiles felt disregarded. Derek mumbled something about...
Dasher wanting to show him respect, validating he was the head of their family or whatever, but Stiles only frowned and grumbled that Dasher was a suck-up. Derek choked on his breath and Stiles smiled at the sound, knowing full and well that it had been a suppressed snort of amusement.

Soon enough Christmas had arrived. Stiles spent Christmas at Chris and Melissa Argent’s home with Scott and Allison. Lydia, Jackson and Danny spent some time there with them before having to go to their own family get together. Stiles had an alright time, but he couldn’t help but miss Derek, the jerk left several days before Christmas due to an emergency that required his immediate attention. Stiles had called, texted and left messages, but the jerk didn’t reply. He returned the day after Christmas and they spent that night seriously bonding. Derek touched him frenziedly, needing to rub his scent all over him whilst Stiles glared and pouted. He wanted so badly to spend their Christmas together, but Derek—the jerk let alpha business destroy that.

Lydia, Allison and Scott were intent on throwing Stiles a bachelor party, but Stiles wasn’t all that excited about it. He didn’t see what the whole hype was about. Celebrating the end to ones single lifestyle was just...blah. He never really embraced being single in the—having as much sex as one could possibly have and dating around. His mother was born and raised in the south, lived with strict God-fearing parents and was taught to value herself—take care of her body as if it were her temple—to put it plainly—live a chaste lifestyle and wait until marriage.

Stiles had wanted to wait until marriage, but then Derek happened—with all his scenting and crazily wondrous touches and Stiles had sinned—greatly. But, he still had to commend himself for not giving in to Derek’s wicked ways and letting the beast steal the last bit of his virtue—not until after they were wed.

Regardless, Stiles really, really, really did not want a bachelor party. But stupid Scott and his puppy eyes and Allison’s and Lydia’s begging—they wouldn’t hear of it. As it was planned out, the party was to be held at Lydia’s and everyone was to come. The only reason Stiles agreed to the event was because Lydia turned into a crazed bitch whenever he disagreed with her and Scott’s damn puppy eyes made him feel horrible if he refused.

December 30th, was the day agreed upon in which the bachelor party extravaganza was to begin. Stiles felt guilty leaving Dasher all alone for the first time ever. She’d been crying sharp hitching noises and scratching at the front door as he’d trudged the porch steps gloomily. Stiles attempted to start his Jeep, but stilled, key in the ignition and glance towards his home—he couldn’t bear the idea of leaving his baby.

When Stiles arrived at Lydia’s, leading Dasher by the leash and the pup bounced happily, he’d reproduced Scott’s puppy eyes of doom to the stunned and perturbed Lydia. She grumbled something about Stiles being a pussy, but he’d just whined, “I can’t leave my baby unsupervised!” Lydia made a snarky jibe about Stiles needing to cut the umbilical cord. In reply he’d flipped her off with an irate bird and at that moment, Allison poked her head out the door and mumbled a greeting to Stiles. Her gaze was fixed on Dasher—and went gaga for the adorable pup. She wordlessly tugged the leash from right out of Stiles’ slackened grip, lifted Dasher up into her arms and cradled the pup. She stole Dasher from right out of Stiles and fled back inside the home.

“My baby!” Stiles whined covetously, shoving Lydia to the side of the door in his rush to chase after the baby snatcher, Allison, and nearly knocking down the counter of the foyer in his haste.

Stiles finally caught up with the cackling baby snatcher within the living area. Allison parked herself between Danny and Scott on the couch. Stiles glared at the amused Allison who nuzzled Dasher’s neck. Glancing over to Danny, Stiles sent a look of pleading understanding. Danny only sighed with mild agitation before a soft smile played at the ends of his lips and he stood from the
couch, silently offering it up to Stiles.

Stiles ejaculated a, “*Hah!*” to Allison, flopped down beside her and smiled at the curious and slobbering just a fraction Dasher. There, Stiles and Allison baby talked with Dasher while Scott laughed and a perturbed Lydia glared on.

“Are you replacing your love of friendship for Dasher?” Lydia grumbled.

“Of course!” Stiles exclaimed as if it were the most logical of things to do and stuck his tongue out playfully.

“You’re such an ass. Why did I agree to host this event?”

“Because you love him?” Danny quizzed.

“I’m beginning to wonder.” Lydia teased and sat herself on the couch opposite of them and Danny took a seat beside her.

“Oh come on, you’re easily replaceable when it concerns my baby.” Stiles interjected.

Lydia narrowed her eyes and flipped Stiles off and the group broke into laughter.

“Where’s Jackson?” Stiles observed the man’s absence.

“So a BBQ?” Stiles noted the simple idea for a bachelor party. He’d been adamant they not do anything wild or unconventional. He wanted something basic and homey and apparently he could trust his friends to keep to his wishes.

“Yeah, this is what you wanted, right?” Lydia almost sounded unsure of herself.

“Yes. This is perfect.” Stiles grinned.

“I wanted to have a paintball match in the forest, but Lydia shot that idea down.” Scott pouted and glowered over to the unmoved redhead.

Stiles barked out a laugh and raised his arm over Allison’s shoulder to nudge Scott. “That would have been awesome, but—”

“See! I told you, Stiles would have loved it!”

“I really would have, but—uh… I’m still recuperating.” Stiles explained thoughtfully. Although Stiles could move around with far more ease, it was a little too soon for him to do any vigorous sporting games—and running around the woods with a paintball gun and possibly getting hit by his fellow sportsmen would be far too much for his healing body.

“Oh…that’s right.” Scott stilled by this, eyes lowering as if ashamed for not thinking his plans through.

“That’s why I objected to the idea, plus I really didn’t want to have to spend hours re-moisturizing my luminous skin.” Lydia clarified with a shrug of her shoulders.
“Sorry. I kind of forgot.”

“Only you, man.” Stiles snorted and nudged Scott’s shoulder again, prompting the beta to laugh at his own airheaded-ness.

When Allison had her fun with the playful Dasher, she finally handed the pup over and Stiles cheerfully set about kissing the pup and scratching the back of her ears as she waggled energetically on his lap.

Stiles might be placing a bit too much attention on Dasher, but the pup was there for him. He was getting married tomorrow and had two weeks of recuperating left. After he fully recovered he would be accepted back into the force—following he passed the psych evaluation—which he wasn’t worried about in the least. He understood the risks of the job and wasn’t suffering from any nightmares of the events, paranoia, or whatever the hell else those who suffered PTSD did. With no job to preoccupy his time and an always elusive fiancé, Dasher was there by his side and he’d began treating the needy pup like his child rather than a dog—Allison had called it transference—but what was the problem with that. It wasn’t like he was going to stroll Dasher in a baby carriage, give her a pacifier, bib or whatever the hell else. He knew Dasher was a dog, but he also knew he’d fallen for the pup and would spoil her like no other.

“Who’s my puppy wuppy, sweetie pie, butterscotch, snookums? You are! You are!” Stiles sang in the most bubbly of voices he ever did use and sprinkled kisses all about the bundle of nerves pup’s snout.

Okay, he might need just a little help.

Dasher bayed and Stiles turned to mush, grinning cheek to cheek, completely forgetting he might be losing his mind and ignored the looks of disbelief coming from the trio.

When he could no longer take their judgmental stares he snapped. “Don’t judge me!”

“Sorry, bud, you might be overdoing it a bit here.” Scott admitted. Stiles just narrowed his eyes into thin slits and glared in the direction of his ex best friend.

“Allison, remind me again, who was the one that wanted to get Milo an Oakland Raiders jersey?”

Allison giggled and glanced over to her suddenly embarrassed husband, who’d turned several shades of red.

“That’s different!” Scott objected.

“No it’s not!”

“I don’t go holding Milo like a cuddly infant!”

“That’s because Milo’s a goddamn enormous German Shepherd!”

“Just admit it.”

“Admit what? I love my pup? Yes, Scott, I love Dasher. She’s the best friend any guy could have.”

Scott scowled. “Replacing me for a pup, nice man.”

“See!” Lydia interjected and pointed at Dasher accusingly.

“She’s better than the whole lot of you.” Stiles quipped.
“Hey!” Allison whined. “I resent that.”

“You would.” Lydia mumbled.

“What does that mean?”

“You’ve always been a bit needy?”

“What!”

Stiles snickered.

“What are you laughing about?” Allison growled and punched the Sheriff’s shoulder, hard.

“Ow! Demon strength, I tell you.”

“Ooooh, you’re in for it now!” Allison pounced on Stiles and he released Dasher.

“Run baby, run! The wicked witch is about to go all demonic!”

Dasher stood at Stiles’ feet, glancing from one to the other as Allison struck hard open palmed blows to Stiles’ head.

“Off, wicked witch, off I say!” Stiles batted the riled Allison’s arms whilst strangulating mirth.

“Okay, Allison, I think Stiles gets it. He’s still recovering, let up.” Scott soothed and effortlessly pulling the fidgeting Allison away.

At this point Lydia was rolling about on the couch beside herself, clutching to her stomach and belting hysterically.

“That’s why I didn’t hit his injuries!” Allison huffed, finally settling in her husband’s hold, leaning back into his chest and allowing him to pet her hair calmingly.

“Thanks Scott.” Stiles panted, straightening himself in his seat. “I thought for a moment there the Blair Witch had gotten me.”

“Argh!” Allison screamed and attempted to detangle herself from Scott suddenly foolproof grasp about her waist. “When I get my hands on you—”

Stiles cackled and made faces of mocking understanding. “You’ll what? Sorry babe, but I think my possessive alpha fiancé wouldn’t much like that. What with us being true mates and all.”

“What? Derek-fucking-Hale is your true mate!” Jackson exclaimed disbelievingly, having just entered the living room beside a confused Danny. The two carried trays of BBQ, the scent immediately filled the room with the bitterness of grilled meat and the sweetness of marinating sauces.

“Oh…right.” Stiles started, having completely forgotten Jackson didn’t know this enormously important fact and iglared at Lydia. “You told everyone else, but Jackson!”

Lydia shrugged unfeelingly. “He wouldn’t really care about it.”

“Uh, I think I would!” Jackson threw back.

Jackson and Danny set the trays of meat on the table to the side, already set up with condiments
and other assortment of snacks. They then sat themselves beside Lydia. The redhead had sighed dramatically before beginning to explain to Jackson what she’d scented from Derek and Stiles.

Jackson was aware what true mates were, yet hadn’t honed his senses enough to detect it. When Lydia divulged he and Danny were true mates, Jackson choked up. He glanced towards an intrigued Danny before rushing out of the room mentioning he’d forgotten to turn off the grill, but everyone didn’t quite believe that. Danny left soon after and the two had remained out of sight for some time, probably talking about this new development.

Lydia turned on some music from her entertainment system for the group to listen to. The trio served themselves and sat back on the couches to eat the wondrous options of poultry. Stiles fed Dasher several ribs and she’d been highly energetic after that point—more so than her norm—jumping up on a struggling to eat his own meal Stiles and slobbering BBQ, sauce all over his face to show her gratitude.

Allison, Lydia and Scott laughed amusedly. Stiles left to wash his face. Although he loved his pup—that was a little too much love for anyone in their right mind. Therefore, Stiles wasn’t crazy—no help required, thank you very much!

When Stiles returned, Lydia was raising the volume of the stereo; a deep frown set into place and matched the equally displeased one of Scott’s. She took note of the question in his gaze and explained dully. “Jackson’s giving Danny a thorough cleaning of his tonsils.”

“And rather loudly!” Scott shouted as if to let the guys know the werewolves in the living room could hear them playing nookie.

Stiles grinned amused and just a bit happy for them. He knew it was hard for Jackson to open himself to others, but for him to be macking it out with his ‘secret’ boyfriend, who wasn’t much of a secret anymore and where the other’s knew what was going on—meant Jackson wasn’t trying to hide who he was.

When Danny and Jackson returned, clothes a mess and faces equally flushed, no one said anything about it. They continued eating their meals, talking, laughing, joking and ragging on the other. Stiles was content. This was how he wanted to spend his bachelor party—even if he didn’t want it at first—with the people he loved.

Stiles had mentioned the bachelor party to Derek. He even asked if he would be interested in going. Derek couldn’t go though; it seemed he had a meeting with an alpha in the next district that same night and would be returning late. Stiles said he understood, but he didn’t. Even if there was some tension between the two, Stiles having witnessed the alpha at his weakest point, he really wanted to share this event with him. Derek only growled something about Stiles not hiring strippers. He bit into his neck with blunt incisors in warning. Stiles laughed at the idea and explained he would never need a stripper when he had such an Adonis for a mate. Derek said nothing, though he felt the curve of a smile as the brute pressed him deep into the bed and Stiles petted the alpha’s mane, soothing the both of them to sleep.

When they finished their meal, Lydia popped in a comedy film and the gang of them lounged about on the couches whilst they watched. Stiles became distracted by Dasher who was intent he play with her, and he let her use his hand as a chew toy all so he could finish the film. When it was over, Lydia and Danny brought the deserts in, lots and lots of sweets; cakes, brownies, muffins, fudge squares, and ice cream. Stiles had a bit of a sweet tooth and went to town.

When everyone had their feel, the newly made up Allison and Stiles leaned against each other and patted their bloated bells with mirth. Scott rolled his eyes as they debated who in fact looked more
pregnant whilst pushing their bellies out as much as they could. Stiles cheered when he won and Dasher yipped for his achievement.

Allison rolled about on the floor playing with Dasher, chasing after the pup and running away after teasingly and frenziedly petting and scratching all about the pup’s furry body. Dasher would yowl and chase Allison cheerfully. Lydia and Scott stood near the table brewing up a mix of the strongest liquors and Lydia jokingly called over her shoulder to Danny, warning him not to drink this batch. Jackson and Danny both flushed at this and Jackson flipped Lydia the bird, telling her exactly what he thought about the redhead. Jackson and Danny sat far more closely to each other than they ever had in front of the group. They leaned into each other’s personal space and whispered things, laughing softly and grinned sweetly at the other.

Stiles smiled softly at the two unaware men currently hissing amusing sentiments to the other. Jackson pressed his forehead into Danny’s shoulder and chortled by something the accountant had said. When Jackson whispered something back, Danny blushed and smacked the werewolf’s shoulder affectionately. Stiles couldn’t help but be reminded of punching Derek’s shoulder in the same manner. He missed that. The way he and Derek could openly tease the other, things had changed since his drunken escapade, the day after, when he confessed, Thanksgiving and the following two nights they spent together after that painful argument.

Although Derek was affectionate, there was a strain there, uneasiness whenever Stiles mentioned enjoying the alpha’s scent as they curled up close, whenever he palmed the brutes face and pressed chaste kisses about the length of his jaw and neck, whenever Stiles would exhale Derek’s name in that certain way that seemed to say without words, ‘I love you. I love you…

IloveyouIloveyouIloveyou.

Derek would stiffen against him, unmoving, as if unsure what to do. Then he’d turn Stiles away from facing him, press the slighter's back up against his chest and whisper harshly, “Sleep.” And Stiles would try, but he couldn’t and when Derek fell asleep, he’d just stare at that blasted wall searching for the answers, searching for enlightenment, trying to unravel the mystery that was Derek.

The doorbell rang and Lydia went to answer it. Allison fell back into her reserved seat and exhaled heavily, completely exhausted from playing tag with the pup. She smiled cheerily at Dasher who jumped onto Stiles’ lap and panted into the distracted human’s face, bringing him back from his thoughts.

“Seems like the two of you had fun.” Stiles observed and kissed Dasher’s brow before stroking her fur, calming the pup.

“Yeah.” Allison heaved and glanced over to Scott who took his seat beside her, offering her one of the two beverages he had, and she drank it hurriedly, replenishing herself.

“Stiles.” Lydia called and Stiles raised his gaze to the beauty before him, concern worrying his features when she frowned at him, a deputy standing beside her.

“Did something happen?” Jackson asked; taking note of the deputy and the tension that was Lydia.

Stiles stared at the deputy perplexed. The officer stood erect and at attention, features solemn. Dark golden hair wisped about his ears and upper neck, piercing blue eyes scanning the room with purpose. Stiles was befuddled, he knew all the deputies, being he was the one who hired them, and he’d never seen this man before—something was off.

Lydia rushed to the stereo then and placed a CD in before cranking up the volume. When Village
People, ‘Macho Man’ blasted through the speakers Stiles paled.

Lydia didn’t…*She did not fucking do what he thought she’d done!*

Stiles’ jaw fell ajar when she grinned evilly and danced her way towards him. She tugged at his arm as he cradled Dasher close and forcefully sat him down on a chair strategically placed in the opening of the room. When he tried to sit up, the inhumanly strong Lydia shoved him back into the chair and held him down by the shoulders.

Scott seemed just as pale at Stiles and he knew then his best friend had nothing to do with this. However, when a mere glance at Allison, Jackson and Danny revealed highly amused grins—he knew he’d been duped—deceived.

“I hear we have a Sheriff in our midst?” The deputy voiced, smiling devilishly towards Stiles.

Stiles swallowed thickly and held Dasher all the more tightly, seeking comfort from his baby, having been betrayed by the people he thought he loved.

“I said nothing wild or unconventional!” Stiles exclaimed as the deputy—now known stripper—or as they liked to be called, exotic dancer, sauntered towards him.

“I don’t recall that?” Lydia said when Stiles knew damn well she did.

“Scott, how could you!” Stiles bleated, knowing full well by the innocence of Scott’s gaze he hadn’t, but feeling the need to blame someone.

“I didn’t—Lydia, I thought I told you no exotic dancers.” Scott moaned with annoyance looking away when the deputy sashayed his hips.

“Let me make it simple for you, Scott. Out of everyone here, you’re the only one attracted to women; therefore, majority rules.” Lydia answered and Scott whined, palming his eyes from the sight.

“Sorry man, you’re shit out of luck.”

“Scott!” Stiles pleaded, but Scott wasn’t going to have any of it, covering his eyes apparently—*see no evil placed upon best friend, do shit about it.*

The deputy stood before Stiles smirking, his hands roamed about his own built form, gliding up from his chest down to his hips and swiveled them teasingly. When he bent towards Stiles’ form he placed his hands on Stiles’ hips and leaned in close.

Stiles inhaled sharply and looked away. This couldn’t be happening. If it were, he was dead meat—actual dead meat, because Derek would feast on his flesh.

This so wasn’t happening. Didn’t anyone realize he was getting married to the fucking sovereign of all alphas—like tomorrow? If Derek found out about this, it would be all of their heads—but most likely Stiles would be the first placed on the chopping block. He promised Derek no strippers, exotic dancers, whatever!

Stiles was going to die!

“You’re one of those guys.” The deputy laughed, leaning closer, heated breath brushing against his neck and Stiles stopped breathing then. “I love the sensitive type—shame you’re getting hitched.”
Stiles choked on spit and inhaled much needed air. He faced the man just as he swayed back and ripped his shirt open—buttons flying everywhere. Allison and Lydia cheered. Danny attempted to, but Jackson smacked him in the chest and glared warningly at him.

"Haaah, those are lots of muscles." Stiles mumbled shakily, covering Dasher’s eyes with a hand even when she shook her head in protest—not wanting his baby to be defiled by the sight.

Stiles’ once paled features reddened considerably as the deputy thrust his hips to the tempo of the music.

“Derek’s going to kill me.”

“What he doesn’t know won’t.” Lydia chimed.

Stiles couldn’t help but to compare the deputy to Derek. The deputy was tanned, where Derek had a pale olive complexion. The deputy had a light coat of hair over his chest—many would consider rugged and go wild for—Stiles quite preferred Derek’s smooth chest any day. The deputy was lean of frame and held soft muscles, but Derek was massive and had a hulking amount of muscles. The deputy lacked the trapezius muscle Derek had plenty of. The deputy’s abs were impressive, but Derek’s were prominent even when relaxed and seemed to demand much attention.

All in all, although the man before Stiles was qualified for his profession and was devilishly handsome, Stiles preferred Derek. He didn’t feel the least bit excited or interested in the man. Stiles wished he were, at least he could surmise all these feelings he had for Derek was a crush and not the earth shattering love he knew it to be.

“Here, let me take her.” Lydia spoke and all at once Dasher was gone and Lydia was laughing off at a distance.

Stiles tried jumping from his seat but that God damn stripper—and yes, he knew what they liked to be called, but whatever—the stripper pushed him back down and straddled his lap, swiveling his hips as if to prompt mini Stiles to life. Only, mini Stiles just glared at the stripper and was content to remain inactive as was his libido.

“Oh, and you’re going to do that with your hips.” Stiles gulped heavily, staring at them as they were just a bit too close to his own.

“Mhmm.” The deputy answered with an eager nod, groping Stiles’ shoulders and stroking them as if to calm his far too tense form.

“So, uh, what’s your name?” Stiles needed conversation. Conversation was good, when all he could hear were the treacherous four cheering him on and Scott’s disgusted groans and moans for it to please end.

“Ronan.”

God, even his name was exotic.

“That’s Irish, right?” Stiles chirped when Mr. Stripper-Means-of-Stiles’-Death AKA Ronan sat and grinded their hips together.

“That’s—I’m ½ Irish!” Stiles exclaimed when Ronan thrust against his pelvis and Stiles felt hardness there.

Lydia and Allison were screeching their laughter at this point; Scott was pinching his nose and
whining whilst Jackson and Danny were leaning close, breathless with hysteria.

“I can see that.” Ronan answered, removing himself from off the terror-stricken Sheriff and Stiles was just about to thank his lucky stars, but then Ronan ripped his pants off. Now, he was wearing nothing but his holster belt, black briefs with a considerable bulge and leather coal boots.

“Jesus!” Stiles blurted and stood from the chair.

Ronan brought him in close and rubbed their hips together as he moved to the music. Stiles planted his hands against the man’s chest to push him away, but flushed at feeling the man’s chest hair and removed his hands, raising them up in the air awkwardly.

“What?”

“Your Irish attributes.”

Stiles palmed his heated face when Ronan’s hands glided about his body and the track of the stereo changed, blasting Texas, ‘Summer Son’.

“The man you’re marrying is one lucky S.O.B.” Ronan whispered hotly into Stiles’ overheated good ear.

“Age!” Stiles squawked and collapsed back down in the chair away from Ronan’s hands that just barely squeezed his buttocks.

“26.”

Ronan ran his hands from Stiles’ shoulders, down his chest before caressing his thighs for several long moments and continued his path. When he reached his knees he removed his grasp and retrieved handcuffs from his belt and Stiles gasped. He couldn’t believe this was happening.

He was going to kill Lydia, preferably before Derek maimed and murdered them all.

“Same—same age as meeewhatthehellareyoudoing?” Stiles cried when Ronan handcuffed his left wrist with Stiles’ right.

“Making sure my shy bird doesn’t fly off till I’m all finished with him.” Ronan teased, sitting himself once more on his lap and rolling his hips against Stiles’ own.

“Uh—you—uh—have a key right?”

“Maybe?” Ronan was trying to be coy and Stiles really wasn’t enjoying it.

“Please say you do, because uh—I don’t think my fiancé will be too pleased if I’m attached to a stripper.”

“Exotic dancer.” Ronan bit out with a frown, before grinning wildly and leaned in close, mouths millimeters from one another as he rutted against him and Stiles was reintroduced to the deputy’s bulge.

“Unless you want me to be—it’s always the quiet ones.” Ronan laughed and so did the rest of the party—and Stiles was going to beat-torture-and kill Lydia—he’d become the next BTK.

“Holy—Jesus, when will this end.” Stiles whined as Ronan palmed his face and pressed his chest against it, so Stiles could feel the chest hairs and muscles and that was just—ugh. He wanted Derek’s touch, Derek’s arms, Derek’s chest, Derek’s hardness pressing into him—this was just a
“You have the warmest eyes.” Ronan breathed, pulling Stiles’ head back and leaning in close to take the precise color and Stiles glanced away and toward Lydia for help.

Lydia’s continuous laughter had died and her smile was replaced with worry, ears seeming to perk as if having heard something. Stiles’ brows furrowed in question, only for that very moment there came a crashing from the entrance and a moment later Stiles felt dead fear in the face of a hulking Derek Hale, madder depths gleaming with murderous contempt.

Holy…shit…

“Derek.” Stiles gushed.

The alpha stood before them ominously, glaring portentously. His body was a trembling mess of power and destruction. Lydia quickly moved to shut the stereo off and the rest of the gang rose from their seats, sensing the danger that was so evidently here.

Stiles almost wanted to yell at the whole lot of them, ‘See, see, see, this is why I didn’t want a stripper, exotic dancer—who the fuck even cares about that right now. Derek’s going to eat me!’

“Stiles.” Came the deathly calm gravel of his name from the far from calm alpha.

“Y—yes!” Stiles belted, shoving Ronan off his lap and stood clumsily beside the self-assured and amused man—shouldn’t he be like fearing for his life right now? It seems life didn’t matter to the stripper who had no sense of self-preservation.

Derek snarled noisily, fangs suddenly protruding from his lips and snapped his jowls, eyes fixed on something. Stiles curiously followed his sight and gulped when he realized he was still cuffed to the stripper—Stiles was dead.

“This—this—this isn’t what it looks like!” Stiles tried, attempting to remedy the situation and could have clobbered himself—of course it was what it looked like, but he didn’t enjoy himself if that helped his case—it didn’t.

Jackson snorted in amusement; evidently Jackson would wordlessly call him out on his stupidity, even with a raging alpha before them.

Derek glanced from Stiles to the man he was attached to and roared furiously.

Stiles damn well near pissed himself then and there. “Okayokayokay, it might be what it looks like, but I wasn’t aware there was going to be a stripper—and what the hell are you doing here anyways? I thought you had a meeting or whatever the hell it was to go to?”

“I arrived early when Erica informed me of your—disloyalty.”

Stiles was going to kill Erica right after he killed Lydia—then Derek could kill him.

“Disloyalty? Haven’t you heard a word I’ve said? I wasn’t disloyal, I was surprised with this.” Stiles pointed at the stripper and flushed embarrassedly when Ronan tugged on the cuffs binding them, not appreciating his devaluing of their doings.

Derek sneered while raising a hand, claws burst forth the instant after. When the huffing brute stormed towards them, Stiles curled inward on himself and shut his eyes, preparing for the attack. There came an agonizing press against his wrist followed by a snap, the next moment he was
tugged against the alpha’s chest and smelled the leather of his coat.

Raising his right arm Stiles gawked with wonder, the alpha managed to claw through the aluminum of the handcuff and free his wrist. The two now stood several lengthy feet away from Ronan.

“Don’t touch what isn’t yours.” Derek snarled towards Ronan and the man smirked amusedly, as if unfazed.

“He isn’t yours either. You haven’t even claimed him.” Ronan replied with an unimpressed shrug of his shoulders.

What the hell? How did Ronan know that? Was he a werewolf too? But Stiles had never seen the man around town and Beacon Hills was a pretty small place. He was sure he would have come into contact with Ronan if he lived around these parts, unless he just recently moved here—then that would make sense. He could be a werewolf from another district.

“Know your place.” Derek hissed murderously, his grasp around Stiles tightening almost painfully.

“Oh, I do.” Ronan answered, tilting his head to the side and baring his throat for one brief moment which answered Stiles’ question—Ronan was a werewolf.

Raising his head upright once more, Ronan smiled at Stiles and Derek was suddenly manhandling him to stand behind him and out of sight. The alpha growled deeply then, body bulking as if on the brink of transforming right there.

“But I also know this isn’t all it’s made out to be. This is an arrangement you’ve been pressured to perform by your packs, not for personal reasons. So…if the Sheriff is ever looking for a good time, I’ll be here to give it to him.”

“Stiles!” Derek barked and Stiles jumped against him. “Get in my car.”

“What? Why?” Stiles interjected and had no idea what possessed him to ask.

“He’s feisty, even with an alpha—I like that.” Ronan chuckled and Derek growled predatorily.

“Get in the car, now. I’ll deal with you later.”

“I’m not a child.” Stiles grumbled.

“Stiles!” Derek demanded incensed. Stiles realized Derek was scarcely managing to remain human, quaking with nerves, head craning feral-like and huffing large animalistic bouts of wrath.

Glancing over to his friends told him all he needed to know, they appeared tense, seeming to sense the danger. Though Ronan hadn’t lost his shit, he looked almost entertained. Derek practically salivating with the need to maim—and Ronan was just standing there in practically nothing with a smirk across his face.

“He really means that much to you?” Ronan laughed.

“Stiles, so help me God—get in the fucking car!” Derek was hollering now, voice crackling with an ill-omened roar.

Dasher whimpered in Lydia’s arms and Stiles felt a chill run down his spine at Derek’s show of undomesticated rage. Stiles quickly moved into action, knowing technically he was in the wrong.
On his way out, he took Dasher from out of Lydia’s arms and hardly heard her apologies as Derek’s growls were so deep and resonating now, they were vibrating throughout the room and windowpanes.

Stiles tensely waited for Derek to join him inside of the Camaro, his Jeep parked beside the midnight sports car. Stiles didn’t even care about how he was getting his car back later; he was more worried about what was happening inside of the home.

A thunderous roar pierced through the home, followed by another, and then there was the sound of something crashing—a moment later Lydia was shouting something but it was drowned out by a howl and glass shattering. Dasher’s tail tucked under her bum and she began whimpering fearfully, pawing at Stiles frantically, needing comfort, but Stiles was far more worried about what was going on inside the home.

When Allison screamed, Stiles felt fear pulse through him and set Dasher into the back seat, prepared to go running back into the home. Only that was the very moment Derek came bounding down the stairs, wolfed out, blood smearing his mouth and dripping from razor sharp claws.

“Holy…Dasher?” Stiles squawked, grabbing the pup from the back seat and holding her as his lifeline, as a way to calm his racing heart and the fear building from the pit of his stomach.

When Derek swung the driver’s door open and slid in beside him, Stiles swallowed thickly, fear licking up a hot path in its wake. Dasher sensing the change nuzzled Stiles’ neck and looked anywhere but at the brooding, blood soaked alpha.

Derek’s nostrils flared then and snapped redden depths towards him, glaring heatedly at the human.

“Don’t you dare do that!” Derek declared authoritatively.

“What?” Stiles asked whilst trying not to piss himself.

Unexpectedly Derek was in his face, the tip of his spotted with blood nose dragging about Stiles’ own and sniffing loudly.

“Don’t fear me.”

“But…the blood…who does it belong to?” Stiles knew it couldn’t be from Derek, but strangely enough had hoped it was—that way he wasn’t dying of fear wondering if one of his friends were in the home wounded.

“That bastard who doesn’t know when to shut up.” Derek snarled, pulled away from the trembling human, started the Camaro and sped off.

“What? You attacked the stripper!” Stiles stipulated from the alpha’s words and the way the werewolf had been mouthing off to Derek.

“He deserved it.”

“He could press charges.”

Derek snorted at the idea and Stiles nearly smacked himself for his stupidity. Derek was the alpha of all alphas, the leader of the nations, no one would be stupid enough to charge him—and even if they were—the stripper was a werewolf himself so that was a definite no-go unless he wanted death.
“Still… Is he hurt?”

Derek’s claws dug into the leather of the steering wheel and he spared a moment’s glance to Stiles, madder depths vibrant and threatening.

“You care about that bastard!” Derek roared, the car swerving then, a moment later the blaring of another vehicle’s horn sounded. The alpha just barely managed to miss a head on collision with a fucking behemoth of a big rig.

“Have you gone bat shit crazy! You damn well near killed us—me!” Stiles stammered, shakily putting on his seatbelt then and clutching to Dasher protectively.

“Argh—stop talking!”

“Me, stop talking? We almost got into an accident and you’re telling me to stop talking! Let me think about it, ummmm—NO!”

“Stiles.”

“Why the hell would you attack, Ronan? He was just doing what stupid Lydia paid him to do—his job. If you’re mad take your anger out on me.”

What the fuck was Stiles even saying? Take your anger out on me? He must be bat shit crazy himself. But Ronan truly was doing his job and then Derek—the over reactor—went all barking mad on the man because of it. Stiles didn’t want to be responsible for the man being injured and blame himself—he had enough to feel guilty about. Derek should just act like a normal person and talk things through—not go all snarly beasty on the man—werewolf.

“You are on a first name basis with that—you’re a two timing mouthy insolent cheater, an unfaithful adulterous male-Jezebel—a conniving deceitful and disloyal mate!” Derek howled, pounding the steering wheel as if wishing it were Stiles.

Stiles frowned at the brute. “I wouldn’t go that far.”

He knew he told the alpha to take his anger out on him, but he thought the brute would hit him not use such hurtful words. It wasn’t like Derek caught him in bed with the guy.

“You—how dare you let someone touch you!”

“I didn’t let him do anything!”

“You were handcuffed to him!” Derek barked miffed, tensing considerably at the memory.

“Oh come off it, Derek. It was a part of his gimmick. It isn’t like I was interested in the guy.”

“I smelled arousal.”

Stiles blushed then.

“That—that wasn’t me!” Stiles proclaimed vehemently.

“But you let him scent you!” Derek sibilance wrathfully.

“That was a lap dance, not scenting.”

“You’re so stupid!”
“Hey! Why are you being such a jerk?” Stiles whined and he didn’t care if he sounded childish, Derek didn’t have be such an ass about it.

“Stupid—idiotic imbecile—a dimwitted fool!” Derek belted, vacillating for some semblance of control.

“You stink!” Derek announced cantankerously.

“Excuse me!”

“You smell like that bastard!”

“Oh… But he didn’t smell bad.” Stiles recalled the man’s scent; it had been masculine and sweet.

Derek slammed the breaks of the car then, stopping no more than several houses down from their own.

“Get out.”

“What?”

“I said, get out.” Derek snipped.

“Why?”

“Stiles!” Derek hollered, pounding his fists against the steering wheel once more, growling with each pound of his fists and pulse of his words. “Get. The. Fuck. Out!”

“I’m trying to be understanding. I know I said we wouldn’t have a stripper, but it’s not my fault they surprised me with one. It doesn’t mean you can treat me so—”

“Go home and shower well.” Derek ordered, hurriedly removing his leather coat and threw it at Stiles so that it draped over his head like a coat rack. “After, sleep with my coat on. I’m staying at the manor tonight.”

“What the hell are you saying?”

“If—if you don’t leave the car now—I—I’ll claim you right here.” Derek snarled threateningly, eyes brilliantly scarlet.

Stiles took note how Derek was gripping to the steering wheel so tightly as if to contain himself from jumping Stiles' bones. There was no way he would let the alpha claim him like that.

Stiles opened the passenger door, unbuckled himself and threw a leg over and out the car door, but hesitated exiting. He couldn’t help but ask, “What’s going on?”

Derek roared with aggravation. Stiles let out a cry of surprise when the alpha shoved him out the car. Before Stiles could detangle his twisted limbs and lift himself from off the asphalt properly to curse the brute—the Camaro was speeding off, the flapping passenger door swung shut by the speed and power of the influencing winds.

Stiles stared after the tail lights of the Camaro as it swerved the corner of the block and disappeared from sight.

Even though Derek was gone—driven off—Stiles hollered in the silence of night, “Asswipe!”
Stiles cradled the whining Dasher and the brute’s coat as he strode angrily the distance separating him from his home. He swore to make the alpha suffer for being such a jerk—somehow, someway.
Stiles dreamt about this day. He imagined what it would feel like. The sun hadn’t even risen when Stiles’ alarm went off and he’d lumbered out of the bed, discarding the alpha’s coat on his way out of the room. He laggard his way downstairs and fed Dasher before unlocking his front door, knowing the wedding party would be there soon and went back upstairs to shower. He no longer had to worry about leaving his doors unlocked or his windows open—he had the three stooges as his guards—if not a possessive alpha.

Stiles always wondered what type of person he’d end up with. What their strengths and weaknesses would be, the best and worst of their qualities. He wanted a kind man who would love him unconditionally, someone who knew him better than he knew himself, a person who wanted only the best for him. A nurturing love ever building and evolving and to be with someone he could grow with—learn with.

Stiles didn’t find that man—he found Derek—a werewolf—a pushy, moody, brooding and possessive alpha. He found a man of little words, though affectionate—distant—a sour wolf. He found his true mate—a man intent on wolking out if another touched what was believed to be his—territorial as was expected from an alpha.

Derek was an ass, a brute, a pushy brooding werewolf—but he was also protective, considerate, compassionate and affectionate. Derek had been there when Stiles needed someone’s compassion—someone to hold him as he wept and not to pry—not to ask him to reveal the deepest parts of himself—of his regrets. Someone who knew pain and knew sometimes the best way to soothe another’s hurts was to wordlessly let them know they were there, to lend their arms and shoulder if they ever needed to cry those pains.

Derek was an ass, a brute, a moody pushy brooding werewolf—but he was also the man Stiles loved. Stiles loved Derek beyond his glares, his sour wolf-ness, because Derek was the person who was always beside him. He’s the only man Stiles ever fell in love with, the only man Stiles opened his heart to and accepted as kin since the death of his parents.

Derek meant more to Stiles than…than anyone else and that was…that was unbelievably scary—exciting, thrilling—but undoubtedly the scariest thing ever. Derek could break him, could destroy him with little words or effort if he wanted, the power Stiles had given with the profession of his love could be his end, but Derek—his true mate—he couldn’t possibly do so—he hoped.

Stiles stared at his reflection in the steamed mirror of the bathroom in complete wonder. Four hours from now Stiles would be married to Derek-fucking-Hale.

“Finally, I was just about ready to come get you.” Scott called as Stiles entered the kitchen.

Scott, Allison, Lydia, Jackson and Danny were all dressed for the wedding in their best suits and dresses. Allison and Lydia wore matching sapphire silk-like evening gowns, the straps hung loosely over their shapely shoulders. They wore white furred shawls that clasped just under their chest and covered much of their arms. Their hair was pulled back in a tucked in French braid, trills
and curls hanging at the nape of the necks. The men wore coal black suits with sapphire silken vests and ties.

The whole gang of them was huddled about the kitchen island; eating from the boxes of donuts they’d brought with them whilst trying not to ruin their outfits.

“Stiles, you look unbelievably handsome.” Lydia proclaimed with a wide resilient smile.

Stiles shrugged off the complement as well as his nerves. He wore a similar suit to the men, though his vest and tie were shimmering and enticing silver. The gang was far too calm for his liking—almost as if the night before never happened—maybe they wanted to forget about it, but Stiles wouldn’t be deterred.

“What happened last night?”

Lydia and Allison frowned whilst the men averted their gaze, seeming guilty or ashamed.

“We really should be heading off.”

“No, Lydia. Tell me.”

“Stiles.”

“Lydia.”

“Drop it.”

“I don’t think I will.”

“We’re already running thirty minutes late.”

“And it’s going to be more if you don’t tell me what happened. What was all that noise? Did Derek hurt any of you? I heard you and Allison scream.”

“It wasn’t like that.” Allison interjected thoughtfully.

“Then what was it like?”

Lydia pursed her lips in a silent show of reluctance to voice the happenings of the night before.

Scott huffed, agitated when Lydia flashed a glare of warning in his direction, but he didn’t seem to pay much mind to it or take it for face value.

“Derek attacked the exotic dancer.”

“Yes, Scott, I knew that already. But what was all the crashing and screaming about.” Stiles rolled his eyes.

Scott palmed the nape of his neck and glanced away. “That was…well…Derek shifted and kind of…went wild. He attacked the dancer—and um—we never realized it.”

“Realized what?” Stiles demanded tersely.

“The dancer—if we had known, we wouldn’t have allowed things to progress the way they had.” Allison explained, though not clear enough for Stiles.
“The dancer—we knew he was a werewolf—but we didn’t scent him—we were all a bit distracted.” Scott added.

“Scott.” Stiles grumbled, palming his face, why did all his friends have to be idiots. Just get to the point already!

“God, Scott, you suck at this.” Jackson commented and Stiles agreed. “The dancer’s an alpha.”

Stiles choked on spit by the last of Jackson’s statements.

“He must have just moved into town, because Derek would have alerted the pack. This alpha—he’s not a part of Derek’s pack. If he were—he wouldn’t dare lay a finger on you. Derek scented it immediately and that’s why he wanted you to get in the car.”

“Why.”

“Because you’d been scented by another alpha—not even a member of his own pack.”

“What’s the difference?”

“If a member of Derek’s pack had scented you, even an alpha, it wouldn’t be to claim you.”

“But you just said they’d never even want to—”

“Touch you, I know. A pack is family—an alpha wouldn’t dare touch you before you were claimed—after, it’s a different story. Alphas of Derek’s pack become like—how do I put this... You know how a wolf alpha’s mate is the only one allowed to birth cubs?”

“Okay.” Stiles drawled contemplating; he was just barely grasping the confusion of werewolf/wolf dynamics and behaviorisms.

“Well they assign a caretaker of the cubs, usually a high ranked wolf. Because Derek is the head of the pyramid, the alphas of his pack become third in charge—after you. Argh—I’m not making much sense I know, but it’s kind of like they become your caretaker.”

“So now I’m a cub.” Stiles pursed his lip unenthusiastically.

“Yes—no, I mean, yeah, in a way you would be, but that all rests on you being claimed as Derek’s which you haven’t. But the dancer—”

“He has a name you know? It’s Ronan.” Stiles didn’t like how everyone was devaluating a human being—werewolf, whatever, same thing, different species.

Jackson glowered as if truly offended Stiles interrupted him. “Ronan, isn’t pack, so to be scented by another werewolf—an alpha—that’s like the same as if you’d been screwing the guy in front of your mate. A big ass ‘no’ in werewolf custom.”

“That still doesn’t explain why Derek sent me to the car or what the hell happened after.”

“I’m getting there!” Jackson snapped. “He sent you to the car because he was ready to shift at any moment—and I don’t know if your small brain can comprehend this but...Derek found you being scented by another alpha—not pack. His animal instincts were kicking in at full speed; if you’d been in the room when he shifted there is no telling what he could have done.”

“He could have killed me?” Stiles breathed shakily—had he really been that close to death?
“What? No, no man!” Jackson groaned and slammed his head against the counter giving up.

Lydia hissed agitatedly and explained for the exasperated Jackson. “If we are going by normal werewolf customs—yes, Derek could have that choice and most likely would have done so—but you’re his true mate—that changes things.”

“What changes things how?”

“He wouldn’t be able to kill his true mate, but he would have been driven to punish you—which—believe me Stiles—if Derek ever gets to that point again—run.”

“What do you mean?”

“He’d mark you—bite you, break you, make you bleed—everything you fear and more. But you’re not a werewolf—so the punishment would undoubtedly kill you if not seriously wound you—ergo, the reason Derek sent you to the car.”

Stiles felt chills run through him—could Derek really do that to him—even though they were true mates? Would Derek’s wolf have taken over completely? If so—Stiles wouldn’t be able to rein it in with the alpha so completely wild and feral—he didn’t think he’d have a chance.

“What was all the commotion and screaming about.”

Lydia reddened furiously. “I was shouting for them to get the hell out. They destroyed my living room.”

“I—uh—accidentally got stuck in the crossfire. I was screaming for Scott’s help.” Allison added and wrapped an arm around the beta, planting a grateful kiss to his cheek—apparently Scott had managed to protect her as she stood before Stiles, hale and hearty.

“What about Ronan?”

“He was wounded, but not seriously. I don’t know what the sick fuck was thinking mocking Derek like that.” Scott gripped.

Stiles laughed then. “You’re really taking Derek’s side on this.”

“What? No, I’m just saying that guy has got serious balls or he likes you enough to piss Derek off.”

Stiles blushed at this, the idea Ronan liked him was sort of a complement in a weird, ‘I’m not into you, but thanks, man’ way.

“Any other questions?” Lydia huffed, hand pressing into her hip as she bounced impatiently.

“Why did you guys not want to tell me?”

“Because.” Lydia exhaled exhaustedly.

“Because?”

“Because, I don’t know—you’re getting married in less than three hours!”

Stiles was a bundle of nerves. He couldn’t stop trembling, he’d tried wringing at his hands, jumping up and down, drinking a cool bottle of water, a shot of scotch from Jackson’s flask, even
having Scott slap him as hard as he could—which wasn’t the best idea he ever had. Being bitch slapped by a werewolf might as well have been being punched by a pro-boxer.

They finally arrived on location. The drive to Alder Lake was two and a half hours and they’d been running late—all thanks to Stiles. The moment they arrived Stiles was stunned at how many people had come, swarms and swarms of people Stiles didn’t even know—all a part of Derek’s guest list. Stiles only invited forty of his closest friends and associates—Derek, however, seemed to have invite several hundred. Stiles glared at the redhead beside him who shrugged her shoulders and told him Derek was pretty much sovereignty and invited all the alphas of his pack. Apparently that meant Stiles was hosting an event with hundreds of alphas, hundreds of leaders all over the world. Stiles had given Lydia too much leeway in planning his wedding and now it was too late to fix it.

Stiles nerves had risen with the knowledge their union was to be witnessed by alphas, the power of their presence, the knowledge that he was binding himself to their leader and enacting a treaty with werewolves was too much of a burden. Derek said he would be his successor—that meant not only would he be in charge of Derek’s personal pack in Beacon Hills, but also to the world of alphas and their packs. This was too much—Stiles didn’t sign up for this.

He knew he would have to marry and mate with Derek. He knew he’d become in charge of the pack of Beacon Hills, but for the nations? That was too much mother fucking responsibility!

Stiles began hyperventilating then, far off from the lake and where the ceremony was to be held. He leaned against a tree and pounded against his fluctuating chest, staring at his wedding party with a frantic look about him.

“Oh shit. Stiles, don’t you pass out.” Scott cautioned, stepping to his side and slapping him once again—Jesus! He didn’t ask the bastard werewolf to slap/bitch slap/punch the hell out of him, again!

“Shit, he’s going to pass out!” Scott exclaimed as Stiles’ hyperventilating became a constant—worsening.

“No he’s not.” Lydia affirmed, brushing Scott to the side, grasped Stiles’ shoulders and met his panicked gaze with one of calmness.

“Come on, Stiles. You knew what you were getting yourself into when you agreed to this proposition.”

Stiles shook his head in disagreement. *No he fucking did not know what he was getting himself into!*

“Come on. This is Derek Hale, the man you’ve been bonding with for months now. You know him, what he’s like, who he is. This is just a union bonding the two of you. All you have to do is walk up that aisle, recite what the pastor says and whala, hitched the two of you shall be. It’s a cinch.”

Stiles stomach knotted painfully, flopping in an unsettling manner. He moaned a pained noise and shoved Lydia back before he was throwing up the donuts he ate that morning into the bush to his left.

Danny and Allison made noises of disgust while Jackson cracked up with uproarious laughter. Scott was mumbling something about Derek killing them if Stiles bolted and Lydia was cursing under her breath, retrieving something from her silver hand purse.
Each strangulated gag left his lips followed another bout of regurgitating that emptied his stomach. When the last of liquids within his abdomen poured out of him, he almost felt relieved, the bile was dispelled and the knots in his stomach unraveled.

Pulling away from the bush he spat at the ground clearing his mouth of the bitterness and met his friends’ stares.

“Okay. I can do this.” Stiles mumbled weakly.

“Here, swish this in your mouth.” Lydia offered her portable mouthwash and Stiles gladly took it. He used it a total of three times before he felt minty fresh and no longer tasted the bitterness of bile in the back of his throat.

“We really need to go. We’re already late.” Lydia pleaded with the stubborn Stiles, although he’d said he’d been ready, he wasn’t.

“You need to push me.”

“What?” Lydia blurted.

“You need to push me. I—I can’t take the first steps.” Stiles implored, batting puppy dog eyes at the werewolf before him.

“Oh for the love of—” Lydia huffed and shoved Stiles forwards, a bit too harsh but got her point across that he should be booking it there, before Derek thought he’d chickened out and came to kill them.

Stiles stumbled forwards, his legs feeling like dead weight. His mind was swirling about him and he couldn’t make much sense.

Lydia and Allison were rushing ahead of him and he watched as Lydia grasped the small hand of her niece, Abigail, who bared a striking resemblance to herself. The flower girl wore a pale blue knee length dress and looked luminous. In one hand she held both the basket of flower petals and guided Dasher about with the leash. The three were then power walking to catch up to the violinists and reach the aisle in time. The violinists played ‘Canon in D Major’ by Johann Pachelbel entrance piece—the wedding having started.

Abigail smiled as she walked the aisles, Dasher prancing about happily at her side while Abigail tossed the red rose petals onto the contrasting cerulean fitted carpet of the pathway. Lydia and Allison followed after her carrying with them red rose bouquets. When Abigail reached the end of the aisle took to sitting beside a redhead female Stiles could only assume was her mother and Dasher sat paciently. Lydia and Allison stood together, turning to face the extensive audience—the audience sitting in white wooden lawn chairs that were covered and wrapped with sapphire blue, lush scarlet and silver ribbons in a large bow at the backs of them.

At the end of the aisle stood the pastor and beside him, Derek—under a wedding arch decorated with poinsettias, baby’s breath and red and white roses. Derek was already there, waiting, watching him so intently Stiles thought he’d just about die there. He looked gorgeous, in a similar suit to his own, but seeming to fit him all the better. He’d shaved, there was still a five o’clock shadow but not as rugged as it normally was—it appeared tamed—made him almost seem…human. The warm tones of the morning’s light—as the sun was just rising flickered off the lake and seemed to warm Derek’s features in the most welcoming of ways.

Stiles stopped walking then, nerves once more making an appearance. Just as he contemplated
running—as if it was possible to escape the alpha’s clutches, Danny and Jackson took hold of his arms and continued down their path.

He couldn’t do this. He really couldn’t do this. Shit just got real and he wanted out. He wanted **OUT!**

As they finally reached the aisle Danny and Jackson released him and followed the trail leading onward. Scott stepped to his side, rested a reassuring grasp on his shoulder and squeezed it with encouragement before he was off too, joining the rest.

Stiles exhaled a shaky breath and followed after them. As he walked the aisles, the werewolves’—he could only assume they were werewolves—the pack of Beacon Hills rising followed by Derek’s invited guests. They tipped their heads to him and bared their necks and caused Stiles to falter, stilling edgily. Jesus Christ! These were alphas mixed in with the betas and omegas that were baring their necks to him—a human.

Stiles’ gaze wandered and met Lydia’s tensed features. She raised her hand to her face and made a peace sign, using her fingers to point at her eyes—wordlessly telling Stiles to focus on the goal. That effectively got him walking once more.

He stared back up at Derek and felt faint then, needing to look somewhere else and stared to his own wedding party. Beside the alpha stood Boyd, Isaac and Erica, the men wore similar outfits as his male groomsmen and Erica wore a dress matching Allison’s and Lydia’s.

Stiles felt a flare of rage take root in him at the sight. Derek had included Erica in his wedding party—that bitch.

Really Derek?

This was such bull shit. How could he even—ugh! No, Stiles needed to calm down. He was doing this. Even so, Erica—the bitch, was glaring at him and Stiles couldn’t help but flash a murderous glare at Derek. It was *his* fault Erica would be a part of their wedding party and as he exchanged vows with the bastard there she’d be in the corner of his eye.

Derek was going to pay.

Stiles smiled evilly, a thought occurring to him in that moment and he was positively a glow as he stomped furiously the rest of the way up the alter.

**Oooh, Derek, was going to pay!**

When Stiles stood across from Derek, he turned to face him before the audience and the pastor. Grinning evilly, he felt no sympathy as Derek met his gaze with curious wonder. The alpha sniffed his general direction—as if sensing his rage—but Stiles was too miffed to care. He’d wait for his opportunity and strike the unsuspecting alpha.

“We come together on this beautiful day to celebrate the marriage and wolves mating matrimony of Alpha Derek Hale and—” the pastor halted reading the recited verse to furrow his brows in confusion.

“Stilinski—just Stilinski.” Stiles offered with a shrug of his shoulders and attempted to ignore his fellow friends’ stifled chuckles—who the hell gave the pastor his real name anyways? Probably Lydia—she was laughing the hardest—she was going to pay for it later.

“—Stilinski. They have come here today to bind themselves as one. Today is the day they will
formally and publically make their promises to each other. Marriage is a journey—to grow and work as one, a way of life—to forever be a pillar for the others needs and wants—to protect and nurture the other in every future endeavor and to be there to pick them up and hold them strong in their bond—to oversee all obstacles, together, united as one.” The pastor paused for emphases and then proceeded.

Stiles bit back a bark of laughter at this—and when he realized the werewolves could detect it—he exchanged it for a subtle clearing of the throat. He wasn’t sure it worked all that well as Derek’s features had soured over into his famous sour wolf pout and sneer.

“Amidst the turmoil of our world, with all of life’s struggles and concerns, it is with deep joy and a sense of wonder and awe that we pause to affirm the power of love. As we gather to witness the union of Alpha Hale and—Stilinski, we also celebrate the blessings we all cherish in our intimate relationships. This ceremony calls us all to renew our vows of love and commitment to one another.”

Stiles rolled his eyes to the cheesiness of the pastor’s words and stiffened when Derek’s eyes narrowed threateningly.

“Alpha Hale and Stilinski, you have signified your desire to enter into the holy state of marriage. If either of you know of any lawful impediment why you may not be married, I charge you now, before God, the Searcher of all hearts, to declare it...........

Well let’s go over all those impediments:

1.) Derek is a first class jerk.
2.) He is extremely moody.
3.) A real grouch.
4.) He’s always glowering with that sour wolf pout of his.
5.) Always wants the last word.
6.) His way or the highway.
7.) Loves to chew my head off over nooooooothing!
8.) Threatens me with no just cause.
9.) Possessive in the not so ‘aw, wolfie’ way.
10.) Pushy—unbelievably pushy.
11.) Likes to use his devilish flashing eyes and fang bearing to get his way—which is not fair!
12.) Won’t ever open up—like ever!
13.) Oooooooh—and he never stays the whole night! What’s up with that!
14.) He won’t say anything about himself.
15.) Won’t let me get to know him.
16.) This wedding is a sham brought up to enact a treaty.
17.) The brute won’t open himself up to even trying to love me.
18.) Should we even be getting married if we can’t even openly talk to one another?
19.) This is a marriage of convenience and my fiancé won’t let me forget it!
20.) He never talks things through.
21.) He never lets me tell him those three words.
22.) He never lets me in.
23.) And damn—how many reasons are there?
24.) What the fuck am I doing?
25.) Seriously, this is crazy.
26.) I’m going to be married—sentenced to live with mister grouchy forever—like fuck-ever
“Now, Alpha Hale, take Stilinski’s hands.” The pastor instructed.

Derek flashed a look of warning to the suddenly agitated human and took each of Stiles’ hands in his own. Stiles’ snarky smirk fell away at the feel of them—Derek’s hands were clammy—never had they felt humid with sweat. It was a cool December morning, freezing actually—but Stiles was determined to have his wedding at Alder Lake. The wedding was rushed because of Derek and they were forced to marry in the coldest of seasons, but Stiles wanted to wed in the same location as his late parents had.

Still, Derek—was Derek nervous about their union? Under all of those scowls and glares—was he just as unsure, just as anxious as him?

Stiles mentally shook his head. Hell no, not a chance in hell. Derek was a jerk, an ass, a brute, a bastard—there was no way he felt anything but agitation for being reduced to mate him for a peace treaty.

“Ladies and gentlemen, at this time we will begin the ring ceremony—exchanging of the rings is a symbol of Alpha Hale and Stilinski confirming their vows and binding of their hearts.” The pastor directed and Stiles tensed.

This is actually happening!

As Lydia and Allison assisted Stiles in planning the wedding, they’d mentioned the rings and urged him to take Derek with him—to choose them as a couple. The thought had turned him to mush and a swarm of butterflies fluttered about the pit of his stomach—he thought it was the most romantic of things to do with the person he loved—choosing the perfect ring that suited both their tastes and would be a symbol of their bond. However, Derek—the jerk didn’t want to go together—because Derek—the romantic sap wanted it to be a surprise. He was even working with a ring maker to craft them a singular pair. Stiles still hadn’t seen them and he was dying to know what they looked like.

Derek released Stiles’ hands and looked to his groomsman Boyd. Boyd took a step forwards and removed the velvet black jewelry box from out of his right side breast pocket. Cracking the box open, he lifted it in reach of the alpha.

“Now as you exchange these rings affirm your vows by proclaiming, ‘with this ring, I thee wed.’”

Derek retrieved the rings and took Stiles’ left hand with his right.

“Stiles. With this ring… I thee wed.” Derek’s voice appeared hoarse as he spoke Stiles’ name. He immediately cleared his throat and proceeded with his vow, though he murmured gently as he slid the ring with all the care the brute possessed which was surprisingly—more than Stiles would have thought achievable and all the more heartwarming.

Stiles removed his hand from out of the alpha’s grasp as to get a better look at the ring. Stiles couldn’t help but to grin like an idiot—goofy and childish as he took in the beauty of the ring—platinum. The ring was simple and beautiful—the best of combinations. It was made of white gold. The edges of the band were streaked with miniature diamonds. At the center were the engravings of Celtic knots in gold and they lined the whole length of the ring.

Stiles always found fascination with cultural symbols and knew that Celtic knots were never
ending and never broken. He knew they were used to symbolize a love that would far outreach the 
grasp of time. It was romantic, stunning really. The sight of it made Stiles feel a swell of emotions. 
The unexpected hearty laugh which escaped the moment he came to realize he was marrying 
Derek-mother-efing-Hale astounded him.

Stiles palmed his mouth with the back of his banded left hand, trying to suppress the joyful mirth 
bubbling up and wishing to escape. It was futile to try to strangle out the noise as was the stinging 
of his eyes—he might just be hysterical. Glancing up at the blurred Derek, Stiles could still make 
out the twitching of a frown across his mouth and his eyes staring off and away.

“Stilinski.” The pastor encouraged Stiles to do the same as the uncomfortable brute.

Derek handed the matching pair of Stiles’ ring he still held in the palm of his hand. Stiles retrieved 
it whilst simultaneously trying to ignore just how tremulous his hands became.

“Derek, with this ring, I thee wed.” Raising Derek’s clammy left he guided the wedding band 
along his slender finger, never breaking eye contact with his true mate—though the alpha tried 
everything not to meet his gaze.

When the rings were exchanged—although the pastor had not asked it of him, Stiles took both of 
Derek’s hands once more and clutched them tightly—wordlessly beseeching the brute raise his 
gaze and meet his own.

“Alpha Hale; do you commit yourself to Stilinski, to love, honor, respect each other, to 
communicate with each other, to look to your own emotional health so that you can relate in a 
healthy way, and provide a healthy home for children if you choose to have them; to be a support 
and comfort for your partner in times of sickness and health, as long as love shall last?” The pastor 
questioned and Stiles swallowed thickly at each one of those promises.

*Love…*

*Honor…*

*Respect…*

*Children…*

Derek’s mouth twitched in the starting of a scowl as if refusing to agree to such terms. Stiles had 
hired the pastor, but he’d never actually spoken to him in great depths—for all the pastor knew 
Derek and Stiles were madly in love. He didn’t know this was out of obligation to a treaty. Derek 
was put into a corner now, having to agree or stop the wedding—which was a big no-no. Other 
alphas were witnessing their exchange of vows—they were to set the example of what they were to 
soon after perform with their out wolves mating matrimony.

“Alpha Hale?” The pastor asked warily.

*Come on, say it. Say you’ll love, honor, and respect me. Say you want my babies. Say we can have children—I want your babies.*

Stiles’ heart pounded harshly against his chest, suddenly sent into a nerve wracking sweat. If Derek 
said yes, he was admitting to loving him—though he knew he didn’t—just to hear it once would 
make all the difference.

“I—” Derek swallowed audibly, his palms feeling all the more damp if possible. Glancing away he 
inhaled sharply and exhaled a moment later the startling and heartwarming, “I do.”
Stiles’ frown shifted then to a brilliant and goofy smile, tightening his hold on Derek’s hands that trembled faintly and Stiles couldn’t help wondering if it was due to the vows or the frigid December morning.

“Stilinski; do you commit yourself to Alpha Hale, to love, honor, respect each other, to communicate with each other, to look to your own emotional health so that you can relate in a healthy way, and provide a healthy home for children if you choose to have them; to be a support and comfort for your partner in times of sickness and health, as long as love shall last?”

“I do.” Stiles proclaimed, no hesitation, accepting their union with those two simple words and binding them as one.

“Father, Mother, God, we ask just now for your blessing on these beautiful wedding rings—that they may symbolize for Alpha Hale and Stilinski in their union; health, happiness, strength and courage, joy and peace, abundance and prosperity and unconditional loving for each other. So be it.”

“By the power vested in me by the state of California, I now pronounce you husband and husband.” The pastor smiled to the two of them.

By the pastor affirming their union, the werewolves of Derek’s party clapped and Stiles’ did much the same with a few cheers and yipyips. Lydia and Allison the loudest of the bunch and Stiles spared a glance to their beaming faces. Allison seemed to be giggling with delight whilst Lydia held a firm smile and struggled blinking back tears. Danny was laughing heartily and clapped his encouragement where as Jackson was grinning roguishly—as if knowing something he didn’t. Scott seemed by far the solemnest of them all—still holding many reservations of Stiles union with the alpha—though when their eyes locked he’d tipped his head acknowledging the symbolic union and stressed to smile—though it didn’t quite reach his eyes.

Derek’s gaze still hadn’t risen, focused on looking out to the lake rather than facing him and that pissed Stiles off all over again. He’d just—they’d just—and the lake? Really? Was the lake more fascinating than looking into the eyes of the man you just damn well married?

**Bastard. I hate you. I hate you. I hate you. I really fucking hate you!**

“Now Alpha Hale, take claim of your mate.”

“Huh? Doesn’t the heated smooching come next? Aren’t you like required to say something along the lines of, ‘you may now kiss your partner, significant other, husband, beloved’ or something? Take claim of your mate?—What the hell does that mean?” Stiles met the pastor’s gaze with bewilderment—not even realizing he’d cursed before the holy man.

“Um… I’m just reading from what Alpha Hale gave me.” The pastor answered glancing at a piece of paper wedged in his faded leather bound bible.

“Derek, what is he—thefuck? What the hell are you doing!” Stiles snapped when all at once, Derek yanked him against his chest with his grasp on his hands and held him in a close embrace.

Derek tucked his head to the crook of Stiles’ neck and inhaled him sharply. “Marking you as my mate, it’s commonly done on the wedding night but—” Derek murmured, blunt teeth grazing the tendon of his neck as if debating something.

Stiles was just about to prompt Derek when in that same instance Derek’s teeth were bearing down on his flesh, digging deep, pressing painfully so. Stiles whined; tears springing to his eyes as his
body broke into jolts of spasms. When those teeth dug further and pierced flesh Stiles sobbed, bellowing out a cry. A hand wound itself into the alpha’s hair and tugged harshly while his other fist into a ball of ferocity and pounded at the alpha's shoulder.

Stiles jerked and screamed when Derek bit deep, too far, too hard—blood—the blood was rushing out of him now and Derek was growling, lapping at it frenziedly. It hurt. It fucking hurt!

Stiles hollered enraged and tugged brutishly on the alpha’s hair, finally managing to pull Derek back and attacked the bastard right back. Biting as hard as humanly possible, locking his jaws. His teeth dug into Derek’s neck with just as much maliciousness as the alpha had mutilated his neck.

Derek released a surprised intake of breath and barked, “Don’t!”

Stiles didn’t care to listen to the bastard, he gnawed the flesh and Derek was suddenly sinking to the floor, into a puddle of trembling flesh, whining insistently for Stiles to let up and forgive him. Stiles wasn’t done yet, he’d planned on getting his revenge by kissing the bastard wolf till kingdom come in front of the whole lot of his pack, but now he was more intent on hurting Derek as he’d hurt him.

Stiles could distantly hear the startled gasps and whispers but he was too preoccupied on punishing Derek’s stupid sour wolish brute self—the bastard was his main focus. The rush of blood pooling in his mouth should be disgusting but it wasn’t. Derek had bitten through the rush of it—even when Stiles screamed in agony and he’d do the same to the bastard. His teeth pressed against muscle and Derek began whimpering, nuzzling Stiles’ wounded left tendon, lapping at the blood adamantly—searching for pardon.

The alpha’s tender affections placed on his wounded neck soothed the pain and Stiles finally let up, swallowing the blood overflowing his mouth and kissed at the bloodied mark. He lapped at the wound, matching the alpha’s affections. He hummed pleasantly when Derek’s whimpers turned to soft tired moans of obedience.

Stiles’ arm having stilled it’s pounding of the alpha’s shoulder wrapped around his back and pulled him near and laved the slowly healing flesh before him. Derek was panting harshly against his neck as if trying to control a frantic need of his wolf.

Stiles was so tired. All he wanted to do now was to rest—relax, maybe ice his wound because God, why the hell did Derek bite him that hard? Why did he bite him, period?

“You okay?” Stiles asked as the alpha broke into uncontrollable shivers every once in a while, his panting seeming rougher.

“You shouldn’t have done that.” Derek growled; nosing up his jaw line and reaching his ear where he sucked up the lobe of his ear to nibble at it playfully.

“You bit me first.”

“That was to mark you.” Derek rumbled, arms pulling Stiles flush against him then and Stiles stilled by the hardness of Derek’s fortitude pressing into his leg.

“Derek!” Stiles gasped startled.

“I—fuck Stiles. We need to leave, now.” Derek growled, suddenly standing to his feet, grasped a hold of Stiles’ arm and stormed down the aisle and away from the stunned audience.

Stiles glanced back to his friends for some type of explanation, what he found alarmed him. Scott
was blushing fiercely and throwing him a look the screamed, ‘You’re in deep shit.’ Lydia was leaning against Allison, shielding her face from view but the uproarious laughter projecting out of her unsettled Stiles. Allison and Danny looked to be at a complete loss of what was going on as were the other humans of the ceremony. Jackson and the rest of the werewolves appeared to be flushed just as Scott was, though Jackson’s shoulders rolled just slightly—evidence he was restraining his laughter—unlike Lydia.

When Boyd, Isaac and a furious Erica rushed towards them, he only then realized why. Derek had released him and was holding himself up using a tree for support. His breathing was labored and his shoulders grew in width, clawed hands gripped deep in the bark whilst resonating growls projected from his chest—it almost appeared as if the alpha were going to shift—but why?

As Isaac, Boyd and Erica stood to the alpha’s side Derek pointed a unsteady clawed finger in Stiles’ direction—almost accusingly.

“Take him away. I can’t—get him away from me.”

Stiles brows rose then—why the fuck was Derek being a world class jerk? *Get him away from me?* What the fuck did he do to deserve such malicious treatment from the brute? Bite him? He’d done that as retaliation.

Stiles palmed his sore neck and removed his hand to glance upon it—blood—lots of blood.

“*Get him away from me? Are you fucking serious, Derek? You BIT me!* Unlike your wolfie ass—I don’t heal lickety-split. Am I going to get rabies or turn into a sorry ass wolf such as yourself? Because let me say this just in case you’ve forgotten—there is no way in *hell* I want to be like you.”

Derek’s head rose then, murderous madder depths pierced his gaze and a hungry snarl dispelled from his lips. Thick protruding fangs snapped in his direction as his breathing was significantly heavier and uncontrolled.

“What about the reception?” Boyd asked.

“Take him!”

Derek roared—the animalistic snarl of an untamable beast and the beta’s shook by the power before them, whining sharply and bowing their heads low as they edged away from him. Derek’s furred paws scraped the bark of the tree as his skin darkened—he was shifting.

Before Stiles could take a step towards the alpha—Derek—his husband and attempt to bring him back to himself, Boyd and Isaac where dragging him away, away from his husband, the lake and to the parking lot.

“Derek? Derek!” Stiles called agitatedly, struggling to get out of the powerful wolves grasps and get to the alpha.

This was bad. If Derek shifted the human guests could be in danger.

Derek’s head reared up at the call of his name and Stiles’ heart stilled. He met those ever brilliant scarlet depths, the thick fangs of a wild beast and watched—watched as fur grew, as the alpha’s sharp nose lengthened into a snout.

Derek broke their stare and ran, ran deep into the forest and away from Stiles’ view.
As Boyd and Isaac reached their sports car, he’d been shoved hastily in; Boyd sitting beside him, Isaac in the passenger seat and Erica at the drivers end. The blond started the car and sped off as quickly as she could, but not quick enough that Stiles didn’t hear the howl of an alpha’s cry in the wilderness of the woods.

“What the hell just happened?” Stiles needed to understand the confusion and chaos that prompted Derek to morph then.

“You’re such an idiot! Do you know what you’ve done?”

“Erica!” Boyd reprimanded.

“Erica’s right. He needs to know what he’s done.” Isaac defended and Stiles glared at the man. He’d thought Isaac was alright, but the bastard was defending Erica of all people which meant he was sooo no cool—not worthy of joining the fold.

“Derek, told you not to and you—God—how the hell is he to control himself now?”

“What are you talking about?”

“January is mating season for alphas. Derek wanted to keep you safe. He instructed us to guard you during your honeymoon—make sure he didn’t attack you. He was going to wait until February to claim you, but you—idiot!” Erica screeched as another howl sounded, close, even though they were miles from Alder Lake by now.

“What?” Stiles exclaimed. “Why the hell didn’t he tell me?”

“I don’t know, maybe because he thought he could handle it, but then you bit him like an idiot. There’s nothing we can do about it now!” Erica shouted, snapping her gaze to him then, glowering with such abhorrence then focused on the road once more.

“What does my biting have to do with this? The jerk bit me first!”

“He had too! Biting of the mate, scarring their tissue is like branding and claiming them. It’s usually done during the act of mating—but he wanted to wait till February. He did it in front of all the other alphas to show he’d claimed you and now they will go back and perform the wolves mating matrimony with their partners.”

“What are you saying?”

“Tomorrow is the first day of January—his heat cycle will begin then—he had to bite you today. If he’d done it later—during his heat cycle. If he’d bitten you during his heat cycle it’d be hard for him to stop just there.”

“How does biting him come into play?”

“You marked him—an alpha.”

“He was healing.”

“But you marked him. You marked him at the beginning of heat month for alphas.”

“It’s still December.” Stiles threw back with furrowed brows of contemplation.

“The stripper.” Erica replied simply and Stiles blushed at the remembrance.
“What does that have to do with this?”

“Another alpha tried to scent you; you bit Derek right after—a day before the heat cycle. You enacted the mating ritual. You’ve marked and dominated the alpha as yours—challenging him for the dominant roll. Derek will fight you for dominance, when he wins—and an alpha always wins—you’ll submit and he will breed you.”

Stiles face reddened horribly. Having Erica tell him about mating rituals, having her explain the detailed behaviorisms and roles in which Derek and he would play was all to personal—all to affecting. One part of him was excited the other zillion parts were fearful.

“There must be a way out of this.”

“It’s too late, you’ve enacted the chase. We can hear him, he’s following us. All we can do is keep driving and hope he calms enough to switch back.”

Stiles paled.

“Wait—are you telling me—he could mate with me while he’s still—”

“It’s not desired, but it’s been done.” Boyd regarded solemnly.

“Fuck no! You can’t send me to my death—that’s like the most morbid—it’s bestiality!”

“Not really, Derek isn’t a full animal. He’ll still have human characteristics.” Isaac contemplated.

“So not the point!” Stiles snapped. “If I were a werewolf, then maybe, but I’m human—still recovering from life threatening injuries. He’ll kill me! Shit, he’s really going to kill me!”

“He won’t kill you. You’re his true mate.” Erica spat agitatedly.

Stiles was momentarily surprised Erica seemed to discern he and Derek were true mates. Did she know because she knew how to scent it or had she been eavesdropping at the bachelor party—hearing when he’d announced such in front of Jackson. Whatever the case, she knew and he prayed to God Derek wouldn’t find out he knew. How could he explain that?

“This is fucked up!” Stiles cried in panic.

Another howl sounded and Stiles felt dread pierce his soul.

Stiles was more than haggard as he’d spent several hours within the car of his stooges driving at an alarming speed on the rough terrains of the mountains. Apparently the werewolves could still hear Derek prowling—stalking him like a piece of prey throughout that time. When five hours had gone by—finally—Derek had stopped following them. Erica declared they were safe to go to the reception—but by that time they’d driven five hours from the location.

When they finally reached the hotel they’d booked and entered the reception hall—everyone had already helped themselves to the catering and they had three hours left for the event. Derek was MIA—probably in the middle of the woods brooding whilst Stiles was miffed the brute had been unforthcoming. You would think bringing up the fact he was going into heat tomorrow—hell it could be midnight—would be a need to know, but Derek didn’t think so. Now, however, things were suddenly starting to make sense. Why Derek wanted to get married sooner rather than later—on the 1st of December rather than the 31st—why he’d been trying to claim him before their
The least Derek could have done was told him—then they could have figured something out—though Stiles still probably wouldn’t have folded on mating before their wedding—they could have pushed up the date. Not by much, but enough.

Now Stiles was having a major freak-out. He was a mess of sweat and fear and Erica had reprimanded him of it—apparently a mate being distressed caused their counterpart to go wild with feelings—Derek was his mate, therefore he needed to stop before he’d be raped by the brute. It still didn’t seem to be working—because there was like a ten foot hulking rabid alpha on their fucking tail!

Stiles found air-conditioning and opening the windows of the car whilst driving in the frigid mountains seemed to be doing the trick of freezing him to the bone—ridding him of perspiration and keeping his mind focused on keeping warm rather than fearing the alpha.

The reception hall was spacious; many round tables were placed towards the left of the grand room while the right had a large dance floor and hosted Clear Waters live performance. The band played an assortment of music. The band seemed to be doing a fantastic job as the dance floor was full—full of humans. The werewolves quietly sat in their reserved seats and mingled amongst themselves—seeming tranquil and at peace—so unlike how the news had painted them to be. Derek must be working extremely hard if he’d caused this—the alphas were mixed in with the rest of the betas and omegas, but they didn’t seem to be aggressive and dominating in the least because Stiles couldn’t tell one from the other.

“Holy shit!” Stiles exclaimed, halting in his progression through the hall and Isaac, who hadn’t been paying close attention, knocked into him.

“What?” He sighed exasperatedly and took a step back.

Stiles pointed in the direction where a noticeable and distinguished alpha sat beside two burly men. “That’s the fucking president of fucking America! Like, Jesus fuck!”

Isaac didn’t even bother looking though he rolled his eyes. “What part of Derek is the sovereign of all werewolves escaped your mind? And don’t point, it’s rude and he can hear you.”

Stiles glanced back to the president who met his gaze dead on. Stiles paled then and felt his groundings shake when the president tilted his head and bared his neck to him.

“Like Jesus fuck me a new one!”

The president chuckled then—even from the distance—the alpha’s impeccable hearing having caught the human’s words. Raising his head upright once more the president smiled kindly before conversing with table of guests.

“Mother…effer…that’s the president of France, China, Japan, the prime minister of England—bitches be crazy—is that the queen of mother-fucking-England!” Stiles was pointing again, jumping on the tips of his toes and gawking at the table of leaders of several fucking nations—like fuck!

“Stiles—shut up. They can hear you.” Isaac repeated, grabbing his arm and leading him away and further—passed the dance floor and to a lengthy table full of the wedding party.

Danny and Jackson were sitting on the far end of the table. Jackson’s chair was turned to face Danny’s, legs crossed, an arm slung over the arch of the accountant’s chair and leaning into the
human, grinning impishly and speaking low enough for only Danny to hear. Danny blushed by whatever the man was saying, turned his body to face Jackson’s own and patted the werewolf’s cheek affectionately, before whispering something back that seemed to surprise Jackson enough to flush embarrassingly and pout to which Danny laughed.

Lydia sat beside Jackson with a sour face, throwing a look of disgust at the couple’s lovey dovey-ness before flashing an equally displeased glance to her other side—where Allison and Scott where currently lost in each other’s eyes and cooing sweetly.

Derek was still absent as there were five chairs left of the wedding party for the stooges, Derek and himself.

Stiles approached the gang and spoke. “Dudes and dudettes, like this is my time to shine. Do you think I want my guests to see you guys being all, ‘Oh, I love you.’ ‘Oh, you are the sweetest.’ ‘Oh, kiss me my sweet sugar muffin, butterscotch, cutie pie!’ If I wanted that I’d do so with Derek.”

“Thank you!” Lydia interjected.

As if the world were working in the favor of putting the soul in Stiles’ step, Clear Water’s belted the opening of Ray Charles, ‘Hit The Road Jack’.

“Now, my lovely lady.” Stiles drawled whilst giving Lydia the hairy eye.

Lydia’s frown turned upside down, gleaming brilliantly at the man before her, already seeming to sense a request about to come her way.

“Yes, my lovely fairy.”

Stiles frowned slightly at the jab, but chose to overlook it. “Dance with me?”

Lydia tipped her head with consent and took the man’s outstretched hand, rounding Danny and Jackson, the two’s clapping hands creating a bridge. Stiles tugged the red head against his chest when she stood a foot from him and the two broke into laughter before rushing onto the dance floor, ready to get their boogie on. The stooges leaving to seat themselves at the table.

Stiles wasn’t the best dancer in the world, but he wasn’t the worst and Lydia was a natural. The two clasped hands and hopped from one foot to the other, swooping close to the ground before skipping onto the other foot to do the same. They did this every four hops, broke their hands apart to shake them and skidded the heels of their feet across the floors when jumping high—twirling mid air to face one another again. They then took hold of the other’s hands and continued in the same meticulous movements.

…Okay…he might just have some skills—his mother took singing lessons as well as dancing and some of it rubbed off on Stiles.

Stiles laughed rowdily when Lydia rocked her hips to the beat and belted, “What you say!”

Stiles answered back, “Hit the road Jack and don't you come back no more, no more, no more, no more.”

Lydia giggled and wrapped one arm about Stiles’ waist and Stiles did the same, their free hands did and imitation of spirit fingers whilst they bent their knees low and spun in a circle, bumping their hips against the other as they sashayed to the soulfulness of Charles.

When the song changed and the blond soprano hummed the opening of Natalie Cole, ‘This Will Be
An Everlasting Love. Stiles brought Lydia into a close bear hug and they spun together, swaying to the music while smiling amusedly—kindred spirits, enjoying the other’s company.

“Wow, I can’t believe Derek’s your husband.” Lydia vocalized with amazement.

“Neither can I.” Stiles affirmed smiling all the more and Lydia raised a hand to squeeze his cheek playfully.

“I know; you can’t stop smiling.” Lydia baby talked to him and Stiles stared wrathfully.

“Tis love.” Lydia chuckled with delight.

“Tis your dementia.” Stiles quipped.

Lydia rolled her eyes and pushed away from the human to make a show of twirling before drawing back and close and continued their swaying to the beat.

“Live in denial—remain blind—but everyone could see the love.”

“One-sided, unrequited, unwanted, undesired, unreciprocated, un-this, un-that, un, un and un.” Stiles droned grouchily.

Lydia snickered and smacked the man’s arm. “Keep telling yourself that.”

“I will, because it is true.”

“Mhmm.”

“It is!”

“Hmm.”

“Derek’s a big mean wolf-man.”

“You sound like a sulking mate.”

“That’s because I am. Can’t you see the pout?” Stiles then proceeded to pout with emphasis and Lydia barked mirth.

“You’re too much.”

“Yes. I know, right? I’m too much to handle.”

Lydia smirked entertained. “Not enough for Derek.”

“Ooooh, you’re a naughty girl.” Stiles abolished with a sly grin.

“Mhmm.”

The song changed then, ‘Stand by Me’ by Ben E. King. Stiles and Lydia took note when Allison and Scott stepped onto the dance floor and curled in on the other and moved to the mellow beat of the music. Danny and Jackson stood not too far from them and wrapped themselves close to the other, whispering things in their partner’s ear—every once in a great while Jackson would say something unbelievably amusing and cause Danny to lean harshly against him and cackle loudly.

Stiles continued to dance with Lydia, hugging her close and tucking his head against her neck.
whenever the lively redhead would say something unbelievable comical about the way Jackson was so letting Danny lead their dance—therefore, taking on the role of the bitch where their relationship was concerned, or the memory of Jackson whimpering like a bitch in heat, or the way he’d been whining at her home last night. Jackson having heard all this spared several long moments to glare threateningly and flipped them the bird before he was distracted by Danny’s roaming hands and fervid nuzzling of his neck. When Jackson flushed and tucked his head into Danny’s neck shielding it from view of the two they broke into hysterics and nearly stumbled to the ground caught in a fit of giggles and snorts of amusement.

When Stiles raised his head back up he caught sight of Derek as he entered the hall. The man’s suit appeared to be covered in bits of dirt and leaves; his hair was a complete mess and damp as if having run miles—which Stiles knew had been the case as he’d been the chase.

Lydia pulled away from him then, smiling knowingly and took note of Matt standing before them with a raised hand—silently requesting for Lydia’s hand. Lydia took the offer, winked at Stiles and spun playfully away from Matt, walking backwards in a taunting manner—her eyes gleamed playfully and beckoned the photographer to catch her by curling a finger and arching it towards herself. Matt didn’t hesitate and played into the crafty hands of the witty redhead.

Stiles met Derek’s gaze once more finding him standing no more than a foot away and smiled in greeting.

“Had fun running and ruining my reception?” Stiles simpered.

Derek scowled. “I didn’t ruin it.”

“Our reserved time is nearly at an end.”

“So.” Derek shrugged unimpressed.

“So?” Stiles bulked.

“The reception will end when you want it to end.”

“Yes, but I’ll have to pay a fee.”

“I’ll take care of it.”

“You’ve already paid for too much.” It was true, although Stiles paid for the invitations, florist, pastor and band, Derek was paying for everything else—each time he offered to pay for anything else the alpha pinned him to the bed, growled and nipped unkindly at his neck until Stiles stopped arguing and backed down.

“Shut up.” Derek huffed, grasping a hold of his tie and yanked him forwards and into his arms, wrapping him up in a tight embrace and immediately went for his neck.

Stiles gasped stridently when the alpha purred contentedly whilst nudging his tender bitten neck. “Bastard, it’s sore.”

“It’ll heal.”

“Yeah, in like a month!”

“It will still heal.”
“And leave a hideous scar.”

“Mmm, nothing hideous—beautiful.” Derek murmured heavily mouthing the wound in an openmouthed kiss.

Stiles hissed at the pleasantly soothing act, clutched to the brute’s shoulders wheezing edgily.

“Not here.” Stiles breathed, tucking his head into the crook of the alpha’s healed neck and breathing him in deeply.

“Mmm, later then.” Derek amended with a chaste kiss. He raised Stiles’ head once more, palming his face with large hands and met his gaze.

The song came to an end then and the band stilled as the vocalist spoke. “Hello, ladies and gentlemen, we’ve enjoyed playing for you, but now is the time of the cutting of the cake, so we’ll be back after. I would like to say on behalf of the band; congratulations to this lovely couple; may your love keep you strong, healthy and full of joy.”

Stiles couldn’t help but to grin at the beauty and tipped his head acknowledging her and the band.

“Aw—wolfie, wasn’t that nice?” Stiles quizzed sickly sweet, patting the broad chest before him with the back of his hand. He raised himself to his tip toes and pressed a sloppy kiss on the stunned brute’s cheek.

Stiles immediately detangled himself from out of the alpha’s grasp and laughed hysterically as he jetted away and toward the guests seated at their tables. He weaved through the cluster, choking on his laughter, clutching to his aching side by the bewildered shock plastered on the brute’s face. The werewolves made sure to remain out of his way whereas when he bumped into a human he called out an apology over his shoulder and took note of the not so amused alpha, hot on his trail.

When Stiles reached his destination, he stood near the French doors of the reception hall and beside the large table carrying their six layer French vanilla cake, white frosting pasted on the side of the cake and fresh strawberries topping each of the six cakes.

“Where’s the knife?” Stiles asked Lydia who’d already made her way to the cake and stood beside the gang of friends. The rest of the guests were slowly making their way over and Stiles felt the flash of a camera—Matt photographing the cake and the group.

“Here.” Allison chirped, grasping the knife from the other side of the table and handed it over to Lydia who was close to him.

When he retrieved the knife from Lydia he tensed as a burly arm wound around his waist and he was jerked back and against the alpha.

“Stiles.” Derek hummed unnaturally syrupy in his vocalization.

Stiles’ grip on the knife slacked and he became overheated when Derek nudged his temple with his nose and sighed dramatically content. “Who’s my sweetie pie, sugar plum, snickerdoodle, muffin, butterscotch, sweetest of sweets, honey bun? You are! You are!”

Stiles’ dropped the knife then, heard it clatter against the table before the crowd burst into amused laughter.

“Oh, it’s on.” Stiles hissed ominously.
“Oh, dear, you know how I just wove your childish antics!” Derek cooed, sprinkling kiss upon kiss all about Stiles’ face and chimed “So adorable!” after each kiss, and the crowd went wild. Lydia was crouched on her knees gripping her side whilst Allison was tearing up—face hot. Danny and Jackson were patting at each other desperately, trying to remain upright when they were struggling from falling over in laughter. Even Scott—that traitor was snickering.

“It’s really on.” Stiles avowed, seizing the knife from the table and Derek wrapped his hand around Stiles’ grasp. The two then cut the first slice of cake and stayed in the position for several long moments as the audience photographed them in the pose. After they cut two slices of cake, Lydia placed them on plates and offered it to the both of them with forks.

The crowd began to cheer them on, requesting they feed the other. Stiles wasn’t so opposed to the idea—he and Derek had fed each other before. Only, Derek had been a jerk for the last month—especially yesterday and today. Stiles wanted vengeance—Lots and lots of vengeance.

Stiles forked the first bite and stilled his movements when Derek raised his own forkful for the human to sample. Stiles eyed it warily.

“Come now, take a bite.” Derek smiled playfully—so unlike himself—something in his eyes were amiss, but Stiles wanted to believe him.

“Truce?”

“Truce.”

Stiles parted his lips slightly and eyed the brute vigilantly as he guided the fork to his mouth. Stiles bit into the sweetness of the cake and chewed contentedly finding Derek had given in. Glancing to his plate he began raising his fork for the alpha and yelp startled when Derek pounced—caught his lips in a zealous kiss, a searing tongue bursting forth and through his unprepared passage and met his own, swiped about his mouth, tasting bits of cake and Stiles flavored goodness.

Stiles reared back crossly, dropped his fork and snatched his cake from his plate and shoved it against Derek’s mouth and hollered fearfully when Derek bit into his palm.

“Don’t bite me again!”

Derek coughed then, coughing up the cake that managed to get into his mouth and laughed—laughed whole heartedly, crumbs and frosting sliding away and sinking to the floor. He smiled brilliantly at Stiles even with frosting and strawberry sap smearing his face. Stiles couldn’t stop the sudden heat coursing through him, rushing to his face, ears and neck.

Unable to break the alpha’s gaze he blindly reached for Derek’s plate and took it—placing both of their plates to the table. He immediately grasped the alpha’s face with his free hands and leaned in close. Derek’s smile faded considerably and became a twitch of curious intrigue.

“You’re just too much that I can’t resist.” Stiles whispered; so only Derek could hear him before pressing forwards and claimed his lips then.

Derek paused for one moment in time and then he was dropping his fork—having retained it during Stiles’ siege of his plate. Stiles exhaled shakily when Derek jerked him hard against his built form and he was all but trying to climb the brute like a tree to get all the more close and suck his face off. The kiss was sweet—sweet with cake and that mouthwatering flavor that was singularly Derek.

Stiles could feel the frosting smudge his nose and mouth as he kissed the beast with purpose and
slowly began to sag against him, Derek taking possession of the kiss and loving his mouth to calmness. The cheers and laughter around them died away as he opened his eyes and met Derek’s passionate hazel.

Breaking their kiss Stiles panted hotly against the brutes mouth, “I lo-long for a dance.” Stiles amended, almost letting himself declare his love for the brute—knowing Derek wouldn’t appreciate it.

Derek hummed his understanding, grasped a cobalt handkerchief from his side pocket and wiped at the frosting covering the human’s hand and face before doing the same for himself. He tossed it onto the table and led the way back to the dance floor.

As they reached the dance floor, Clear Waters was there to greet them, the vocalist stepped before the microphone and spoke once more.

“Now, as requested by Alpha Hale, we will perform this lovely couple’s song.”

“I already requested one—wait. We have a song?” Stiles posed and Derek smirked.

The moment the saxophonist blew that melody and the drummer and pianist followed Stiles barked with mirth utterly delighted and brought Derek into a tight embrace and swayed with him to the fast tempo.

The vocalist sang the entrance of Maxine Nightingale, ‘Right Back Where We Started From’.

“You’re just—” Stiles struggled to find the words.

Derek hummed contentedly, nuzzling the human’s scarred ear, inhaling his scent eagerly.

“Wonderful, absolutely wonderful.” Stiles exhaled blissfully.

“You smell wonderful.”

“I smell like you.” Stiles jested, having slept in the alpha’s coat.

“Exactly.”

Stiles blushed then. “You’re too much.”

“As are you.”

“What I did was called for.”

“What you did was cheat.”

“I did not cheat!” Stiles snapped, suddenly recalling just how frustrated he was with the alpha.

“You so did cheat!” Derek growled.

“You so did cheat? What now, you’re talking like a valley girl?”

“I guess you’re rubbing off on me.” Derek snarled.

“I so do not talk like a valley girl!” Stiles protested.

“That right there was valley girl talk.”
“You are like—you are ridiculous.” Stiles stuttered catching his tendency to use the word ‘like’ a bit too much.

“Just admit it.” Derek pursued, pulling away to palm the human’s hips and swayed theirs to following the tempo of the music.

Stiles huffed, punching the brute’s shoulder before gripping at them and pushing him away to saunter about the brute, hips swiveling, arms raised up and twirling to the strumming of the music and spun to press his back into the brute’s chest.

“Come on—if this is our song, dance like you mean it.”

Derek snarled agitatedly, gripping a hip and pressing him against his body while his other’ imitated the human’s movements and they danced in harmony.

The song ended soon after and the next began—the one Stiles requested the band perform—the song that seemed to speak such truth regarding his life and how he felt about the moody, brooding, pushy brute of a husband. Chantal Kreviazuk, ‘Feels Like Home,’

Their tempo slowed and Stiles made to face the sour wolf’s solemn scowl. As the lyrics strummed through the room—Stiles soon felt his anger die away and he wrapped his arms about the brute’s neck and yanked him back down and into his personal space to nuzzle his nose in an Eskimo’s kiss.

“Who’s my moody, brooding, cranky monster, growly beastie, sour-faced wolfie? You are! You are!” Stiles singsong in the most bubbly of voices.

“You want to die?” Derek offered with gritted teeth so not amused.

“Mmm, maybe after kissing the hell out of you in front of all your pack, again.” Stiles didn’t wait for the alpha’s reply and pressed their lips together, kissed with all the gentleness and care he possessed. He loved the wolf’s mouth with great emphasis, grazing his tongue about the crease of the alpha’s mouth requesting entrance and was welcomed the instant after.

Stiles hands rose and threaded through the brute’s damp dark mane. He stroked and caressed the silken hair, pressing against the alpha’s chest and stilled their dance to further lose himself in their kiss. Derek’s hands snuck under the pelt of his suit and massaged a path up his back before flattening against his ribs and pressing him all the closer to take possession of the kiss.

Derek broke their kiss after several long moments to meet his gaze with one of tender thoughtfulness and then he did something Stiles never thought the brute would do. Derek spoke words Stiles never imagined he would hear. Words he thought would never leave that defiant mouth—never break free to existence. Words he didn’t believe possible, sentiments that he’d never dream Derek could possess for him and he felt a peace. He felt pardon from all the hurts, all the fears, all the tears and welcomed, at home in the alpha’s arms.

“It’s always been you.” Derek rasped, shutting his eyes and swooping back down to claim the human’s lips once more—catching the gasp that was dispelled.

This kiss was infinitely more—it shattered Stiles to pieces in the best of ways.
The reception continued long after the original time frame they’d scheduled with the hotel. Stiles really didn’t understand why he felt so bad making Derek pay for the additional fee—the alpha was a jerk. He was always keeping things from him and dealing with it himself, when really, Derek should talk with him about it. A marriage was about a joint partnership, of working through dilemmas as a team. Derek didn’t think so.

Derek never explained why he’d been so upset about the stripper. If Derek simply talked it out with him—explained werewolf customs, Stiles would have been able to understand the brute’s feelings and wouldn’t be upset with him. He could have reassured Derek of his affections and although Derek wouldn’t allow him to say those three words—he could be able to reassure the brute, make it evident that for Stiles, there was no one else—could never be anyone else.

Derek hadn’t even told Stiles about mating season. Stiles hadn’t even known alphas went through heat. How could he have known Derek’s worries without the alpha telling him? Yet again, if they talked it through, they could have come to an agreement—get married on the 1st or the week after—or something.

Now as it was, Stiles bit Derek—unknowingly enacting a chase for dominance and spurring the alpha’s need to mate. Derek wouldn’t be able to keep his distance when his heat cycle struck and Stiles would be screwed—literally. He just prayed Derek wouldn’t lose his humanity during the act and their mating turned into bestiality because that was gross—like ugh—like blah—like, hell to the no.

The two danced for some time, Derek being extraordinarily handsy in front of everyone—having the tendency to nuzzle his wounded neck and exhale merrily. When they left the dance floor and took their seats at their reserved table, Stiles conversed with the gang. The whole time Derek palmed at his knee, stroking it affectionately while leaning into his personal space and inhaled his scent, nudge the slighter’s ear with his nose. Derek even went as far as humming soft rumblings while kissing Stiles’ temple and cheek repeatedly and keenly.

Stiles was a hot mess of nerves and excitement, struggling to get some space between the two, but Derek easily overpowered him. The brute brought Stiles into his arms and cradled him close to his chest.

Scott blushed for Stiles, Allison and Lydia giggled like school girls—every once in a great while squealing, ‘aw, so sweet’. Danny and Jackson smiled at the two before getting lost in each other’s presence and whispered sweet nothings while laughing softly—having completely forgotten about the recently wedded couple.

Stiles couldn’t take it and finally managed to detangle himself from Derek and began searching for Abigail, having spotted her playing with Dasher earlier when he’d been on the dance floor. When he found her seated beside her mother and holding his pup, he’d noted it been a while since he’d walked the dog and took Dasher outside to do so.

As he exited the hotel Derek found him then, wrapped his arms about his waist, pressed his chest against the slighter’s back and nuzzled his neck once more. Stiles huffed agitatedly, flushing hotly as Derek laved his wounded flesh whilst Stiles attempted to walk Dasher and give her the chance to do her business.
Soon after, they returned to the reception hall, Stiles carrying Dasher as if she were a baby. The pup contented herself in burrowing her face into his shoulder as he and Derek took their seats again. Stiles then proceeded to be nuzzled not only by Dasher but his extremely affectionate husband.

The speeches were then carried out. Boyd as Derek’s best man gave a speech that was both civil and to the point. Then it was Scott’s turn and throughout his entire speech, Stiles attempted to free himself from Derek’s grasp to tackle the traitorous beta who made it a point to humiliate him—recounting stories of their past that should have very well stayed in the past, but at the end—thank God there was an end—Scott closed it with heartfelt and moving words.

The wedding continued for sometime after before it was coming to an end and Derek and Stiles were leaving. As they prepared to leave the gang followed them out of the hotel to see them off. Derek patiently waited for him in the car and at that time the gang gave Stiles their separate goodbyes; Lydia gave him the tightest of bear hugs, Allison’s hug was significantly lighter as she’d congratulated him on the beginning of a new journey, Scott’s had been one of comfort and promised he was here for him if ever he needed him, Danny and Jackson clasped him on the shoulder and wished him luck on surviving heat week. Stiles flipped them the bird and everyone broke into laughter.

Now, Stiles sat with Dasher curled up on his lap asleep. Stiles attempted to keep his breathing even when Derek drove with his left and caressed Stiles’ fuzzed buzz cut and the nape of his neck with his right.

“Scenting me? I’m sure I’m drenched in your scent already.” Stiles contemplated softly, turning into Derek’s touch, regardless, and brushed his cheek against the alpha’s inner wrist.

“You do—mostly, you smell somewhat like your friends—especially Lydia.”

“Well they are like family.”

“I’m your family.”

Stiles smiled at this knowledge, heart rate rising ever so slightly. Derek was Stiles’ family now. “I know.” Stiles murmured croakily, eyes unexpectedly tearing over by this truth.

“Don’t.” Derek hitched, his grip tightening over the steering wheel and nostrils flaring. “You need to keep your emotions in check—if you become distressed, I—it won’t be easy for me to keep calm.”

“Is it because your heat cycle will be starting soon—Erica explained.” Stiles added when Derek snapped his gaze to him, startled.

“Yes.”

“Derek… Why didn’t you tell me?”

“I—I didn’t think I would need to. I thought I could control myself.”

“But if you explained—even about the marking during the wedding ceremony, I would never have bitten you.”

“I didn’t think you would. I should have known better.”

Stiles laughed then—unsettled by the consequences of his actions.
“Do you think you can still manage to not—to wait till February?” Stiles needed to remain optimistic.

Derek’s lips pursed.

“Derek.” Stiles pleaded.

“I—I can try.”

“What does that mean?”

“I will do my best, but you challenged my wolf—and it wants you. The heat—it will spike those needs.”

“But can’t you fight it? Your human side is strong—I’ve seen Scott control his bloodlust during the full moon.”

“That’s not the same thing.”

“I know, but maybe you could try doing something like that—using your human side to overpower your heat.”

“Stiles…alphas are the only ones who go through heat, because by werewolf customs they are the only ones allowed to breed. You’re my mate and you challenged me. Biting me on the peak of my heat cycle—that was the same as telling my wolf you’re ready and want to claim me.”

“I claimed you before. Why can’t I just claim you, again? Maybe that way we could get through your heat cycle without—and then when February comes…we could—” Stiles was blushing heatedly, talking about the deed was just—God—Stiles felt so flustered even thinking about it.

Derek seemed to be heating over as well, appearing anxious and uneasy. “That—I—alphas don’t—they just don’t, but I…”

“But you did. Why?”

“I—I wanted to, but during the heat cycle alphas will be driven to claim their mates and breed them.”

“I’m not a woman.”

“It still applies.”

“So there is nothing we can do.”

“I won’t touch you until February.” Derek declared; face suddenly hardening into a scowl.

“But you just said—” Stiles’ brows knitted with bewilderment.

“I know what I said, but you’re not ready. I have an idea. Get out my cell phone; it’s in the glove compartment.”

Stile leaned forward, minding not to disturb Dasher, opened the glove compartment and retrieved the phone.

“Call Dr. Deaton, he’s in my contact list. Be sure to press speaker.”
Stiles did as he was told and they listened to the dull drilling of rings as they pulsed within the Camaro and Derek kept his eyes on the road.

“Hello.” Dr. Deaton greeted.

“Deaton.” Derek acknowledged.

“Derek? Why are you calling? Shouldn’t you be celebrating?”

Stiles was surprised at how Dr. Deaton addressed Derek so casually almost as if they were old friends.

“I am—was—I need your help.”

“What can I do?”

“Mountain ash. I need plenty of mountain ash.”

“Mountain ash?” Deaton repeated, clearly surprised. “May I ask why?”

“No.”

“When do you need it?”

“Tonight, if possible.”

“Alright, I can have it ready in an hour. Will you be coming to pick it up?”

“I can’t, but I’ll send someone. You’ll be at the clinic?”

“That sounds like a plan.”

“Thank you.”

“You should be.” Deaton chuckled good-naturedly, before the phone went dead as Deaton had ended their call.

“Mountain ash?” Stiles contemplated.

“It acts like a shield, repelling werewolves; they can’t cross the lines of mountain ash.”

Stiles contemplated these facts in relation to their dilemma. “Are you suggesting we could use it?”

“Yes. The heat cycle comes in five stages; scenting, fatigue, tremors, fever, then heat. When my fever hits, that is when you will use the mountain ash to protect yourself. I won’t be able to touch you then. From there, we will need to wait it out.”

“How long does a heat cycle last?”

“It varies; the longest recorded was three and a half weeks.”

“Three and a half weeks? God, Derek!” Stiles huffed then, palming his face—this was seriously a problem.

“Call Boyd, I’ll have him meet with Deaton.”
It was late—or early—it really depended on who one asked—when they reached their destination of their honeymoon, Fergusons’ lodge. The same lodge they’d spent that disaster of a Thanksgiving.

Derek brought the luggage into the lodge while Stiles took Dasher on a walk around the snow layered woods, allowing her to take care of her business once more—the drive up to the lodge had been a long one.

When Dasher was ready to go back into the home, Stiles was relieved. They spent a good hour driving up and high enough that they were surrounded in snow and Stiles wasn’t dressed to stay out too long.

Derek was at the hearth, stoking the recently made fire when he and Dasher entered. Stiles could already feel the heat radiating through the cabin. Still, it wasn’t enough for such a short time and the best way to raise his body temperature in the meantime was by taking a hot shower.

“I’m going to shower.” Stiles announced, releasing Dasher from her leash and shutting the front door behind him.

Derek tipped his head with conference. “Would you like some tea?”

“You went grocery shopping before the wedding?”

“No, Isaac did.”

“Oh. Smart.”

“I told you, I’m smarter than you.”

Stiles pouted. “Why do you have to be such a mean lug.”

Derek smirked and shrugged his shoulders. “Tea?”

“Yeah, I’d like that, three spoons of sugar, please.” Stiles smiled thoughtfully before wandering down the hallway.

He first checked the room he slept in during Thanksgiving vacation day and found their belongings at the foot of the bed. Stiles unzipped his suitcase and proceeded to unpack all his belongings and placed them in the dresser. When Stiles finished, he slipped the case under the bed and snatched a pale plush red towel, black robe and white briefs he left on the bed when organizing his clothing.

The heat from the showerhead striking his chilled body did wonders, it soothed him, though he’d hissed several times when heated water struck his sore neck—really Derek. Derek had gone overboard, seriously. The brute didn’t have to bite that hard, did he? Why couldn’t wolves kiss like normal people? Why did they have to be such possessive territorial creatures, craving the act of marking scaring their mate. It was brutality—spousal abuse. Stiles should soooo charge Derek. Hah! That’s what he should do. He was the Sheriff, it was quite possible.

Stiles smiled evilly at the thought of booking his husband and holding him in jail for several days—but that went against several rules. He wouldn’t be able to make the arrest, but he could totally press charges.

Stiles chuckled aloud at the thought, “Bitch deserves it.”
Stiles knew that he’d never do such a thing—firstly; Derek was the sovereign of alphas and could easily fight back and secondly, Stiles loved Derek—he could never do that to the man he loved with his whole heart.

After Stiles shower, he changed and wandered into the kitchen. Derek was seated on one of the stools sipping from a pale orange mug; a matching pair of Derek’s mug was placed on the kitchen island counter and waiting for Stiles.

Stiles took a seat at the stool beside Derek’s and eagerly raised his awaiting mug to his nose and inhaled the spiced herbal brew.

“Green tea.” Stiles noted pleased.

“Yes.”

“It’s my favorite.”

“I know.”

“You know?” Stiles was surprised.

“I noticed you had several boxes in your pantry when I cooked for you.”

“Oh—observant to boot.”

“I try.”

“My hubby is so bright—I’m going to enjoy boasting about you.” Stiles jested sweetly and nudged the alpha’s shoulder with his elbow before drinking his tea.

“Hubby?” Derek parroted, brows furrowing and frowned unenthusiastically.

“Oh! Or hunk—I like that! What about hunk muffin?”

Derek’s eyes narrowed, “Hubby is just fine.”

Stiles sighed dramatically before grinning affectionately and leaned into the brute’s shoulder, dipping his head to rest there and exhaled with contentment.

“Hubby, you want to go to bed? I think this tea just soothed me right to the brink of crashing.”

Derek sipped from his mug one last time before he nodded in concord. The alpha set his mug onto the counter, rising from his seat and Stiles did the same. As Stiles led the way back to the bedroom Derek pressed up against him, wrapped his arms about his waist and they stumbled the rest of the way to the bed—Derek refusing to let the slighter go.

When they entered the room Stiles grinned at Dasher fast asleep at the foot of the bed. Once in bed, Derek curled up close to the human, nuzzling Stiles’ sore neck, kissing the bruising flesh, lapping over the open wounds and hummed blissfully. Stiles couldn’t stop the thrilling sensations that pulsed through his body, evoked by Derek’s affections—he could only enclose his arms about the wolf’s head and bury his nose into the dark lustrous mane of his mate—husband.
Derek was Stiles’ husband, they’d actually married—bonded—though Stiles still had yet to be claimed, they were wed. It made Stiles feel settled—at place—reassured him of their ties and he knew it shouldn’t. He knew he shouldn’t feel relieved to have Derek as his husband—that this marriage should upset him—anger him, but it didn’t. He wanted this. If he was being honest with himself he’d always wanted this, but at what cost?

Derek didn’t love him—tolerated him, yes, but he did not love him. Derek most likely would never love him.

“Why don’t you undress?” Stiles commented, needing to draw away from those pained contemplations.

“I need to be dressed for when Boyd arrives with the mountain ash.” Derek answered matter-of-fact, lips ghosting along the length of his raw mark.

“Still, you could change out of your tux and into something comfortable.” Stiles deliberated.

“I’m comfortable like this.” Came the wolf’s soft reply and Stiles snickered realizing the brute was referring to their position and not of his clothing.

“My hubby: the sweet talker.”

“Mmm.” Derek hummed planting a solid kiss on the slighter’s wound and Stiles’ breath hitched.

“Not fair, I told you its sore.”

“I’ll make it better.” Derek whispered, pressing another kiss onto the mark before suckling genially.

“Derek.” Stiles moaned, tilting his head, revealing his injured neck—exposing himself to the alpha’s kind affections—needing.

“You smell wonderful.”

“You’ve said that before.” Stiles grinned, nudging the alpha’s temple and pressed a kiss there as Derek loved his mark.

“That’s because it’s true.”

“Derek.” Stiles breathed, eyes shutting enjoying the alpha’s attention.

“Hmm?” Derek graveled distractedly, currently laving at the mark.

“What did you mean earlier?”

“Earlier?” Derek repeated unaware as to what Stiles was referring to.

“You know—when you said…when you said…” Stiles flushed unable to finish. Those words made him feel a swirl of emotions, so many that he could scarily formulate or achieve the courage to voice them.

Derek stilled, almost as if he sensed Stiles’ need to unearth the meaning behind his deceleration.

“When you said…” Stiles inhaled deeply, preparing to say those words aloud and bring with it a truth he wasn’t sure he was ready to learn. “When you said, ‘It’s always been you.’”
Derek didn’t reply, remained in a silence seeming unending, stiff as a board—remaining unmoving. Stiles didn’t like this, he palmed the alpha’s shoulder to push him back while his other clasped about the wolf’s face and raised his gaze to meet his own.

“Derek.” Stiles implored.

Derek met his gaze for one brief moment before lowering his eyes to the slighter’s lips and pursed his own.

“Can’t we just…forget I ever said it?” Derek sounded so frayed, beaten down, as if Stiles was breaking him.

“Derek, why would I want to do that?” Stiles edged, tenderly stroking his brute’s stubble and pressed their foreheads together, effectively catching Derek’s gaze with his own once more. “Those words…they were beautiful. I—I liked hearing them coming from you.”

“I shouldn’t have said it.” Derek shot back, a shiver breaking through and Stiles wrapped a leg around his waist in silent comfort.

“But you did.” Stiles countered.

“I’m so glad you did.” Stiles planted a chaste kiss to the brute’s lips before nudging the wolf’s nose with his own.

“I want to take it back.” Derek garbled despondently and Stiles almost wanted to laugh at the implausibility, almost, because the pain of Derek wanting to go back on those sentiments destroyed him.

“Why?” Stiles mewled, eyes glinting. “Why do you want to take it back? I—I liked it. I want to hear those words more often, those sentiments, all of it—if it’s you saying them. Why take those words away from me?”

As Stiles pleaded he leaned against the brute, pressing him back into the bed and rolled over him, wrapping a firm arm about his waist and palmed his face with his free hand. Nudging his nose earnestly now, needing for the alpha to match his affections.

“I—I love you.” Stiles plowed through the reluctance of voicing his confession and claimed the wolf’s lips with his own.

Not a second later was Derek gripping unkindly to his arms and shoving him off, breaking their kiss to jump out of the bed and pace the room. Quivering hands corded through a dark mane all as Derek’s breathing fluctuated into harsh panting, his eyes appearing wild though not feral. Stiles could clearly see Derek was on the edge, but his wolf was dormant—this was Derek, his human half, overwrought.

“Please, Stiles, please forgive me.” Derek beseeched.

Stiles’ stomach churned at the fraught tone Derek’s voice took, wavering; hazel eyes gleamed, struggling to keep tears from building to the surface. Stiles was on his feet in a instant and making large strides to the alpha seeming at the brink of a nervous breakdown.

“Don’t!” Derek exclaimed holding his hands out in front of him in a show for the human to keep his distance.

“Derek, please.” Stiles entreated, his own emotions becoming a mess at seeing the man he loved
so distraught. “I just want to…hold you.”

“I know. I...please—just, not right now. I—I need to go.”

“What? It’s so late and cold out, where would you go?” Stiles didn’t like this. Derek was trying to leave him, to deal with his emotions alone where Stiles couldn’t comfort him, couldn’t be there to soothe whatever was distressing the alpha.

“I—I said those words because…I meant them.” Derek acknowledged, edging away from the human and closer to the door. “But I don’t want to mean them. I can’t.”

“What does that even mean?” Stiles felt like he was losing his mind with the alpha’s tendency to show him such affection, only for in that next moment, push him at an arm’s length. It was truly maddening.

“It means you are my husband and will become my mate, but after I’ve claimed you…we can never be more. This is a union—I don’t love you and I will never love you.” Derek voiced, firm and authoritative, storming out of the room and a moment later the front door swung open and thundered shut.

Stiles stood within the silent home as the alpha’s proclamations repeated themselves over and over again in an unwanted—undesired mantra. Stiles’ body shook with the power of the alpha’s declaration, knees overweighed by their burden and devastation. Stiles collapsed, knees buckling and slammed against the cool wooden floor.

This is a union—I don’t love you and I will never love you.

Union...a union...that was all they had. Why was it so hard for Stiles to realize this? What they did those nights spent in bed was bonding—bonding—a necessity to the wolves mating matrimony. That was all it was. That’s it, nothing more. Stiles knew this, logically, but his heart wanted more. The knowledge they were true mates had spurred him on his willingness to open his heart, because some part of him had hoped—even knowing it was hardly likely—Derek might love him. Derek knew they were true mates. He could have been secretly in love with him since he was fourteen and simply chosen to keep it to himself—for reasons unknown to Stiles, but that so evidently was not the case.

Derek didn’t love him and could never love him.

Abruptly, Dasher was at his side, leaping upwards, pawing at his face and whining. She must have awoken to their arguing or maybe she simply sensed his distress. When she began to lap at the silent tears carving a path along his face—only then did he realize he was crying. Stiles took hold of her, embraced her close and buried his head deep into her neck; Dasher’s yielding fur soaking up his tears.

It hurt. It really hurt. His heart, God, his heart. Now he understood what a breaking heart felt like. The pain, the soreness, it throbbed agonizingly so—there was no words to describe it. It was an overwhelming hollowness, the seizing anguish crushing—drowning him in the suffocating heartbreak.

There was nothing he could do—there was nothing he could use to soothe this misery. Although he wanted to blame Derek, hate the brute for hurting him, this wasn’t Derek’s fault. Derek had done nothing wrong—he’d approached Stiles and explained everything in detail—told him this was a marriage but not one of the heart.
No, this was Stiles’ fault—plain and simple. He’d been weak. He’d misinterpreted the alpha’s affections, comfort and compassion for love when really all it had ever been was Derek taking on the role of a mate. His wolf side would consider him kin and because of that, he would care for him. Stiles knew this—but only today did he fully come to grasp the true meaning of such.

This heartbreak was his entire fault and all he could do now was pray for the day he finally was claimed, so that after…he could try to piece himself back together. This love broke him to pieces, Derek’s words *broke him to pieces*—first for joy—though now it was an overwhelming sense of distress. This union had ruined him in ways he didn’t think he’d even be able to fix—not in the way he wanted to. He’d always be off, not completely back to himself, but he half prayed he could live in a flight of the imagination that made this okay even when he knew it never would be.
Stiles spent that night kneeling in the middle of the bedroom, curled in close and clutching onto Dasher. The borzoi nosed his face and Stiles attempted to focus all his attention on his pup rather than the heartache plaguing him—he was unsuccessful.

He’d never loved someone the way he loved Derek and in answer to his love Derek bestowed heartache and devouring anguish.

The floor was dead cold so when Stiles gained his bearings he rose and shifted to the bed—removing his robe and hid away under the sheets. Stiles scooped Dasher near and shared his pillow with her. Dasher nudged Stiles chin and tucked her head under his neck, falling asleep soon after. Stiles wished he could sleep just as peacefully as Dasher, but he couldn’t—his mind was constantly full of Derek—worried about his true mate.

Where could Derek have gone so late? Although he was certain the alpha could handle himself—he still fretted Derek might catch his death in the snow-coated mountains. Derek was a werewolf, so it was more than likely that Stiles’ fears were needless, but that didn’t mean it made Stiles care any less.

When there was a knock at the lodge’s door Stiles left the sleeping Dasher to answer it. He retrieved the robe and wrapped it about himself—the lodge was still unbelievably cold or was it his insecurities that made him feel such?

He hurriedly swung the door open, praying it were Derek and he’d forgotten his key, but his heart sank when he found Boyd carrying with him a large coal colored garbage bag. The werewolf held it up to him and simply noted it was the mountain ash Derek requested. Stiles took it—no sooner did he do so—was Boyd slipping back into his car and driving off without so much as a goodbye.

Stiles frowned at the car as it descended down the paved road and disappeared from sight. His frown swiftly fell away and concern replaced it—when from the edge of the forest emerged a frayed Derek, hands shoved deep in his pant pockets and pale—deathly pale.

Stiles dropped the sack of mountain ash, forgotten, in his rush to get to the alpha. He bounded down the steps and towards Derek, feet freezing in the snow but he hardly even noticed; his main focus was over Derek’s wellbeing.

“God, Derek, what were you thinking? It’s unbelievably cold out.” Stiles reprimanded, raising his hands up to palm the alpha’s face and found his skin was chilled to the bone—so unlike his naturally overheated body.

Derek huffed agitatedly and knocked the fretting human’s touches away, grasped at an arm and dragged the slighter back towards the lodge.

“What are you doing coming out in only a robe and no shoes?”

“What were you doing out here in a tux?” Stiles countered annoyed.

Derek growled with aggravation, shoving Stiles the rest of the way into the cabin and released him to carry the sack of mountain ash. Shutting the door, he set the sack beside the entryway and preceded his path back to their bedroom and Stiles made to follow.

Stiles wordlessly watched as Derek sat himself at the foot of the bed—toeing his polished and
snow soaked shoes and socks off then shrugged his tux coat onto the bed. Stiles wanted to brush
the bits of snow layering the brute’s hair and palm that frigid face. He wanted to warm the alpha’s
body with his own, but he didn’t think Derek would allow him to be that close to him now.

When Derek completed removing the rest of his garments and only stood in black boxer-briefs he
 glanced in Stiles’ direction, deliberating. Tossing his clothes and shoes on a desk chair he closed
the distance between them and stared down at the human, calculatingly.

The kind brute then raised chilled hands to grasp a hold of the slighter’s face and leaned down to
plant a chaste kiss to his left brow.

“I’m sorry.” Derek breathed, stepping into Stiles’ personal space and enfolded his arms around
him.

At last, Stiles felt Derek’s shields falling away as he’d taken the first steps in placing affections on
him and Stiles returned them in kind. He wound his arms about the alpha’s waist, running his
hands over Derek’s back, heating his form and rested his head on the alpha’s shoulder.

“You have nothing to be sorry about.” Stiles exhaled heavily, voice dull, weary of the heartache
that only seemed to double in the alpha’s presence.

“No, I do. I shouldn’t have said those things knowing the way you feel about me.”

Stiles choked back the emotions wanting to escape, blinking away the hurts and swallowed the
lump in his throat. Not being able to speak in that moment, Stiles buried his head fervently and
nuzzled the alpha’s neck.

“You’re a wonderful man. I’m grateful to have you as my mate. We just can’t be what you want us
to be.”

Stiles could feel his lashes dampen with voiceless tears and by the sharp intake of breath projecting
from Derek, Stiles knew the alpha scented it.

“I promise to always be at your side and provide you whatever you need. I will make this union
bearable for you.”

Stiles didn’t want this. He didn’t want Derek to feel obligated to right the pain of his heartbreak—
to offer him comforts for a marriage of convenience they agreed to uphold, together. He didn’t
want Derek’s guilt.

“I don’t want anything.” Stiles rasped thickly, pulling away from the brute’s arms then. Stiles kept
his gaze from meeting Derek’s, so that he wouldn’t see the pain, though Stiles was sure the wolf
could scent it.

“Please, there must be something you want? Would you like a cat, another dog, laptop, boat—
maybe a new car?” Derek offered.

“Derek.” Stiles sighed, wandering to the bed and sat himself where Derek had been a moment
earlier. Stiles was not even angry with Derek for attempting to buy his sorrows away. Stiles knew
this pain was his fault and Derek was attempting to appease him the best way he could—but all
Stiles wanted was Derek’s love and he’d been denied that.

“Actually….there is something I want.” Stiles voiced, so softly he was sure to the human sense of
hearing it would have gone unnoticed, but Derek wasn’t human.
“What?” Derek earnestly implored, stepping forwards until he stood before Stiles, erect and at the ready—prepared to do whatever it took to make Stiles’ needs met and hopefully relieve the guilt of his honesty.

Stiles caught Derek’s gaze, apprehensive, hands clutching to his knees with anxiousness, unsure if he could voice his need. If Derek could do this one thing for him—maybe the pain would lessen—maybe he could feel a sense of completeness with it—even when he knew it would be a falsehood too great.

“Tell me you love me.” Stiles’ eyes were open pools of desperation.

Derek stiffened, gaze hardening, features slackening with uneasiness and dread.

“Stiles—” Derek started regretfully.

“I know. I know you don’t love me—that you could never love someone like me.” Stiles chuckled then, not sure why. Maybe to right the pain that coursed through him at acknowledging those truths.

“Just…just this once…please. Even if it’s a lie—I just want to hear it once in my life.”

Derek edged away, stumbling in his rush to distance himself from the human and palmed his mouth to keep words from escaping—though what words they could have been were lost to Stiles.

“Please, Derek. Tell me—like you mean it. I—I promise to never say those words to you, again—I swear it. So please, please, Derek.”

Stiles knew he sounded desperate, pathetic, but he needed this. Derek was his husband and would become his mate. He would live the rest of his life beside the alpha—remain his partner for life, but never would they be able to love each other—Derek wouldn’t allow it. All he was asking for was three simple words, these simple words he’d call upon to remember on those days he felt at his lowest. Maybe it would somehow be able to appease the heartbreak for sentencing himself to a loveless marriage—just hearing it once could very well put him back together.

“Please.” Stiles murmured dependently.

Derek paced the room, restless, one hand still managing to palm his mouth. As Derek paced, his gaze would rise periodically to stare at the human, accusingly—as if Stiles had asked him to commit murder. Their gaze would break a moment later and Derek would gravel under his breath words lost to Stiles’ human senses and the hand used to muzzle away the alpha’s words.

“It’s not like you care about me—they are just words. I already know they mean nothing to you—so, please, just say it.”

“I—I can’t.” Derek burst, dropping his hand and stilled to face the human then.

“What do you mean you can’t?”

“I mean that I won’t.” Derek snarled. The uneasy demure of Derek shifted then to one of brooding ominous maliciousness as hazel depths glowered at him. “I won’t ever say those words.”

“Derek.” Stiles requested, but the alpha raised a hand to still his words and Stiles did so.

“I know you want to hear it, but I can’t say something I don’t feel—and it will only cause you further pain to hear them and know they mean nothing to me.”
“Still, Derek—”

“No, Stiles, no…I’m sorry. I really am sorry, but I can’t. I don’t deserve to say it.”

“Derek,” Stiles pleaded on deaf ears for Derek left him, entered the joining bathroom and shut the door behind him.

Stiles sat in the silent bedroom and listened to the showerhead hum with life and sighed heavily. Their conversation had come to a close. There was nothing he could do to right the wrongs of those mistakes that led him to this heart wrenching sorrowfulness, nor was there a way to convince the stubborn alpha to give him this one gift in the form a pardon.

Stiles slid back onto the bed and edged close to the slumbering Dasher, stroking her side and stared fondly at the pup as she shifted in her half slumbering state to edge closer. Stiles continued to focus on stroking his pup’s fur and not think about his heartbreak.

Once Derek finished showering and emerged completely bare Stiles avoided making eye contact and settled further against the bed. Derek slipped under the sheets behind him and tugged at his robe and Stiles allowed the alpha to remove it. Derek tossed the cotton robe over his shoulder and somewhere on the floor before jolting against the human.

Stiles shut his eyes and breathed in deep, attempting to calm his ragged breathing at the feel of a completely nude Derek.

“Why are you…” Stiles couldn’t even finish his sentence and instead buried his head in his pillow to silence his gasps and calm his breathing—Derek nuzzling his neck and mouthing at his sore tendon.

“My heat cycle will be starting soon—scenting like this will calm my wolf.” Derek explained. His hand dragged down the length of the slighter’s hip and thumbed the waistband of Stiles’ briefs. “You too.”

Stiles moaned into the cushion, breathing harsh as Derek shoved his briefs down and off. Gripping to his waist he yanked Stiles back and against his hard and exposed form.

“Calm yourself.” Derek advised, laving Stiles’ neck, arms curling about his chest and abdomen and holding fast.

“Not so simple.” Stiles shuddered and tucked his head further into the sheets attempting to smother himself.

“You’re such an ass.” Stiles hissed. “You’re always playing hot and cold, affectionate then indifferent, tender then cruel. I can’t take it. I’m losing my mind.”

“I’m sorry.” Derek whispered huskily, pressing gentle kisses about the length of the human’s neck—kindhearted touches of remorse.

Stiles frowned into the plush cushion and gripped at Derek’s arms, holding them in place for no matter how Derek hurt him, Stiles still couldn’t stop loving him.

Derek stilled his affection to nudge the human’s jaw with his nose—noiselessly seeking Stiles raise his head to meet his gaze, but Stiles stubbornly declined.

Derek exhaled a great heaving puff of air before pressing his forehead against Stiles’ shoulder and spoke words—words from a heart Stiles didn’t think the alpha could posses.
“You’re a man who wears his heart on his sleeve, who loves wholeheartedly and cares sincerely for those he calls friend. I—I’m not a good man, Stiles. I’ve done many things I regret. I’m… I’m not good for you.”

“Derek—” Stiles exhaled. He raised his head then and spun in the wolf’s arms to face him, but Derek gripped the nape of his neck and guided Stiles’ head to tuck under his chin and keep the human from meeting his gaze—suddenly unable to do so.

“I—I left Beacon Hills a long time ago—left my sister and because of it…I couldn’t protect her from my uncle. I—because of me, she’s dead. I abandoned my own sister because I was selfish and she’s gone now.”

“No… Derek, no.” Stiles uttered, pressing kind kisses to the beast’s neck before him, arms clutching to Derek tightly when he shook ever so lightly.

“I’m not a good man. My family is dead because of me—Laura’s dead because of me. My love… it’s not worth anything. You don’t want to love this wretched man.”

“Derek—” Stiles pleaded, needing the alpha to stop saying such falsehoods—the alpha hated himself so much—Stiles didn’t want to hear this—anything else but this.

“Derek…you are a good man—you’ve been so kind to me.”

Derek laughed then, a laugh full of antagonism, frustration and self-loathing. “You don’t know what I’ve done.”

“Tell me.” Stiles insisted.

Derek remained still, said nothing. He remained in complete silence even when Stiles stroked at his back soothingly—wordlessly prompting him to voice his thoughts, but they never came. Stiles finally pulled away to meet the alpha’s depths and found Derek’s gaze focused on the wall. He appeared absolutely tattered, at the end of his rope, as if at any moment he would just break down into nothingness, but Stiles knew he wouldn’t—Derek was too obstinate.

Stiles raised a hand to palm the alpha’s stubble cheek and dipped down to nudge Derek’s nose resolutely. Needing for Derek to respond in some way and he did, but not in the way Stiles wanted. Derek leaned back and away from Stiles’ touch, clamped his eyes shut and bowed his head—pressed his face harshly against his pillow as a strangled whine erupted from his lips. Derek’s body shuddered once more with silent cries.

“Derek.” Stiles cooed, his voice fluctuating with emotion. Pulling the larger as close as humanly possible and burrowed his head in the cavern of the wolf’s chin and chest—he nuzzled his wolf affectionately, comfortingly.

Something was seriously wrong with Derek—something had started to change with his emotionless alpha since Halloween. Derek wasn’t as emotionless as Stiles once believed the wolf to be. Up until Halloween, Derek seemed so brutish and moody, but now…there was so much pain and emotions bubbling to the surface. Derek was trying to keep it at bay, keep it away from Stiles. How could he when they were constantly together? How could Derek keep it from Stiles—his true mate?

“Tell me.” Stiles entreated, nudging the underside of Derek’s chin as the quaking alpha sobbed aloud and a sharp moan of misery escaped the cushion.

Stiles’ eyes fogged over with tears—even knowing Derek told him not to. The alpha howled then,
whimpering wounded noises, his arms gripping to Stiles tightly—scenting his mate’s distress.

“Tell me!” Stiles begged intently, “Tell me—tell me, please.”

Derek never told Stiles, never voiced those pains that cut so deep he was reduced to tears. Only bayed, howled and whimpered his sorrows, held the human as if he were his lifeline and trembled against him.

Stiles feared Derek would let these hurts fester and never open himself to the healing comforts Stiles so desperately wanted to present to his love. He feared Derek didn’t trust him enough to open the pains of his heart. But what Stiles feared above all else was; Derek would forever remain in the silence of the unknown and the torment it brought in its wake.
Heat and Phases

That night Stiles held Derek so securely—he felt each breathless huff of a sob, each vibration of a whine and every pulsing quake that tore through defiant nerves. Stiles laid soundless kisses about the wolf’s brow which comforted the beast. He cradled Derek’s head near his chest and shut his eyes when a rumble of a hum projected from his husband as Derek listened to the beating of his human heart.

They lay like that for, Stiles wasn’t sure how long. But alas—when Derek gained his bearings and seemed to comprehend Stiles held him much like a parent would their tearful child—he removed himself from Stiles’ welcoming arms and turned away from the human.

Stiles didn’t allow Derek’s flippant behavior to detour his comforts—knowing even if Derek didn’t say it aloud, he needed this. So Stiles layered himself against the alpha’s back, draped an arm about the wolf’s chest and another under a defined abdomen. Stiles palmed Derek’s flesh and stroked it relaxingly whilst he tucked his head at the brute’s neck and pressed chaste kisses there.

“You might be an ass, but I still care about you. Nothing you say can change that.” Stiles tried to reassure the mute alpha—show Derek he would never desert the wolf and would be there if he should ever wish to bear his soul. However, Stiles wasn’t so sure Derek trusted him enough to do such.

Stiles listened as Derek’s breathing calmed and evened out. When the brute fell into a deep slumber, Stiles tugged the alpha back and close to him. He enclosed a leg over Derek’s hip and curled himself against the wolf—linking their bodies as one and attempted to find the lull of sleep.

It didn’t come quick, but it came and when Stiles woke the following morning, he didn’t want to open his eyes to find the alpha gone. He didn’t want to, but he did. Dasher was the only one to greet him and Stiles really should have gotten used to this.

After Stiles showered and changed, he peeked through the living room window and found the alpha’s Camaro parked out front. Stiles could only assume the alpha had gone out for a walk as he’d done the night before—he hoped this time Derek had chosen to dress warm.

After spending a good few minutes searching the cabinets Stiles found the puppy chow and Dasher bounced eagerly at his side as he filled a bowl of kibbles. Once he fed Dasher, Stiles prepared himself green tea, scrambled eggs and toast. By the time he placed his plate and mug on the kitchen island and sat himself to eat the distant creak of the front door opening and closing filled his ears—Derek was back.

Stiles raised his gaze to the swing door of the kitchen when Derek entered and Stiles frowned by the sight—Derek was not dressed warm—he was hardly dressed at all—shirtless, in knee length black shorts and comfortable sport shoes.

“Are you trying to catch hypothermia?”

Derek glowered in Stiles’ direction as he made his way to the refrigerator where he retrieved a bottle of water and chugged the contents down. Only now that Derek stood less than four feet from him did Stiles take notice at how flushed Derek’s exposed skin was, blotches of red blossoming across his face, ears, neck and chest. A thick layer of sweat coating his entire body all as he panted—seeming to catch his breath—how was that even possible?
“Heat cycle has begun.” Derek huffed, swallowing the last of his water.

“Already?” Stiles was amazed, he’d thought it might take longer to come, but apparently Derek’s cycle was right on time—new years day bringing with it Derek’s heat—that’s just great.

Derek threw his empty bottle into the waste basket and rounded the corner to stand at Stiles’ side. Stiles choked out a noise between a whine and a screech when Derek wrapped him up in his arms and nuzzled his neck.

“Ew! Get off me, you’re all sweaty and I just showered!” Stiles whined, squirming in his seat and trying to detangle himself from the alpha’s sturdy embrace.

“I know. I don’t like it—you smell of soap.”

“Uh—hello—that’s the point. Aw, gross man, stop!” Stiles griped when the alpha’s damp mane soaked the underside of his chin.

“I need to scent you.” Derek proclaimed with purpose.

“Yeah, scent me all you want after you’ve showered.” Stiles gritted, scrunching up his nose when Derek leaned his full weight on the human and was practically crawling up onto his lap.

“You smell much better.” Derek hummed contentedly, lapping at Stiles’ neck.

“I smell like sweat.” Stiles grumbled, not amused, frowning at the patch of Derek’s visible head.

“Exactly.”

Stiles couldn’t see the jerk, but he could hear the smile in Derek’s reply.

“Well then if you’re finished using me as your towel, go shower!” Stiles demanded and smacked the alpha’s back, regretting it when his palm connected with more sweat and he wiped his hand against his jean encased thigh.

“Okay.” Derek murmured unmoving, pressing affectionate kisses about the length of his neck.

“Any day now.”

“Mmm.”

“You’re still not leaving.”

“Mhmm.”

“Derek.” Stiles puffed curtly.

At last Derek released Stiles of his hold and took a step back to sniff at his general direction. A wide grin set into place when the wolf scented something pleasing.

“I’ll be back.” Derek promised and Stiles couldn’t help but laugh at his phrase.

“Really Derek? ‘I’ll be back,’ come on, dude, you’re better than that.” Stiles teased and Derek rolled his eyes—having not intentionally chosen to use the popular phrase as to pay reverence to such a classic film.

Stiles grinned entertained when Derek left the room. He chuckled under his breath and took a bite
out of his forgotten breakfast then, figuring he should get something down before the
200 pounds or something werewolf attacked him for some more scenting.

Stiles assumed they were choosing to ignore the elephant in the room which happened to come in
the form of Derek’s confession and tears the night before. Stiles wanted to address it—find out
what was so painful Derek couldn’t even talk about it. Was it the massacre fire at the Hale manor,
was it his sister’s death he blamed himself for, or could it be something else?

Whatever it was—Derek didn’t want to tell Stiles. Why couldn’t Derek tell him? Did he think
Stiles wouldn’t understand him, would judge him? Stiles wouldn’t—even if what Derek did was a
terrible wrong, Stiles would never desert his brute—he’d support him, advise him and console him.
Stiles would always stand beside Derek, because Stiles knew that whatever pains and hurts there
was they were stronger together. If Derek needed Stiles to be the strength in their bond because he
couldn’t seem to find the power to do so—Stiles would take the challenge and foster Derek’s
anguish with love.

Stiles didn’t think Derek was the type of man to cry—he thought him more of a man who would
bury his emotions deep within and live the anguish in silence. Derek…the sobs—those pained
broken sobs that dispelled from him tore Stiles to shreds.

What was hurting Derek so great that he cried, not once, but twice? Stiles really wanted to know.
He was dying with all the secrecy.

Stiles settled on the living room couch and flipped the television on to a local news station. He
made it fifteen minutes into the news broadcast when Derek emerged, once more shirtless and this
time in a pair of gray sweats. The brute was at his side in an instant, wrapping his arms around the
slighter and nuzzling his neck contently.

Stiles exhaled heavily and squirmed in the alpha’s hold. An unmanly squawk broke free when
Derek manhandled him to sit between his legs. Derek pressed his back to the corner of the couch
and caressed and nestled the human from behind.

Stiles attempted to place his focus back on the television but found it was extremely difficult to do
so. Derek’s skin was slick with the water from the shower, his body ten times warmer than before
and he smelled of Stiles’ kiwis and apples shampoo—potently sweet—mouthwateringly tempting.

“So…so scenting?” Stiles struggled to voice, eyes half lidded enjoying the brute’s wondrous and
devious mouth lapping at his skin as if he were the most delicious thing on earth.

“Mmm.” Derek moaned eagerly, nipping at the junction of his neck and Stiles moaned in answer to
Derek’s own—though his sounded far more breathless and pitchy.

“How—how long does it last?” Stiles gripped to the alpha’s wrists enclosed about his waist.

“How—scentsing? Each phase of the heat cycle lasts for a day—that is, until heat strikes. Heat lasts until
we’ve mated thoroughly or to the end of the month.” Derek drawled serenely, content with loving
Stiles’ aching neck.

“Smell so good.” Derek rasped with need, mouthing bruised flesh and Stiles blushed at the feel of
Derek’s growing arousal.

“Derek.”

“Don’t worry. We won’t—not until February. It’s too risky now.”
“But you’re…”

“It’s fine. Just ignore it.”

“Wish I could.” Stiles snorted at the impossibility.

Derek smirked against Stiles’ neck and massaged his abdomen, the heat of the wolf’s body seeping past Stiles’ clothing and enflamed his flesh.

“Are you feeling better?” Stiles couldn’t help himself and regretted it when Derek stilled his movements and became tense.

“Let’s just forget it.”

“Derek…how can I forget your words and now this? Let’s talk about it.”

“I don’t want to talk about it.” Derek groused, pressing his forehead against Stiles’ shoulder and nuded the human’s shoulder blade with his nose—insisting Stiles conform to his desire.

“I want to talk about it.”

Derek didn’t respond and Stiles huffed agitatedly.

“We can’t keep ignoring things like this.”

Derek exhaled a trembling breath at Stiles’ observation and he felt the alpha nod his head with silent affirmation.

“Then talk to me. You know you can trust me, right?” Stiles pleaded, so exhausted from trying to get his brute to open up and always having Derek shove his attempts aside.

“I—I—” Derek stuttered.

Stiles waited for the alpha to voice his thoughts, fearful of trying to draw them out—not wishing to have Derek clamp up.

“I—I was young and foolish—” Derek began, pausing for a long moment as if fighting to get his words out. “—when I first met Kate Argent.”

Stiles paled then, his heart throbbing painfully—Kate Argent. He’d forgotten all about her. Derek…Derek and Kate…they were together. Stiles all at once wanted to get himself out of Derek’s arms; he wanted to get away from Derek’s confessions—fearful—deadly terrified what the alpha would say next.

Was the reason Derek always pushed him away—refused to even try to love Stiles—was because Derek loved Kate?

Stiles tugged at the alpha’s arms then, wanting out of his embrace.

Does Derek still love Kate?

Stiles struggled all the more, dug his nails into Derek’s inner wrists in his attempt for pardon—away from the painful realization Derek couldn’t love him because he was a man and not Kate. Derek tightened his hold around Stiles and continued—even when Stiles tried not to listen.

“I was young and she…she knew what my family and I were. She knew and she didn’t…but she still
accepted me.”

Stiles wanted out—out of Derek’s arms and out of this room—away from Derek’s words—confession of a love still so evident.

“We became close.”

Stiles knew Derek was involved with Kate and that after her betrayal he hated her—how could he not—but now he couldn’t help but wonder if he still loved her—even after what she did to his family. Stiles elbowed the alpha’s chest and let out and ‘Umph’ when Derek yanked him back and pressed him painfully tight against his chest.

“I trusted her. I let her in and she...she used it to get close to my family.”

Stiles stilled then, the depth Derek’s voice dropped as he spoke the agony of his words bled through.

“I thought her a friend and she thought me the enemy. She burned my entire family—murdered innocent people—werewolves and humans alike. My parents, my aunts and uncles, my cousins—children, Stiles, children—all dead—all dead because of me.” Stiles could hear the tears in Derek’s voice before he even felt dampness pelt his exposed neck as the alpha huddled close to him—seeking comfort.

Stiles sagged by the weight and gravity of Derek’s words. He knew that Kate started the fire that killed Derek’s family. Peter had been hell-bent on murdering everyone a part of the transgression. Now Derek was explaining the happenings through his perception—he and Kate were close, but they weren’t involved?

“You and Kate were friends?” Stiles needed to be sure he was hearing Derek clearly.

Could it be Stiles misunderstood the closeness Derek and Kate once shared—that the town’s people misinterpreted Derek’s ties to Kate?

Derek wordlessly nodded against his neck and breathed softly, “I trusted her.”

“And she used you to get close to your family—betrayed you.” Stiles deliberated.

Derek didn’t reply this time because he’d already made Kate’s betrayal evident and knew Stiles was formulating those truths aloud to solidify their impact.

Stiles didn’t know what to say, only what to do and so he coiled his arms over Derek’s, layering them together. He tipped his head back and nudged Derek’s ear with his nose, prompting the alpha to raise his head and meet his gaze. Derek did so and when their eyes met, Stiles’ heart melted at the sight of glazed over hazel—the ever determined brute fraught with keeping himself together.

Stiles raised himself up and claimed the alpha’s lips with his own in a chaste kiss—to which Derek met and deepened to a dawdling dance of tongues.

A choked noise escaped Derek’s mouth within their kiss and Stiles raised a hand to palm the wolf’s stubble cheek and loved the brute’s mouth—silencing that sob with affection. Stiles then shut his eyes knowing Derek didn’t want him to see his tears and focused on loving the alpha’s mouth the way he’d been rejected to love his brute with words.

When they broke their kiss, Derek buried his head once more against Stiles’ neck and nudged the human’s tendon and bruises, tenderly. Stiles rested his head against the wolf’s own, shut his eyes
and breathed calming breaths. Stiles allowed his brute of a husband to scent him to his delight and
twirled the pads of his fingers over the length of Derek’s arms in a show of ease and recognition.

“Thank you.” Stiles murmured and placed a kiss of gratitude on Derek’s dark mane.

Derek had opened up to him—though he knew there was still much the alpha kept hidden; the
matter of his sister and Peter, the fact they were true mates, the things he’d done and didn’t want
Stiles to know. For now this was enough—Stiles didn’t want to pressure the brute into telling him
more than he was ready to. But when the day came—if the day came—that those secrets were
confessed, Stiles would be there to offer his comforts to his damaged husband.
The phase of scenting went rather well—by rather well, Stiles meant rather infuriating. Derek wouldn’t leave his side for any reason. If Stiles wanted to retrieve a glass of water—Derek wrapped his arms from behind and the two were forced to waddle awkwardly to the kitchen. As Stiles prepared Italian sandwiches for lunch and tacos for dinner, Derek still kept him close. The alpha watched him prepare their meals from over his shoulder and would proceed to nuzzle his neck with purpose.

Stiles nearly went insane and had himself a world altering conniption when he tried using the restroom and the damn needy brute tried to follow him inside. But there was no way in hell Stiles was going to piss with the alpha trying to hold him. Instead, Stiles glared murderously at the door as he used the facility and heard the alpha pace the hall with agitated impatience.

The moment Stiles exited the bathroom he struggled keeping his balance as Derek latched himself onto him. Stiles started to refer to the brute as the leech after that. His leech spent all day caressing his flesh, nuzzling his neck and curling up close to the slighter wherever he went or whatever he did.

By the time they slipped into bed, completely bare, the Goddamn leech rolled on top of him and nestled in close and Stiles frowned, his left eye twitching just slightly—wishing that the scenting phase was over and done with already.

The next morning, Stiles once again was left alone. When Derek returned this time Stiles had just finished his breakfast and was curled up on one side of the couch watching the news. Derek appeared far more flushed than he had the day before. The alpha was shirtless once more and wearing sporting red knee length shorts and white running shoes. His body was drenched in sweat as he stumbled past with a grunt of a greeting and lumbered for the shower.

Derek returned, shirtless and dressed in thin cotton midnight blue capris to which Stiles raised a brow in question. With a heavy sigh Derek crawled onto the couch and collapsed with a strident ‘umph!’ resting his head on Stiles’ lap.

Stiles couldn’t help himself and curved his body to face Derek’s so he could soothingly pet the alpha’s mane. Derek sighed exhaustedly and Stiles could only surmise the alpha’s behavior had something to do with the fatigue phase of heat.

“Fatigue?” Stiles wanted to be sure.

“Mmm.” Derek hummed in concurrence and nosed Stiles’ abdomen. “Need to rest.”
“Why do alphas become fatigue?” Stiles contemplated tracing circles along Derek’s scalp with the pads of his fingers.

“It helps us preserve our strength for heat.”

“So why go walking?”

“Not walking—running.”

“Running, whatever. Why go running?”

“Burns off steam—calms the wolf.” Derek yawned, wrapping his arms about Stiles’ waist and pressing a kiss through the human’s shirt and against his bellybutton.

Stiles breath hitched at the act and palmed the alpha’s damp forehead.

“You’re so warm.”

“A part of the heat cycle—temperature rises as I near heat.”

“There’s nothing you can do to bring your temperature down?” Stiles couldn’t help but to worry about Derek, the man was burning up—his face was practically redder than a tomato.

Derek shook his head ‘no’ and inhaled the human’s scent with pleasure. “Only mating—but we have to wait until February.”

“I’m sorry this is so hard on you.” Stiles apologized, feeling blameworthy for Derek having to endure the heat cycle and suffer the whole month.

“It’s okay. I understand. Its better this way…mating during heat is…risky.” Derek murmured drowsily. “Want to sleep.”

Stiles smiled kindly at the drowsy brute while he continued his mindless stroking of the alpha’s atrous locks and watched Derek’s features soften when he fell into a deep sleep.

Stiles stayed seated on the couch as Derek’s pillow for several hours and during that time he watched the news, crime shows and romance comedy films. Every once in a while Derek would shift to sniff him with satisfaction or hum happily when Stiles started to stroke his head of hair again. When Stiles became hungry he took great care of shifting away from the alpha and went to the kitchen to prepare a meal.

He spent the rest of his day laying in bed and reading from his nook book. Derek wandered into the bedroom later that night, finding Stiles had fallen asleep with his nook lying on his chest and Dasher curled up near his side. Stiles woke when Derek took the nook away and laid himself against the human—placing the nook on the bedside counter. Derek removed Stiles’ clothing with little protest and after, he did the same for himself. Stiles sighed cheerfully, wrapping his arms and leg about Derek’s heated form and curled up close. It didn’t take long before the two fell asleep.

The next morning Stiles was stunned to find Derek hadn’t left for his daily run, instead he’d woken to the alpha trembling against him, breathing ragged. Stiles palmed the alpha’s face and met Derek’s hazel depths and found he was sweating profusely, moaning in a delirious state.

Stiles retrieved a cool cloth and patted the alpha’s heated face, but Derek didn’t much like that. His teeth chattered and he jerked away from the coolness of the wet cloth. He instead wrapped Stiles close to him and held on tightly as tremors ran through his body. The third phase of heat having
struck.

Stiles stayed with Derek in bed most of that day. He caressed his damp flesh, petted his raven locks and whispered words of encouragement. Derek hardly even spoke that day, only moaned with need—needing Stiles’ touch and comfort.

The next day Stiles woke up cold, his body huddled in close with the sheets curled in tight around him in a desperate attempt to keep warm. Derek was always warm and for the last few days he was unbelievably warm—blisteringly hot—his heat being a major part of what kept Stiles warm at night in the mountains and the reason he woke now without the heat overwhelming him.

So when Stiles woke and found himself alone in bed, he realized that the alpha’s absence was the reason for it. Derek was nowhere in the lodge and the fact his car was still parked out front left Stiles to believe the alpha went out for a walk/run or something along those lines. He retrieved a blanket from the bed, being sure not to disturb the slumbering Dasher and huddled close in on himself seated on the couch. His blankets bundled about him as he waited for Derek to return, worry creasing his features with tense keenness.

It was still so dark out and a glance at the clock read, 4:33AM. Stiles waited for Derek, but as the minutes passed and the brute had yet to return Stiles decided to go out and search for him. He changed into hiking boots, thick denim jeans, button up sweater and over that a hefty coat. When he exited the home, the chilled winds blew heavily and stung at his face.

Stiles didn’t know where to start his search so he took to following the trail of footprints that led from the lodge out some ways. Stiles noticed that the footprints held no grooves as those of serrated soles—which could only indicate that the subject had been barefoot. But why would Derek go out in this chilled weather with no shoes—it was suicide—that or Derek’s wolf could handle the frigid mountains. Still, Stiles felt overwrought with anxiousness and hastily followed the trail.

He hadn’t gone ten feet from the lodge when he halted in his steps. Derek laid head first on the snow, completely bare, clawing at the snow, panting heavily; large bouts of steam dispelled from slacken jaws, the alpha’s body trembling noticeably against the fresh snow.

“Derek!” Stiles exclaimed with alarm and made hast to kneel beside the wolf.

“What the hell do you think you’re doing?” Stiles hissed and shrugged off his coat to wrap it about Derek’s body.

“Don’t.” Derek groaned, burying his head in the snow and huffing large puffs of breath as if trying to catch his breath.

“So hot.” Derek gasped, shoving the coat off and suddenly Stiles came to realize in that moment Derek wasn’t clawing at the snow as much as trying to bury himself under it.

Placing a hand against the alpha’s cheek and another on his shoulder blade, Stiles raised a brow at the feel of him. Derek was burning up—so hot now, he was certain the wolf’s temperature was in the danger zone for a normal human, but yet again, Derek was not human.

“Is this…fever?” Stiles needed to understand.

Derek groaned again, drowsily nodded his head and let out a loud exhale of relief when he managed to shove the human’s coat completely off him.

“Derek, what can I do?” Stiles didn’t like this. He didn’t like that Derek had dragged himself out of their bed and into the snow to cool off from his fever—it worried him, Derek was trying to handle
so much because of Stiles’ unwillingness to mate during his husband’s heat.

“Nothing.” Derek gritted—contradicting his words when he unburied a sweltering hand from snow and grasped Stiles’ currently stroking his flushed cheek. He pressed it close to his mouth where the wolf sharply inhaled the human’s scent and whined with need.

“So hot.”

“You feel it.” Stiles breathed—no humor, only worry as he stroked the brute’s back with his free hand, settling comfortably on the cool snow next to the wolf. “Let me take you back inside.”

“No.” Derek deadpanned and tightened his grasp on Stiles’ hand. “Too hot inside.”

“We can put out the fire of the hearth and turn off the heater.” Stiles offered and Derek shook his head at the idea, nosing the snow.

“You’ll freeze.”

“I could use a blanket to keep warm.”

“You’ll still freeze. It’s better for me to stay out here, it feels nice.” Derek finally raised his eyes to meet Stiles’. Stiles was memorized by the beauty of Derek’s gaze; hazel with flecks of citrine and coquelicot, full of wildness and hunger—enough to stir something in the pit of his stomach and set his libido active.

Derek snarled frustrated then, releasing Stiles' hand and dug them deep into the snow, crunching them into compact balls of ice. When his hands released the snow to rise above him and bury in his nigrine hair, only then did Stiles see claws had disbursed and they now dug at his own scalp.

“Leave me.” Derek graveled in pain.

“What?” Stiles blanched; hurt his brute was being so callus towards him.

“Go, now. I—I can’t be near you and smell you when you’re… just go.”

“Derek.” Stiles huffed, running his hand over the alpha’s back insistently and frowned when Derek rolled away from his touch, clawing at the snow, trying to raise himself up but collapsed even before he could attempt to straighten his legs.

“Mountain ash.”

“What?”

“Use the mountain ash now. Border the bedroom and bathroom with it. You need to believe the ash will work or it won’t—believe in its power.”

“Derek, what are you saying?”

“There are bags of groceries I placed in the pantry—enough to last you several weeks, put it in the room and stay in there. My heat—it shouldn’t be long now.”

“I thought you said the phases would last a day each until heat?”

“I—it should, but… God help me—arousal—smell it all over you—go, now.” Derek whimpered
then, snuffing his nose into the cold snow as if to plug his sense of smell.

“Derek.” Stiles started, alarm building to the forefront as he came to realize the wolf was dead serious.

Derek raised his head, growled deep and feral-like as his depths shifted madder, “Hurry!”

Stiles was on his feet in an instant and bolting for the lodge. The moment he entered he snatched up the mountain ash lying at the side of the door and went for the kitchen. He retrieved the bags placed exactly where Derek directed him to look and stumbled in his rush to enter the bedroom. He threw the bags of groceries on the bed and unkindly woke Dasher from her sleep. She barked an agitated whine as she slowly shifted on the bed—still half asleep and practically glared at Stiles, but his main focus was enacting the mountain ash barrier.

Shuffling the coal colored bag near his chest he edged close to the entrance of the room. Pinching one corner of the bag he ripped at it and an instant later, black lustrous ash disbursed from the sack, as he walked the length of the door and walls, he focused all his conviction that this mountain ash would work, it would keep werewolves from passing—specifically the heated werewolf outside of the lodge.

The moment he finished bordering the room a howl sounded—but Stiles never lost focus, even when he heard a beast’s growl near the lodge. The moment he finished boarding the walls of the bathroom was the same moment the mountain ash ran out—the perfect amount to shield both rooms and keep him safe.

Dasher began barking then, gaze focused in front of her as she bounced on the bed playfully. Stiles thought her attention was focused on him, but as he entered the room further his gaze wandered to her line of sight and his grip on the empty bag fell then.

Derek stood before him—he knew it was Derek even when the alpha stood before him in its full primal state. A beast with the most scarlet and madder of depths, body bulking and pulsing with an enormous amount of energy—ready to let loose. Dark fur appearing as dark as night—thick and wispy, sharp and erect ears’ twitching as if hearing the precise moment Stiles’ heart leapt and kept speeding. Fear overwhelmed all of Stiles’ senses even when the alpha snarled in warning—as if the werewolf part of Derek were disconcerted with Stiles’ evident fear of him.

The beast took a step forward and closer to the trail of mountain ash and Stiles’ breathing accelerated—fearful he’d messed up somehow—that the mountain ash would fail him—that the alpha would claim him. Stiles so didn’t want his first time being claimed to become bestiality.

The beast took a step forward and closer to the trail of mountain ash and Stiles’ breathing accelerated—fearful he’d messed up somehow—that the mountain ash would fail him—that the alpha would claim him. Stiles so didn’t want his first time being claimed to become bestiality.

The alpha took another step so now he stood inches from the border and Stiles whimpered then—a fearful needing whimper. The very second after, the alpha’s ears lowered and turned back, its head lowering—lowering until its body crouched awkwardly low—lower than Stiles’ own hunched inward chest and shoulders. Almost as if the alpha sensed Stiles’ apprehensiveness and took on a submissive stance—a posture used to express apprehension in the alpha Stiles would never have believed if not for his eyes baring witness to the sight.

Even with the stance provided to ease Stiles’ uneasiness the alpha still made an attempt to near him, only it proved impossible as the brute’s hind leg pressed against an invisible barrier. The alpha took a step back then and lowered onto all fours and sniffed at the ground—snout inches from the mountain ash.

Stiles backed against the foot of the bed and collapsed onto a bag of lumpy groceries and besides a bouncing with enthusiasm Dasher who continued to bark at the seemingly unaware alpha.
When the alpha whined unhappily and pawed at the invisible barrier Stiles met the beast’s needing gaze with fascination. The barrier worked—but Derek—alpha Derek was upset with him—whining as if Stiles had kicked him.

The alpha backed further away and pressed its back against the wall of the hall, his lower hind legs stretching out in front of him and pressing into the barrier while its claws hung loosely at his sides and he fixed his gaze on Stiles through the doorway.

Stiles watched as the beast’s breathing calmed steadily and his features seemed to soften—all at once fur lessened, claws retracted and bulked muscles and snout dwindled down till Derek sat before him—humanized.

“Derek?” Stiles breathed as Derek’s head lolled and he sagged further to the ground, falling over on himself and against the ground with a loud thud and breathed in deep breaths—seeming to right himself.

“Derek.” Stiles breathed again, raising himself from the bed and crawling on his hands and knees to lay himself inches from the barrier and meet drained hazel depths.

“Derek…” Stiles pleaded, needing the alpha to answer him, tell him he was alright—though he didn’t look it.

Derek was beet red—almost violet—trembling and sweating copiously—depths dizzily attempting to focus their sights on one thing.

“Derek!” Stiles’ voice took on a note of insistency then and the alpha whined, palming the cool wooden floors of the lodge, legs kicking out weakly.

“Hot—so hot.” Derek wheezed and met Stiles’ gaze with desperation.

“What can I do?” Stiles insisted, needing to right the alpha’s discomfort.

“You.” Derek panted, desire and hunger filling his gaze before they slammed shut and claws grew to lash out at the wooden floor. “I… just… want… you, Stiles”

Stiles swallowed thickly, resting his head against a folded arm while his other inched to scarcely graze the edge of mountain ash with the pads of his fingers. “I know…” he whispered—he knew Derek’s needs for they were his own.
Waver

Derek lost consciousness soon after that. His breathing remained laborious even deep within a sleep state. Stiles retrieved the bed comforter before laying himself as close to the edge of the barrier as was possible. He stared at the slumbering alpha for long moments and as those moments progressed, light from the open blinds bled through and the bedroom was illuminated.

Stiles shut his eyes for only just a moment, but sleep instantaneously beckoned him from awareness and deeper still into the calmness of darkness—it was futile to deny its allure.

The next time Stiles woke it was by Dasher lapping at his nose. He groaned groggily and raised the sheets to cover his head and soon enough Dasher left him to his sleep. Several moments passed before he recalled the happenings of earlier that morning and sat up at once, the bed sheet falling to cluster about his waist.

His gaze locked on half lidded hazel and stared at the alpha that’d awoken God knows when. Dasher crossed the barrier in Stiles’ drowsed state and now curled herself against the alpha’s waist and nudged his hip contentedly, resting her head there.

Derek groaned with agitation and precariously shoved Dasher against the border and towards Stiles—willing the human to take the pup.

“So hot—can’t stand her body heat,” Derek groused and sagged back to the floor.

Stiles took Dasher and sat her on his lap where she curled contentedly, unaware of the alpha’s agitation.

“How are you feeling?” Stiles inquired, stroking Dasher’s mane to still the pup as well as calm his own anxiousness.

“Mmm,” Derek grumbled fatigued and palmed his glowing face.

“There must be something that can bring your temperature down. Maybe if you lay outside again—” Stiles contemplated—realizing the heater and fire from the hearth must be raising Derek’s temperature more than what was healthy for an alpha in heat. Stiles couldn’t turn off the heater from the bedroom—the fireplace wood would die out eventually, but not for several more hours. Derek didn’t look like he could stand much less have the energy to put out the fire from the hearth and switch off the heater—still he hoped the wolf had enough energy to get himself out of the warm lodge.

“It helped with the fever, but the heat—nothing can—nothing but mating,” Derek drawled, smacking the roof of his mouth with a dry tongue.

“How are you feeling?” Stiles inquired, stroking Dasher’s mane to still the pup as well as calm his own anxiousness.

“Mmm,” Derek grumbled fatigued and palmed his glowing face.

“Are you thirsty? I noticed some bottled water in the grocery bags,” Stiles started to rise to retrieve them when the alpha shook his head—denying the human’s offer.

“Won’t work—heat is…different.”

“How so?”

“Body…” Derek huffed breathlessly and dug claws into the wooden floors once more. “Body heat—so—so—ugh, just…water, won’t help this.”
“I feel terrible,” Stiles conveyed. “Because of me this is so much harder on you.”

“I can handle it,” Derek whispered huskily, shutting his eyes and focusing on his breathing.

The silence lengthened as Stiles stared warily at the alpha whilst the beast breathed in measured breaths.

“What’s it feel like?” Stiles’ curiosity flared.

Derek moaned as if aroused by the very sound of the human’s voice and Stiles blushed when he saw just how hard the alpha became.

“Feel you—can hear you breathe…each pulse of your heart…every harsh swallow of saliva—smell your fear—scent myself on you—so strong—want to touch you—mark you—claim you as mine. Mine,” Derek shuddered at the thought of possessing Stiles and opened his eyes to pierce the human’s gaze with one of yearning.

“You’re mine.”

Stiles swallowed thickly and he nodded his head without thought—he was Derek’s, no question about it—pure and precise to the alpha’s statement, for the beast knew truth and Stiles affirmed such though he needn’t do so.

“Always,” Stiles murmured, heart pulsing speedily then and Derek groaned, rolling onto his back and revealed himself further for the human’s viewing pleasure.

“I want you,” Derek whimpered, chest heaving tattered puffs of torrid air—Stiles strangled out a noise closely resembling an echoing whimper.

“February—I promise you—you’ll have me then,” Stiles proclaimed steadfastly.

Derek whined distressed at the inadvertent rejection and palmed his damp face with vacillating hands.

“Smell you everywhere—can smell you on me. I can’t—can’t—can’t—take it!” Derek sobbed crazed and thrashed his head about as if to rid the aching heat—it didn’t seem to alleviate the wolf’s hankering.

Stiles lowered his gaze to the alpha’s arousal—perfectly crafted—thick—flushed and swelled—needing him—but Stiles couldn’t give in—no matter how much he wanted to.

“Let’s talk about something else,” Stiles squawked unmanly-like and deliberated—any topic would do at this point—but suddenly his ADHD brain couldn’t formulate a one—all he wanted was to touch Derek and be touched in return.

Stiles’ libido spiked and his arousal became stimulated—Derek quivered in response, nostrils flaring and whimpered urgently.

“Ethnicity, what is your ethnic background?” Stiles asked the first question that popped into his mind.

“Swiss and Italian,” Derek graved through his hands.

“I’m part Irish from my father and part Italian from my mother,” Stiles expressed and noted that Derek carried many Italian attributes—what with his dark hair, olive skin and hazel eyes.
“What is your astrology sign?”

“What?” Derek barked restlessly. “Who the hell cares about that?”

Stiles frowned—he cared. “When were you born?”

“September 11th,” Derek glared tensely.

Stiles stilled at this. “Really?”

Derek didn’t reply and so Stiles took that as a yes. “Damn, that sucks.”

“It doesn’t matter—I don’t celebrate my birthday.”

Stiles silently did the math and laughed unreservedly. “Oh my God, that makes you a Virgo! I was born on August 26th, which also makes me a Virgo. No wonder we don’t get along, we were born on the same house planet.”

Stiles couldn’t stop his laughter then—even when Derek stared angrily in warning for the human to shut up.

“We are too much alike—that’s why we can hardly stop fighting.”

“Ugh,” Derek protested, rolling onto his side to face Stiles and curled his arms over his head to hide in shadow.

“Tea or coffee?”

“Coffee,” Derek projected through his arms.

“Tea—obviously.”

“What do you remember about your high school prom?”

“Didn’t go.”

“Really, why?”

“Didn’t want to.”

“I went, but I mostly just hung out with Scott and Allison. We left early to join some friends at a Mexican restaurant after—it was nice enough.”

“You didn’t take anyone?” Derek peeked through his arms then.

“What? Like a date? No,” Stiles replied with a shrug of his shoulders.

“Are you mostly optimistic or pessimistic? Why did I even ask a question I already know the answer to?” Stiles teased, smiling brightly at his little jab.

“Shut up,” Derek snipped.

“What shocks or offends you?”

“You.”

“Hey!” Stiles couldn’t stifle the abrupt and amused chuckles that projected from out of him at the
wolf’s witty comeback.

Derek smirked, his mouth visible as his arms jerked up and his body shook mildly with silent laughter. Stiles answered his smirk with an honest grin—this was good, Derek was focusing on something other than his desire for him.

“Do you like children?” Stiles had to know—his questions taking on a serious note, but he wanted children—even with a marriage of convenience. He wasn’t saying he wanted children now, but in the future—Stiles would like it if they could have children.

Derek raised his head and stared calculatingly at Stiles, even exhausted as he was.

“Why do you ask?” Derek countered, voice void of emotion—giving nothing away.

“I—I was just—I want children. I want children with you.”

Derek’s gaze broke away then to tuck his head back against his arms—shielding his features from Stiles’ view.

“Shut up—don’t say stupid things.”

“It’s not stupid to want to have children—to want to have children with you,” Stiles amended petulantly and he didn’t give a damn—the brute couldn’t shut him up with mountain ash protecting him.

Derek huffed loudly in his arms as his body relaxed—having been tense without Stiles noticing.

“I…don’t hate them,” Derek confessed.

“Do you want to have children…with me?”

Derek didn’t reply for a long while, but then at last he did. “I—I’m not sure.”

“What does that mean?”

“Ask me when you’re ready and we’ll see.”

Stiles wouldn’t pressure the alpha anymore for a clearer answer—the matter of having children wasn’t one to take lightly. When he was ready—then he would talk with Derek and see where the conversation led them.

“Do you believe in the existence of soul mates?”

Derek hitched an audible breath then and said nothing. Lay deathly still and Stiles began to wonder if he’d gone too far, but he needed to know—know if Derek believed in the possibility.

“I—I guess,” Came the ever soft reply.

Stiles swallowed past the nervousness that plagued him then, for the next question could possibly break him—destroy the bond they had spent months strengthening.

“I—I—Lydia told me that we—we’re true mates. What does that mean?”

Derek still wasn’t moving; his head buried in his arms. The alpha was content with keeping his voice and thoughts to himself.
“I’ve known for some time now, but what I can’t figure out is why you didn’t tell me. Why you never thought it important to bring up. I’m not upset with you. I just want to know why you never thought to tell me.”

“It’s…complicated,” Derek spoke with much care. “I…’ve known since I was fourteen.”

“Why didn’t you tell me?”

“It’s not like I didn’t want to…I’ve wanted to for so long—but you were young—my family thought it best I approach you after you turned eighteen. Laura—she kept an eye on me and made sure I didn’t let my animal instincts to claim you overpower human logic. I—for many years, I watched you.”

Stiles’ first thought was Derek was a total creeper, but gradually he took in the alpha’s words and their impact. Derek had known since his youth—all those chance meetings—being in the same place at the same time—all of it was intentional. Derek…he’d known and he’d watched him, but why? Could it be…the alpha harbored feelings for him even then—that all the affection, compassion and possessiveness Derek exhibited now stemmed from his childhood. Did Derek recognize Stiles as his true mate and because of that formed a connection to him all those years ago?

“Then the fire happened—I blamed myself and left Beacon Hills…left Laura. I was unable to protect her from my uncle. I—I wasn’t there for her when she needed me the most. Peter…he...”

“What about Peter Hale?”

“He knew—all my family knew—they could scent you were intended for me and he…because I was the last of our family left—he wanted my allegiance and threatened to have you killed if I didn’t conform…so I became a part of his pack to ensure your safety.”

“So…all those years you spent a part of his pack was to ensure I was never harmed—so that’s why Peter never tried to kill me?”

Derek tipped his head in conformance and even with the wolf’s bordering arms Stiles could still make out the action of concord.

“But I still tried to find any opportunity I could to kill him…and I failed…terribly.”

“What are you talking about—we defeated him.”

“That wasn’t the first attempt,” Derek acknowledged dully.

“But you still won out in the end.”

Derek didn’t say anything after that, just huddled in close to himself and shadowed his face further while he attempted to fall asleep.

Stiles watched him shrewdly. Something was off with the brute. Derek was hiding something from him still—even after opening up so much—there was still something the alpha concealed.

“Peter offered me the bite…to become his mate. Did you know this?” Stiles’ brows furrowed accusingly and Derek tensed—a thunderous growl projecting deep within the alpha’s chest, growing with intensity until Stiles felt the pulsing vibrations strum against the floorboards and thump in waves over his being.
“He did it as a threat—sensing my silent contempt for him, so he—but you rejected him and he could do nothing to claim you without your permission. He knew if he did, I wouldn’t rest until I ripped his throat out with my bare teeth.”

Stiles swallowed dryly then—the volatile hatred rippling from out of Derek was so thick and overwhelming Stiles felt weighed down by it.

“You—” Stiles choked out, pausing to clear his throat and tried speaking once more. “You…ca—care that much about me?”

Derek’s arms shifted and folded then, slipping under his neck to prop his head much like a pillow would. His temple rested on the inner part of his wrist and at last he met Stiles’ gaze. Hazel depths soft—open—revealing a thousand flickering emotions—yet none remained long enough to name.

“You’re my true mate,” Derek murmured amorously.

“What does that even mean?” Stiles sighed, so exhausted of trying to understand the bond that linked them together.

“It’s not something easily explained—you’re…special…specially made for me and I you.”

“Derek…that makes no sense,” Stiles sullenly whined, helpless, damn well near close to sobbing like an upset child. Why couldn’t everybody be direct? Say what they mean without the frills and roundabouts; a pear is sweet, an orange is orange, the moon has craters—so on and so forth.

“Stiles,” Derek huffed breathily; seeming weary from their extensive conversing. “You asked me if I believe in soul mates.”

“Yes,” Stiles answered though Derek hadn’t stated his recollection as a question but rather an observation.

Closing his eyes, the wolf’s breathing evened out—seeming to drift in and out of a half sleep state. Stiles felt chills run down his spine—goose flesh appeared on his arms—following the thought process of Derek’s words—he hoped his suspicions were leading him down the right path and to the ultimate conclusion—desiring for his wish to be truth.

“Derek!” Stiles persisted without delay, needing the alpha to snap out of it and finish his thoughts. Derek’s left brow rose as if attempting to rouse his worn out form and finish his train of thought.

“I know…” Derek mumbled, legs sprawling out and tipped his head back as he brought his arms closer to his chest—attempting to settle into a relaxed position to better rest.

“Derek!” Stiles complained, nearing the barrier, leaning to the very edge and ogling at the abruptly yawning brute.

“Have known since fourteen…you’ve…”

“I’ve…I’ve what—damn it!”

“Mine…”

Stiles eyes narrowed and he half contemplated if he could punch the alpha and get back to the sanctuary of his mountain ash barrier before Derek retaliated.

“I’m your what?”
“Mine…my…soul mate,” Derek exhaled, body slackening as sleep took hold of his heated form.

Stiles slumped heavily on his bum and he lay himself onto his back—staring at the ceiling in complete amazement. Derek… Soul mates? He—true mates were in fact the equivalent to soul mates. Derek—since fourteen he’d known—seen Stiles as his.

A vivacious enthused snort dispelled from Stiles, followed by another—deeper now—then thicker—then piercingly high—then he was laughing excitedly. Dasher seeming to sense the energy unfurling from out of Stiles pounced onto him. Stiles happily embraced his pup close to his chest and melting jovial heart.

Derek cared—he really-fucking-cared! Stiles’ eyes shimmered with mirth—Derek valued him—viewed him as his true mate—soul mate. That meant something—chyeah! That meant for seventeen-fucking-years Derek had viewed him as his soul mate—there had to be feelings there—Derek had to at least like him—right???

He had to have developed stronger feelings then liking after seventeen years. All his affection, concerning over his wellbeing, comforting and possessiveness had to mean infinitely more than caring or liking—it had to mean love—there had to be love there. Derek had to love him.

Stiles’ tears burst free at the thought—sliding past his temples and into his fuzzed hair as he nuzzled the yipping eagerly pup’s neck and laughed all the more. Stiles was happy—he was honest to God happy! The happiest he’d been in many years—since the loss of his father. Stiles was filled with a need to shout his joy—though it really wasn’t the best time for that—what with a slumbering alpha a foot and a half away. Stiles could only tremble with noiseless laughter—gasp breathlessly and cradle his ball of warmth that came in the form of his baby, Dasher—embrace her with all the joys of his heart.

He might be a little hysterical—God, how wonderful it felt to be just a bit mad with hysterics after months—years of living in a constant state of albatross.
Chapter 32

Derek stumbles across a book waiting for Stiles. The book details a fantasy world where Stiles is a heroine and has adventures. He discovers a large amount of violence in the book and believes Stiles has been harming himself. Derek converses with someone and discovers its part of a series that showcases Stiles falling in love with a character much like Derek. Eventually Derek confronts Stiles and they become an item. Derek reads the entire series and later Stiles gets them published.

If you know this story, please please please let me know.

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End Notes:

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After Derek fell into a deep sleep—his raised body temperature doing a number on him and Stiles calmed from his high, he rummaged through the bags of groceries. Stiles frowned when he found the bags were stuffed with junk food, all types of jerky and bottled water. But then again what did Stiles expect the wolf to get him—he needed food that wasn’t perishable. Still, he had to give the wolf credit; Derek purchased a hefty amount of fruits.

Stiles took out a bag of cheddar pretzels and a pear to snack on and gave Dasher some kibbles from a bag of puppy chow. There was no bowl—so Dasher would have to make do with eating on the floor—not like the pup cared anyways.

Stiles glanced to the still slumbering alpha and sighed dramatically. When the hell would he wake up? Stiles knew part of his impatience had to do with the need to inquire more from the suddenly vocal alpha. He could only assume Derek’s candidness had something to do with his heat. Derek was almost certainly dog-tired and so much in need he didn’t really care what he said. That—or he was delirious from heat.

Stiles retrieved his nook and read some. He attempted to read, he should say, but it proved impossible when his mind would stray to thoughts of true mates being the equivalent to soul mates. What did that mean for Derek? Did Derek really have feelings for him? This was going to drive him crazy!

He gave up on the nook and switched his focus on his cell. He texted the gang to see how their week was fairing; Danny and Jackson were busy spending time together and couldn’t really bother texting. Stiles didn’t have to be a rocket scientist to know what that meant.
Allison and Scott were heading to the theater and texted that they would call him at a later time—Stiles highly doubted that. Allison and Scott were always spazzing out and he just knew they would forget.

Lydia was at home, dedicating her day to watching sappy romance chick flicks and Stiles so badly wished to join her. Instead, he was barricaded in the bedroom for the remainder of Derek’s heat. Lydia thought it was the most amusing thing she ever did hear and Stiles texted her a lengthy slew of curses.

Lydia didn’t seem all that bothered and thought this was for the best—an alpha’s heat cycle was terribly painful.

This got Stiles’ full attention. He shifted to the foot of the bed, placed a pillow under his chest and bent his arms about one end of the pillow. Lying comfortable there with Dasher curled up against his side, he began texting once more.

**Stiles:**
What do you mean painful?

**Lydia:**
You don’t know?

**Stiles:**
If I knew, I wouldn’t be asking.

**Lydia:**
What kind of idiot marries an alpha and doesn’t do the research?

**Stiles:**
The kind who didn’t think alphas went through heat! How the hell was I to know that?

**Lydia:**
Really? Whatever—so you know about the five phases?

**Stiles:**
I’m trapped in a barrier of mountain ash—duh.

**Lydia:**
Is that sass I detect from my iPhone?

**Stiles:**
Maybe.

**Lydia:**
You know… I think I would much rather continue watching my romance film—Hugh Jackman is too dreamy to resist.

**Stiles:**
Oh for the—I’m sorry, Lydia. My beautiful fiery redhead, please-please, my dear love, tell me.

**Lydia:**
L.o.l
Aw, such a sweet talker. Be still my heart!

Stiles:
Yeah-yeah, get on with it.

Lydia:
*Sigh*

There are the five stages of heat. When the fifth stage hits; the alpha will become fatigued, feverish and in need of their mate. They might shift during the transition from fever to heat. It really depends on their mate and if they are...yah know—in the mood for—tra-la-la-la.

Stiles rolled his eyes at this—imagining the redhead giggling with amusement.

Stiles:
It’s already happened. Now get on with it, woman!

Lydia:
Don’t you exclamation point me, mister!

Stiles:
OH. MY. GOD!

Lydia!

Lydia:
ROFL!!!

Stiles:
I swear...when I get out of this barrier I’ll...I’ll...

Lydia:
You’ll what? Don’t think you can handle my feisty werewolf self, hon.

Stiles:
......

Lydia:
That’s what I thought.

:D

Stiles:
I’ll tell Derek you put the moves on me. His ass will definitely be able to contend with you.

Lydia:
You wouldn’t dare.

Stiles smirked evilly—though he knew he’d never do it. He could still use it as a threat to get what he wanted.

Stiles:
Try me.
Lydia:
Do it.

I’ll just have to tell Derek you asked me for the stripper’s number.

Stiles paled and hurriedly texted back.

Stiles:
I never asked you for his number!

Lydia:
Derek doesn’t know that.

Stiles:
He’d know if you were lying.

Lydia:
I know how to lie without causing my heart rhythm to fluctuate.

Was that even possible? If it was and Lydia knew how to do it, his ass would be in it, deep.

Stiles glanced warily at the slumbering alpha before him and swallowed thickly.

Stiles:
Fine, you win. I give. Now, please tell me.

Lydia:
Say sorry.

Stiles:
Lydiiiiia!

Lydia:
Say it.

Stiles:
Oh my God. How are we even friends?

...

I’m sorry, from the bottom of my heart.

I’m truly, sincerely sorry.

Lydia:
:

See, nothing hard about that!

Stiles:
Lydiiie-ie-ie-iiiiia!

Lydia:
After the shift from fever to heat has been made, the alpha will need to begin copulation with its mate. If for whatever reason the alpha does not have a mate or is unable to claim their mate, they
will begin to exhibit signs of fatigue, fever, anxiety and aggression. These signs will continue for the duration of their heat cycle or until they can copulate with their mate.

Stiles read the text several times in a row. So that’s why Derek appeared so feverish and fatigued. Stiles couldn’t help but feel all the more guilty for causing the alpha to suffer so much.

**Stiles:**
Lydia, is there anything I can do to help Derek...without...you know...doing *that*?

**Lydia:**
Sorry hon.

Stiles frowned and glanced once more to the alpha. Derek was so flushed—even from where he lay, he could see the droplets of sweat layer the alpha’s body. This was his entire fault.

**Stiles:**
You know...when I get out of this room and back to Beacon Hills, I’m going to make you suffer.

Stiles swore—needing to take his frustration out on someone.

**Lydia:**
What? Why me?

**Stiles:**
Because you were mated with an alpha and failed to tell me what January meant for them.

**Lydia:**
:)

Caught that, huh? Damn, and here I thought you were rather slow.

**Stiles:**
Lydia...you’re a horrible friend.

**Lydia:**
Aw, don’t say that love.

:(

You know I love you.

**Stiles:**
Not enough to save me from a possible case of bestiality.

**Lydia:**
Psssh!

**Stiles:**
It’s not funny!

**Lydia:**
Lo.l

**Stiles:**
I hate you.

**Lydia:**
LMFAO!

**Stiles:**
Really hate you.

**Lydia:**
ROFL!!!

**Stiles:**
Really, really, hate you.

**Lydia:**
I love you too.

**Stiles:**
I didn’t mean it in a, ‘I love you hate you’ way. Not this time. This time you went too far.

**Lydia:**
Come on. So what if it did happen when Derek was in his primal form? He wouldn’t hurt you. All you have to do is whimper and Derek would fall to his knees if it pleased you.

**Stiles:**
What are you talking about?

**Lydia:**
Don’t tell me you haven’t noticed.

**Stiles:**
……

**Lydia:**
You really are an idiot!

**Stiles:**
Hey!

**Lydia:**
An alpha—no matter how powerful, if mated with their true mate automatically becomes the submissive partner in their relationship.

**Stiles:**
Derek is far from submissive—he’s a moody, pushy, possessive brute.

**Lydia:**
Of course he is! He’s an alpha.

**Stiles:**
You make no sense.

**Lydia:**
Because Derek is an alpha, he’s the most dominant of his pack—territorial to the extreme. He will
exhibit signs of an alpha in your relationship, but he will give up that dominance without hesitation if you become frightened or if you whimper.

**Stiles:**

Whimper?

Now that Stiles thought about it, every time he became frightened—really frightened and whimpered Derek backed down—even that morning as he tried entering the room—he’d lowered himself lower than Stiles—a show of submission.

**Lydia:**

Whimpering—it will appeal to the wolf side of Derek—both his wolf and human self will give in to your will. So, if you really wanted human/alpha Derek to stop or give in, all you have to do is whimper. Because you’re his true mate, he can’t harm you. It’s physically impossible for him to even try.

Stiles was astounded. Derek really was the bitch. He’d do anything to please Stiles’ will. Every time—**every single time** he whimpered, Derek gave in and backed down because Stiles wanted it so. So this was another part of what it meant to be the true mate of a werewolf? They could never harm or upset their mate. Every time Derek said something to hurt him—he always apologized and tried to make it right—just as he’d done the first night they came to the lodge.

**Stiles:**

So true mates are like soul mates?

Stiles needed to confirm all that he believed true—Derek wasn’t waking anytime soon, he might as well confirm such with Lydia.

**Lydia:**

Yes and no.

**Stiles:**

What do you mean?

**Lydia:**

The idea of soul mates is that one soul was split into two. True mates are a little different. Werewolves can scent them. They can distinguish their other half. Unlike humans, if a werewolf finds their soul mate/true mate, their behaviorisms alter to suit their mate, human or werewolf.

Werewolves love power by nature and rely on their animal instincts. Once they have distinguished their true mate, they become driven by animal instincts to claim them. After they have claimed or been claimed by their mate, they give full power to their partner and follow their will.

Stiles contemplated Lydia’s text with great consideration and deliberation. So werewolves could detect who their soul mates were by smell—the counterpart to their own scent—together harmonizing and mixing as one. Derek had known since youth. They were already partially bonded. Stiles claimed Derek as his—one part of the wolves mating matrimony complete.

Derek knew this—all about Stiles being his soul mate and chosen him as his mate. Could it be that Derek didn’t chose him just because he was the Sheriff of Beacon Hills, but because he wanted to be mated to his true mate, married and tied to him forever more?

**Lydia:**

This has been fun, but Hugh Jackman is shirtless and I’ve got to watch this.
Stiles couldn’t help but to laugh at Lydia’s girlishness.

**Stiles:**
*Alright—have fun with that.*

**Lydia:**
*Oh, I will.*

;)

**Later, hon.**

Stiles had much to mull over. He was legally married to Derek—his true mate and in a few weeks would be mated and wolf bound to the alpha. His life was forever changed. Nothing ever would be the same. He would become second in command to the largest werewolf pack—hundreds of thousands of packs tied to Derek and now to Stiles. If Derek were to pass on before him—he’d be the next to take over the packs left to him by Derek.

Stiles frowned with worry. How could he possibly handle all of that power alone? Derek was always leaving to handle *alpha business*. Stiles didn’t even know what alpha business it was that Derek handled—and what if Stiles died before him—what about after they both passed away—who would take control over the packs then?

There were many things Stiles would like to ask Derek, but the stupid alpha was always blocking him out, being elusive and refused to open up. But as it was now, Derek was open—far more open than was normal for the brooding bastard. Now was the best of times to question Derek—the man’s feverish mind was consumed with thoughts of mating—logic for the moment was out of reach and this was his chance to attain all the answers he’d ever desired in knowing.

Stiles stared at the panting mass of sweat alpha and felt excitement unfurl at all the possibilities and knowledge he could—would abstract from the heat consumed werewolf.
A graveled deep resonating groan sounded. Stiles immediately sat up in bed and peered towards the entrance.

Derek’s face scrunched up in soreness—shut eyes squinted tight, nostrils flaring as he inhaled stridently and exhaled staggered breaths. The alpha’s body coiled in on itself in pain.

Stiles was kneeling beside the barrier before his mind fully caught up with his body.

“What is it?” Stiles rushed, sensing the alpha’s distress.

Derek whimpered keenly—eyes opening then and pooling over with misery.

“I can’t take this heat.” Derek wheezed; sweat trailing across his neck and joined at the hollow indention of his mid-clavicle.

“I’m sorry.” Stiles acknowledged—aspiring for nothing more than to caress the alpha’s rosy face and wipe at the sweat layering his forehead, though knowing it to be impossible.

“Just want to touch—mark you.” Derek murmured and palmed the barrier, disappointed when he was unable to feel his human.

“You will.” Stiles avowed.

Derek bowed his head and pressed it against his other arm. The hand palming the barrier slipped then and rested near the line of mountain ash, though never touching the divider.

“I want you. Break the barrier.” Derek’s claws retracted then—an open demonstration of his control. “Please, I’ll be careful. I promise you. I’ll do my best not to shift.”

Stiles gawked at the alpha before him—flushed head to toe, trembling and sweating profusely. In heat and coveting Stiles with an animalistic hunger—he knew this, but still…this was Derek talking—Derek’s wolf, but still Derek…Derek with vibrant hazel depths, seeming to be devouring him whole.

God, Derek was so hard. Stiles couldn’t look away, though he knew he should. Derek’s well endowed arousal burgeoning in length, pulsing with needing release, pressing against a sculpted abdomen, the head glowing ever red.

Stiles’ libido set in motion at the sight and Derek quivered in a mess of sweat—hazel depths transitioning to piercing scarlet.

“I want to fuck you.” Derek rumbled, claws suddenly bursting forth and dug deep into wood and slashed with untamed turbulent vigor.

Stiles shot up from the ground and paced the room, thrashing his head from side to side, resolutely. He wouldn’t give in, no matter how much mini Stiles was pleading with him to do so.

Stiles huffed large bouts of air and jumped several times mid-pace, shaking out his limbs as if to cool down and rid the desire to break that blasted barrier keeping Derek from him.

“Okay! Ooookay! Okay! Ooookay! This—this can’t happen.” Stiles stammered, rubbing at his face
with a jittery hand.

Derek whimpered with discontentment and audibly hacked at the floorboards with enormously extended claws. His left arm twisted oddly and snapped. The alpha roared a human cry of agony as he forcefully realigned his arm and snapped it back into place. Derek was struggling to remain human.

“I know. I know.” Stiles attempted to appease the distraught alpha and stepped closer to the barrier. Realizing what he was doing, he furthered himself away from his husband and whined in distress—his mind raging a war with itself.

“Stiles! I’ll give you anything you want—just—break-the-barrier!” Derek demanded—fraught. The alpha’s eyes flashed from scarlet to hazel many times before reverting to their warmest shade; humanized hazel.

Stiles groaned with frustration, swayed, leaning forwards and towards the entrance of the barrier and back—closer to the bathroom, contemplating locking himself away from the in need beast.

“Aaah—I want to, but ugh!” Stiles complained—a throttled noise bursting forth and rebounded onto his knees. He bounced on the tips of his toes and gaped at the alpha before him. Stiles’ arms hard-pressed against his knees in an awkward fetal position and he balanced himself on his toes.

“You can control yourself?” If Derek told him he could and make Stiles believe his lie, he might just convince himself of that lie and break the barrier.

“I can.” Derek lied and Stiles knew it. There was that brief pause before he answered and his eyes shifted just so.

Stiles whimpered and palmed his face with both hands this time. “No you can’t.”

“I can try!” Derek amended, but that wasn’t good enough.

“That’s still not a solid ‘yes’. You could lose control. Unintentional as it might be; you could lose yourself in the act and hurt me, in spite of the fact you’re my true mate. There is a possibility I could be in danger.” Stiles rationally contemplated, pitifully slumped back and down, slamming onto his bum and stared at Derek from far off in the room. His arms frailly lay between his legs and he pouted like an upset pup.

Derek growled—burrowing his rosy face into the junction of one arm and proceeded to concentrate on his breathing while Stiles stared pathetically at him.

“Don’t be like that.” Stiles entreated.

“Shut up.”

“Why so mean?” Stiles sullenly murmured, disconcerted.

“Shut up.”

“What, so now that mating is off the table it’s all, ‘Screw you, Stiles—oh wait, since I can’t—shut up’?”

“Shut up.” Derek hissed threateningly.

“I hate you.” Stiles sulked.
Derek didn’t reply and Stiles glowered at the bastard, seething.

“You know what—you shut up! You and all your glaring and threatening—you and all your *growl* I’ll something witty and frightening *growl*. I’ve always been accommodating, understanding and kind and you...you—just *growl* and glare and *growl*—like always!”

Stiles stood then, frustration and anger boiling over. Derek unburied his head from his arm and stared unimpressed at the human—hard as a rock, flushed as ever, sweating like it were July and still coming off as intimidating.

“I hate it! You could show some emotion! Some kindness! I mean, I care about my life, so excuse me if I’m a little unsettled with mating. You could kill me or behead mini Stiles—hell, a very living Stiles’ head.”

“I wouldn’t kill you.” Derek stated as if it were the surest of things.

“But mini Stiles could be in jeopardy—hell to the no!” Stiles scowled at the unaffected alpha.

“Right, go ahead and give me that look—that says you’re all superior and I’m measly in comparison. Oooohh, if I could, I’d just!” Stiles bounced on the tips of his toes and let his fists go flying. Growling strangulated and restless grunts and shook his head crazed as he punched the invisible and figurative Derek-the-Moody, Lord of Assness.

Dasher sat up from lying comfortably in the bed to stare with fascination at the enthused Stiles and yipped as he appeared to be having a seizure of rage.

When Stiles finally came to a halt—puffing rampant breaths, chest heaving robustly, he stared back to the entrance way.

He nearly lost his shit.

“I’LL KILL YOU—I’LL FUCKING KILL YOU!” Stiles screeched unmanly.

Derek had turned over during Stiles’ outburst and he now stared at the wall—showcasing his glorious gluteus maximus.

Stiles retrieved his pillow from the bed and threw it at Derek’s prone body—the alpha’s heightened reflexes flared, catching the pillow without even a glance back and tucked it under his head where he began to scent the remains of Stiles.

Stiles screamed a frustrated shrill vocalization of pure contempt and fell back to the ground, grumbling disjointed threats under his breath and continued to glare murderously at his husband.

Stiles’ ears perked when he heard a soft fluctuating hiss—a hiss that stuttered and snapped, reverberating. It closely resembled a cackle. Staring fixedly, Stiles noticed the continuous jolting of the alpha’s shoulders.

Derek was laughing—laughing at him.

“I hate you.” Stiles snarled—lackadaisically. Though, truthfully, just a little content at the sound of pure enjoyment from the normally reserved bastard.

Stiles came to realize now was the perfect time to attain the answers to his questions, but where to begin? There was so much he wanted to know and he knew that having ADHD would make recalling everyone of them difficult, so the best thing for him was to ask whichever came to mind
first.

“A while ago—you mentioned befriending Kate.”

Stiles immediately detected when Derek’s hushed laughter ceased and his body went rigid. He did not respond and so Stiles thought he should further explain his interest and wish to understand.

“Did you and Kate…was there ever any feelings other than companionship?”

Still the silence remained and he just about gave up, seeing this was a sore topic for the wolf.

“Are you inquiring if Kate and I were in an intimate relationship?” Derek calculated—leaving nothing in his voice to suggest or hint to an emotion of any kind.

Stiles’ gaze lowered to the ground before him, though the alpha couldn’t see him. He felt slightly ashamed for wanting to know. If Derek was in a relationship with Kate; it was in the past and really shouldn’t matter to him. They agreed upon a marriage of convenience. He had no right to feel jealousy.

Still…Stiles didn’t like the idea of Derek being with Kate, of Derek having cared for someone else—more so maybe than him. The thought of Derek being with someone else upset Stiles so much so, he felt physically sick.

Derek’s past was the alpha’s past and had no relation to him, but regardless of that fact, Stiles wanted to know.

“Kate…was extremely manipulative. She knew how to get what she wanted. What she wanted was me. I foolishly let her into my life.”

Stiles felt like he was going to hurl at any moment and stared off to the bathroom—believing that if Derek went into detail, he wouldn’t be able to hold it in.

“We became close, friends, but never shared an intimate relationship.” Derek proclaimed with sureness only achievable when voicing truth.

Stiles exhaled the worries that which once consumed him and stared with reassurance to his wolf’s back.

His brows creased with deliberation. Kate was the only one Derek had been seen with as a youth. Derek hadn’t been seen with anyone else in Beacon Hills during the time he resided in the small city. What about after Derek left Beacon Hills? He’d been young when he left, right after graduating high school—he must have surely met someone after. Stiles’ stomach knotted nauseatingly once more.

“Did you date anyone during your time away from Beacon Hills?”

“No.” Derek sighed, shifting his arms under the pillow to make himself comfortable, content with staring at the wall.

Stiles’ brows furrowed all the more, then that would mean—but it couldn’t—someone like Derek couldn’t…

Oh…my…God…

“Were you a virgin the night I claimed you?” Stiles exclaimed in disbelief and let out a startled cry
when Derek stiffened considerably.

“You were!” Stiles scrambled from the floor and swiftly rushed the distance between them, to stand before the mountain ash.

Derek groaned and buried his head in the pillow—seeming to realize his slipup and reveal what Stiles was finding difficult to come to terms with.

“Holy—how is that even possible? You’re drop dead gorgeous! How could nobody approach you! That’s! If that’s the case, there is no hope for people like me.”

“Shut up.” Derek moaned through a mouthful of pillow.

“Like Christ! People must be blind. Hold up—so like—I was your first ever—like ever. So you never claimed anyone? What the hell, man?” Stiles palmed his forehead in disbelief, eyes bulging. “And you’re how old?”

September had come to pass—Stiles turned 26 on August this year and Derek was five years older.

“Christ, a thirty-one year old virgin!”

“Shut up before I kill you.” Derek garbled and as Stiles stared down at the alpha, he could make out the humiliation written on his face, his rosy features seeming all the more blood rushed and beset.

“Like you could with mountain ash.” Stiles reminded and eagerly sat crossed legged as close to the alpha as he could, mountain ash inches from his limbs.

“Why haven’t you…you know?” Stiles was secretly thrilled by this knowledge. He was Derek’s first and only and Derek would be his.

“Why haven’t you?” Derek shot back and Stiles flushed, equaling Derek’s heated features.

“That’s because I...my mother, she...she waited till marriage. I...I wanted to do the same—to share that part of myself with the one person I would spend the rest of my life with.” Stiles confessed truthfully, though just a bit mortified.

Derek didn’t reply, just breathed in shakily. He finally unburied his face from the pillow, rolled back over and faced Stiles, tasseled hair sprawled on the pillow, eyes ever piercing and intense.

Derek swallowed thickly, Adams apple bobbing before speaking, “It wasn’t that I never had offers or wasn’t approached.”

Derek frowned. He despised anyone that approached what he believed to be his, Kate more than the rest because he knew for certain whom she was. The one good thing Peter Hale achieved was killing that crazed bitch.

“I didn’t want them.”

Stiles inhaled deeply before breathing out softly. “Who did you want?”

Derek smiled slyly, a hand dragging across the damaged floorboards and grazed the invisible barrier with the pads of his fingers—longing to touch the human.

“It’s always been you.” Derek spoke those words Stiles thought the brute would never tell him again…and only now did he fully comprehend its meaning.
“Do you love me?”

Stiles needed and dreaded the answer, but God help him—he couldn’t help but to ask—desiring to know the truth though it could very well cut his heart and leave him bleeding an inward wound no amount of tears and comfort could soothe nor amend.
Derek eyes lowered with disinclination—olive skin ashen white with trepidation.

“Stiles…” Derek asserted with much consideration.

Stiles’ features hardened when he came to realize Derek would shift their conversation—steer it away from the question that had been delivered and he now sought understanding. Stiles wouldn’t let Derek hinder his desire to know—he needed this.

“Derek, don’t. I’m done with having you lash out and transferring the conversation. Answer the question: Do you love me?” Stiles was amazed by his brazenness, even more so by the look Derek offered him, fear.

“Please.” Derek exhaled a shuddering plea, voice laced heavily in emotions—so much so, Stiles’ heart throbbed in reply.

Stiles wanted to give in and appease the alpha, but he also needed to truly understand the wolf’s motives and put his agony to an end.

“Do you love me?” Stiles questioned again, firm and resolute, though his body shook from nerves.

Derek appeared ill—horridly flushed, sweat consumed in a somewhat delirious and feverish state. He wasn’t in shape for this, but that was what made this the perfect chance for Stiles to achieve all the knowledge he wanted. This was his only opportunity.

“Tell me.”

Derek whined earnestly, bowing his head lower, nudging the cushion of the pillow with his nose and breathed erratically—his fever undeniably high.

“It…doesn’t matter.” Derek reasoned, faintly, shutting his eyes and placed his full concentration on breathing.

“It matters to me.” Stiles countered.

“Let it go.”

“I won’t.”

Derek huffed uneasily and opened his eyes then to glare at the human with contempt.

“Do you think that because I’m weak right now, it gives you the right to demand an answer I don’t wish to give?”

“Do you think because you’re an alpha, you have the right to dictate what I do?”

“It doesn’t matter if I do or don’t. Nothing can ever happen.”

“Why is that?” Stiles arched a brow, challengingly.

Derek’s lips thinned into a stern scowl. “I won’t let it.”
Stiles felt the fight in him wane. “Why do you have to be like this? Why can’t you just tell me how you feel? We could have something real, if you would just open yourself to the possibility.”

“Too much has happened to start now.” Derek murmured.

“So you admit it?”

Derek shut his eyes once more and exhaled a breath of agitation. “So what if I do?”

Stiles frowned at Derek’s roundabout way of suggesting he just might truly care, just might truly love him. Derek always had to make things far more difficult than they had to be. Still...that was the best answer he’d ever got or would get from Derek. Stiles knew this for certain, because he knew Derek.

“You said you’d do or give me anything I want, didn’t you?”

Derek’s eyes snapped open then and stared hesitantly at the human. “Yes…is there something you want?”

Stiles shifted from sitting crossed legged to instead kneel before the brute and inches from the mountain ash. Pressing his hands onto his thighs and his bum against the soles of his feet, he met Derek’s tentative gaze with sureness.

“You are mine.” Stiles proclaimed, thick with possessiveness and the alpha shivered by the declaration.

“Yes.” Derek rasped, pulsing with evident delight at Stiles’ domineering behavior.

“This bond, once I’m claimed, it will not end. This will be a real marriage in every sense of the word.” Stiles rose to his feet and stared down at Derek, daring the wolf to contradict his declaration.

Derek hesitated—obviously not expecting the suggestion that once they were wolf bound, they would remain as that of true spouses.

“We agreed this was a marriage of convenience.” Derek articulated with sound logic.

“That was before I knew we are true mates. I’m not asking you, but demanding we affirm our vows. No separate bedrooms and lives—we live as one with love in our hearts, because even if it frightens you to say it—I know you feel something for me.” Stiles defended.

Derek’s eyes shifted, silently calculating Stiles’ new proposition. His features became torn as he came to his answer.

“We can’t.” Derek mourned. “Just…no.”

Stiles shut his eyes at the rejection. Derek was always calling the shots—even now, but no more. He wouldn’t let Derek. Stiles was now the dominate one where their relationship was concerned. Lydia and even Derek stated so—though Derek didn’t use as many words. Stiles needed to start believing this to be true or Derek would override his power.

Opening his eyes once more, Stiles met Derek’s pained gaze, always sorrowful as if guilty of a crime unforgiveable, but no longer would he allow Derek’s self-loathing for the death of his family to hinder him and their future together.
“You will listen to me.” Stiles ordered with authority—bringing forth the Sheriff he was to rein his stubborn husband.

“You’ve watched me since we were young and have waited for me—that means you have some feelings, so no, Derek. This is no longer a marriage of convenience—this is a real marriage. You are my mate.” Stiles trembled even as he spoke his avowal, for it was truth and there was no leeway.

Derek shook his head, opening his mouth to deny Stiles’ truth. Stiles had to do something to put Derek in his place and although he thought it the silliest of things, he whimpered—whimpered high and thickly.

Derek stilled immediately, his gaze snapping up to meet the human’s with disbelief. Stiles was attempting to appeal to Derek as well as his wolf and demand they conform to his will. His will now happened to mean to affirm to his wish of enacting a new proposition—a true marriage.

Derek did something Stiles hadn’t expected, he glared; glared so fierce that Stiles was grateful for the mountain ash that protected him from the wolf’s evident rage. The alpha growled, reverberating, it consumed Stiles’ body with its pulsing vibrations.

“You…” Derek struggled to voice his frustrations, but Stiles didn’t want to hear them.

“Am I understood?”

Derek bared his teeth—human teeth that lengthened into fangs of fury. His jowls slackened leveling the magnitude of his growls. He bayed once out of defiance and Stiles winced when he stepped back at the alpha’s show of dissatisfaction.

“Yes.” Derek huskily answered. Stiles’ jaw dropped to gape at the beast with wonder.

Derek…did he just…Derek…he…

“What?” Stiles choked.

Derek’s brows lowered and knitted with pensive submission, lowering his eyes to stare down at Stiles’ feet.

“Yes. I accept your amended proposition.”

Stiles knees now trembled along with the rest of his body and he struggled to remain standing.

“Ri—right. Okay, then.” Stiles stuttered, backing further away from the entrance and Derek’s cloud of doom. Hurriedly retreating to the restroom, he knocked against the frame of its door—jumped and looked back at it. Laughing at his foolishness, before rushing inside and slamming the door shut.

Stiles didn’t even manage to take one step before he let out a shrill cry and landed face first into the tub with a thunderous clatter of limbs.

Five days had come and gone since that stupendous of days in which Stiles exerted his dominance and Derek submitted. Submitted to their new proposition in which they chose to continue their marriage as that of a real partnership.
Stiles sulked by the foot of the bed and frowned at the alpha. Five days had come and gone since Derek last spoke to him. Derek’s last words were that of agreeing to his proposition.

“Derek.” Stiles pled meekly, remaining optimistic.

Derek didn’t say anything, much like the last five days. Every morning since the first, Derek had regained his strength and came to lie before the entrance. He would spend most of his day there, most likely his heat drawing him to be as near to his mate as possible. Stiles would attempt to talk with Derek, but the wolf just gave him his back and lay there, much like a statue. When it grew late, he would silently rise and leave to sleep in one of the other two vacant rooms.

Stiles knew he shouldn’t have done what he did, using his power over Derek to get his way, but that damn brute never would have given in otherwise and deep down Stiles knew Derek wanted this just as much as him. So why was it, Derek refused to allow himself the opportunity to love and be loved?

“I’m sorry, okay?” Stiles struggled to right his wrongs, Derek’s answer was peace.

“You have to talk to me some time.” Stiles reasoned.

“......”

“So what, this is how you plan to spend the rest of our married life, in silence?”

“......”

Stiles glared agitatedly at the brute. “Okay, this is how you want to play it?”

“......”

“Fine!” Stiles exclaimed, standing to his feet and nibbled at his bottom lip staring to the brute that chose to disregard his outburst.

“You want to claim me, right? Will that make you happy? Will you forgive me then?”

Derek’s ears seemed to perk at this and at last he sat up and faced him with a raised brow, clearly wanting to see where Stiles was going with this.

“If that’s really what you want…” Stiles wasn’t sure if he really should be doing this, but thinking never really did him much good. So staring down the beast with fortitude, he neared the barrier and inhaled a lengthy breath, summoning all of his courage to the forefront.

“So be it.” Stiles dragged his foot, close to the wolf, passed the entrance and across the barrier with astonishing ease. “You can have me.”

Stiles did it.

He broke the barrier.

Derek gaped in wonder at the breached mountain ash. Widened hazel depths darkened with hunger, narrowing with precision and flashed madder with want. A growl, thickly laced with feral craving sounded. Fangs and claws burst forth, ears sharpened and twitched—following the pounding of Stiles’ human heart.

Stiles observed Derek gradually morph into an in-heat werewolf—the alpha in its true form, broadening and rising on bulking hind legs. Towering over him, arched back just about touching
the ceiling as it curled low and its snout sniffed noisily at his face, mere inches separating them.

And as the alpha’s jowls slackened and a heavily frenzied tongue slithered out to lap the length of Stiles’ cheek, lower still to the healing mark of his left tendon, Stiles felt that…maybe he should have spared time to clearly consider his actions before he’d chosen to break the barrier.
Okay, so when Stiles broke the barrier he’d done it to right his wrong of forcing Derek into conforming to his personal wishes. However, now that a very real alpha was at present sniffing him as if he were catnip and the wolf were an extraordinarily large cat, lapped at his neck while thick canines glided a path across his slender neck, Stiles was seriously reevaluating his decision. There was very little he could do now that the beast crossed the border and was crouched over him.

“Jesus!” Stiles puffed when the alpha raised a clawed arm and pawed his shoulder and another pressed against his lower back. “Derek, come on. I said I was sorry, you can change back now.”

The alpha grumbled a low hum, snout nudging Stiles’ marked neck, still very sore and bleated with remonstration. The alpha grumbled sympathetically—almost cooing, much like how Derek soothed Stiles that first morning they ate breakfast together. Stiles came to understand then that it had been Derek’s wolf that soothed him then; his wolf had always been present. Derek, whether in human form or his true werewolf alpha form—Derek was still the same living creature and both carried much consideration for him.

Still…Derek wasn’t changing.

“Okay…anytime time now would be great….what did you forgot how or are you still pissed? Is that it? Pissed, eh?”

The alpha’s tongue laved his mark once more. Stiles could feel the supremacy of the beast’s paws, guiding him closer—those claws could slice him to ribbons. The power in his wolf’s arms could very well bring with it his end.

Stiles raised trembling arms and hesitantly reached out to touch the beast, but just before connecting his nerves flared and halted his progression. Stiles’ breathing accelerated, his heart thumped a constant beat, growing in tempo until it drummed steadily upon his ribcage. Squinting eyes shut as he grasped the alpha’s shoulders and expected some type of retaliation; instead the wolf whimpered—nudged the underside of his chin with a snout, encouragingly, needing more.

“Derek, I’m really trying not to freak out here, but you could help with that if you switched back…like now. Come on, how many times do I have to apologize?”

The paw pressing against his lower back scooped him in and Stiles cried out with astonishment as the alpha leaned back, lowering himself to press into the hallway’s wall and cradled Stiles in his strong bulky arms. Stiles knelted between the alpha’s hind legs as the beast’s paws settled to curl about his waist, locking him in place.

Tensing with uneasiness, Stiles shoved back against one corner of the brute’s arms, stretching his legs out and under an arched hind leg that bore down against the adjacent wall.

“Okay, you’ve made your point, Derek.” Stiles continued to speak with the werewolf, hopeful that the alpha still retained his logic, being there was no reason for the beast to feel under duress. Stiles could still recall their conversation the night he and Scott had fought. “Now, change back already.”

The alpha’s cooing transition to persistent whines and the beast nuzzled his sore neck, one arm tightened the expanse of Stiles’ waist while the other tugged the collar of his ruby knitted sweater.

“Derek.” Stiles whispered, taken aback when skillful claws hooked through the fabric and with one harsh yank, tore the article of clothing in half. Stiles strangled out a noise, closely resembling a
shrill cry, terrified.

Having shut his eyes during the initial attack, the moment it was over his eyes burst open to survey the damage, but there was none—not to his body anyways; his sweater on the other hand…torn to ribbons. Stiles grasped the flaps of the dilapidated sweater and attempted to cover his exposed chest, but the alpha grasped onto one of his arms and let out a growl of warning, snout nudging his temple now switching his attention to begin sniffing at his hair.

Stiles gulped down the lump in his throat, voice seeming to have failed him now as he sat still as ever—small prey having been caught and at the mercy of his predator. Watching with great scrutiny, he let the alpha paw the tattered sweater with little struggle. The wolf took Stiles’ stillness as wordless admission that he could shrug the article of clothing over pale shoulders and off. In the end, the fabric came to bunch up in a heap on the ground between the both of them.

“I will do that!” Stiles exclaimed sharply when the alpha pawed his crotch, claws shifting to hook through the waistband.

Stiles’ hands hastily met the alpha’s questing paw and clutched the robust wrist. The brute lowered its paw as Stiles shifted around him, but the wolf’s other arm didn’t seem all that willing to release him.

Stiles raised his gaze then to meet the alpha’s piercing madder depths and struggled to speak once more.

“I’ll take these off.”

The alpha stared several long moments, grip tight as ever before finally loosening and released the human.

Stiles exhaled a ragged and audible breath of reprieve and stood before the werewolf. When he took a step back, only then did he regret the act, the alpha bared its fangs and snapped its jowls, baying unhappily—wishing the human to remain close and within his reach.

Okay.” Stiles amended, voicing his understanding. His tremulous hands grasping the clasp of his pant and struggling to unclasp them—madder depths surveying him closely, seeming to enjoy viewing the human stripping down before him. It took Stiles several tries before he succeeded, hooked his thumbs through his pants and briefs. He squinted his eyes shut, finding it hard to believe he was actually doing this when Derek was the way he was. He then swiftly shoved his pants and briefs down, unhooking them from his ankles and tossed them further into the hallway. He then proceeded to toe his socks off and kicked them as well as his tattered sweater to join the rest of his clothes.

Stiles stood before the beast. The alpha reposed against the wall of the corridor, hind legs bordering the frame of the bedroom entrance, extended and upturned feet flanking the walls of the bedroom.

“Derek, change back, because…when I agreed to break the barrier I never agreed for bestiality.”

The alpha just stared at him.

Stiles inhaled sharply and raised his hands, stepping closer to the beast before planting his hands on the alpha’s upper neck and daringly scratched the back of the wolf’s sharpened ears in a fond caress.

“Turn back and I’ll let you claim me willingly.”
Madder depths stared intensely, hungrily, nearing him. Worrying the bottom of his lip, Stiles nibbled the flesh, disconcertingly surveying the alpha’s jowls when they hung and tattered breaths gushed forth, across the expanse of his lower half. Stiles felt shame for the act set upon his own arousal, heated breath gusting over his genitals stirring them to life.

God, this was so wrong and yet Stiles was getting off on it, because it was Derek—Derek’s wolf, but still Derek. The damn wolf was teasing him, torturing him, wishing to humiliate him and degrade him all the more. God, Derek was never going to let him live this down—a goddamn human who’d been turned on by a goddamn werewolf.

Stiles gasped—a slick torturous and scorching tongue flicked and laved the expanse of his abdomen.

“D—Derek, not—not like this.” Stiles implored, contradicting his words when his hips swayed forwards and the alpha’s heated snout nudged his protruding length. “Fuck…”

Derek—the alpha was raucously snuffing his arousal, disjointed growls and whines erupting from deep within the beast’s vibrating chest whenever Stiles attempted to step back and give them space. Paws clasped the globes of his buttocks and the tips of claws pinched at Stiles’ flesh in the best and thrilling of ways, drawing the human nearer still, so he could scent the human all the better.

Closing his eyes, Stiles’ knees quaked at the feel of the beast’s grooved tongue brushing the starting trail of his pubic hair.

“Oh God. I—this is...wrong, so fucking wrong.” Stiles moaned and shuddered all at the same time, excitement overcoming him.

A lengthy cry of delight dispelled from the back of his throat as that crafty and devious tongue lowered still. A extensive tongue, thick and balmy curling the entirety of his length, slurping up the taste of pure sex—twisting it’s head just slightly brought the beast’s heated and damp nose in perfect alignment to nudge the human’s sack.

Stiles was seriously loosing it. This was so wrong, but God, it felt fucking glorious. The alpha sniffed his sack persistently; jaw hanging loosely, allowing his insistent tongue free reign and Stiles sobbed a cry of ecstasy as he was suddenly coming undone, release bursting forth and meeting an adamant tongue. The alpha growled pleasantly as he laved up Stiles’ release with enamored desire.

When Stiles attempted to pull back from the wild beast, the scent and taste of his release seeming to have riled the wolf further, the alpha’s claws dug deep, a paw dragged across flesh to grip the human’s hip. Stiles exhaled a breath of distress, those thick and razor-sharp claws snagged meaty flesh.

“Stop!” Stiles hollered his distressed command, grip tightening around the alpha’s neck, his nails pressing through fur and piercing skin—a kneejerk reaction set alight by pulsing pain.

The alpha immediately reared back and Stiles whimpered torn by pain and guilt when the beast’s ears lowered in apprehension, shooting him a look of remorse—almost as if Stiles had kicked him and that made Stiles feel awful. Derek…that damn alpha—but God, his bum.

Stiles removed a hand from the beast to feel at his right cleft and felt dampness. Twisting to survey the damage done, Stiles found that the overzealous alpha had unintentionally dug four claws into the fleshy part of his rear and left deep lacerations.
Stiles raised his right hand and frowned with disturbance. Rubbing his thumb against his palm and fingers, he spread the blood about—blood that trailed the length of his wrist and the back of his palm. Although there was a great deal of blood, the wound itself wasn’t all that bad. It wouldn’t kill him—though they would scar if he didn’t get stitches.

The nearest hospital was two hour’s drive from where they were…it really wasn’t that bad. He’d received worse wounds over the years and never went to the hospital for any of the ones not life threatening. So long as he properly sterilized it, he’d be fine in a week or two.

The alpha whined persistently, nudging Stiles’ bloodied hand before, seeming to sense he’d lost himself in the act and then thoroughly lapped his hand clean of any remains. When his snout sniffed his side and attempted to reach his wound, Stiles palmed the alpha’s slackened jaws stopping him.

“I’m okay.” Stiles soothed, attentively stroking the alpha’s mane and the beast sulked.

“Please, Derek, change back.”

He believed his pleas were falling on deaf ears, but when the alpha’s fur thinned and its body retracted to form a human’s, Stiles was thoroughly amazed and elated.

“Derek.” Stiles gasped, madder depths finally shifting hazel, staring with relief at his husband’s humanized form.

Derek scowled, seeming to be upset with him and this seriously ticked Stiles off.

“What the fuck was that? I told you I’d let you claim me and you thought it’d be fun to scare the shit out of me?”

“You’re the one who broke the ash and told me to fuck you.” Derek shot back.

“In human form, not fucking doggy—werewolf style!”

“Well, you could have just whimpered in the first place—simple right?” Derek responded, thick with sarcasm.

“You could have changed.”

“But you don’t appreciate free will.”

“Oh my God. I said I was sorry!”

“That’s not good enough. I told you not to abuse your power.”

“I didn’t. Your wolf seemed perfectly content.”

“Not my human side.”

“What the hell do you want from me?” Stiles huffed and dramatically collapsed onto his bum—wincing slightly when his clammy cleft smacked against the ground—attempting to focus on his annoyance rather than the pain, he awkwardly crossed his legs and glared at the brute.

Derek’s furrowed brows of tense agitation relaxed then, his eyes lowered and stared down at the human’s most private of areas. Stiles blushed suddenly realizing he was very naked and in his current position was bearing all before an equally bare, though unbelievably aroused and in-heat wolf.
“I smell blood.” Derek grumbled, brows knitting together.

“Why do I smell blood—your blood?” Derek’s voice was suddenly on edge and before Stiles could explain Derek shoved him back, pinning him to the ground. Vociferously sniffing Stiles, starting with his upper body and lowered as he progressed in his inspection, his hands wandered the expanse of Stiles’ being.

“My bum.” Stiles grumbled, palming his face, shielding his eyes from view—embarrassed by his actions that had led him to this point where a humanized alpha was currently sniffing him out and scanning for the cause of an unforeseen wound.

“I—did I—?” Derek whispered with devastation, gaping at the human, horrified.

“What, you don’t remember?” Stiles was confused, shouldn’t Derek know why he scented blood when he’d been the one to do it—there was no reason for him to be under duress and to lose his human sense of logic.

“I can’t remember anything after you…in my mouth.” Derek breathed, focusing on recalling the events. “The scent of your release…tasting…I blacked out for a moment.”

Stiles flushed heatedly, mortified.

“God…I—I really…” Derek voiced with trepidation, appearing utterly devastated by his actions, believing himself to have forcefully taken Stiles—though he couldn’t remember doing such.

Stiles didn’t understand Derek’s broken question, nor his stuttering pleads for a moment, before all at once he did and groaned discontentedly at the implication. “What? No, God, no Derek. That’s not it, you—HEY!”

Stiles yelped when Derek was suddenly manhandling him until he’d rolled over and was kneeling in an upright position on his hands and knees.

“Stiles.” Derek rasped; self-hate evident in his voice, surveying the damage. “We need to get you to the hospital.”

“What? No! It’s not that bad. It will heal.”

“I attacked you! You need to get stitches.”

“No you didn’t! It was just…just…” Stiles struggled to find the right words.

“Just what?” Derek snarled, clearly upset—though Stiles knew it was more or so for what he’d done to his mate then for Stiles’ stubbornness. “Just…attempted rape, right?”

“No! It was just…enthusiastic passionate love making!” Stiles didn’t need Derek to flash him that look that clearly said he wasn’t right in the head—he already knew this. After all, he agreed to marry the brute in the first place, didn’t he?

“You need to be checked out. The lacerations are awfully deep…if you don’t get them properly tended to, they could become infected.”

Stiles knew Derek had a point, but he was pretty sure they could handle it themselves. Splash a bit of rubbing alcohol and bandage it for a few weeks—sure it’d scar, but at least it’d save him from the humiliation of having a stranger tend to the wound.
“It’s my body. I choose what happens to it and I don’t want to go. That is a definite no.” Stiles grumbled petulantly.

“I did this to you, so I think it’s best we see a doctor.”

“Hell no! I’m not going to have someone touching that part of me! Shouldn’t you be all growly beasty and crazed by that thought?”

“Not when you’re hurt and it’s needed.” Derek gritted through grinding teeth, coming to the realization someone would have to touch Stiles in order to tend to his wounds, essentially scenting him. Mating season heightening Derek’s possessiveness, but regardless of that fact, he was consenting to the necessity of doing such.

“I don’t need to go.”

Derek glared a look that said he wasn’t backing down and Stiles suddenly realized he never would.

“No.”

“.....”

“I said, no.”

“.....”

“No, damn it!”

“.....”

“No means no, Derek!”

“.....”

“Derrrrrrek!” Stiles complained, sobbing throatily and dramatic, Derek’s features remaining stern and authoritative.

“Get dressed.” The alpha ordered, rising to his feet then, offering a hand for the human to take. Stiles narrowed his eyes into slits of ferocity at the considerate brute.

“It’s a fucking two hour drive to the nearest hospital!”

Derek flashed madder depths of forewarning.

“What about that!” Stiles pointed to the alpha’s pulsing and still very hard arousal—an arousal that hadn’t flagged in days. “You’re in-heat!”

“I’ll just have to deal with it. Right now all I want is for you to receive treatment—you’re hurt because of me.”

Stiles scrabbled to his feet then and followed the alpha to their bedroom where the alpha intended to dress himself. Stiles grasped at the wolf’s arm and began to beg, because he was serious when he said he really didn’t want a doctor that up close and personal with his bum.

“No, come on. There’s a first aid kit in the master bathroom, we can patch it up ourselves.”

“It will scar.” Derek elucidated simply, slipping on a pair of faded jeans—going commando, even
as Stiles practically plastered himself against the wolf pleading for the stubborn Mr. Moody to see things his way.

“It doesn’t even hurt!” Stiles lied.

Derek sent a fierce look and rounded an arm about the human’s waist, drawing him in. For one moment in time Stiles believed the alpha was giving in—that he sought an affectionate hug, but this was Derek, always brooding and ass prone, Derek. The alpha smirked and with a resounding thwack, he smacked the soreness of Stiles’ ass. Stiles sobbed out a cry of pain at the unexpected assault.

“What the fuck, man!” Stiles roared enraged and punched Derek in the arm with as much force as he could possibly summon, his eyes dampening and stinging with unshed tears.

“It hurts, huh?” Derek asked with a snarky smirk before throwing on a grey sweater and leather coat, grabbed the keys from the dresser and exited the room. “I’ll be waiting in the car.”

Derek was such a bastard.

“You…I’ll murder you!” Stiles decreed as if it were the surest of things, chasing the alpha out of the lodge, wrath his one constant.

He followed Derek all the way out of the home and towards the porch—realizing only then he was still bare as the day he was born and cursed under his breath, out in the open and frigid mountains. The alpha broke into uproarious hysterical laughter, needing to lean against the Camaro for support and watched amusedly as the human sprinted back inside the warm lodge.

“Fucking alphas!” Stiles swore, marching all the way back to the master bedroom—needing to get dressed, because apparently Derek was a fucked up pushy dickhead and his chronic assness made Stiles do dumb shit—like chase the wolf out in the snow covered mountains wearing his birthday suit.
Bliss

When Derek and Stiles entered the lodge that evening, the sun had set as it was winter and therefore became dark earlier on in the day. Derek sat heavily at the foot of the bed and threw Stiles a disdainful and fuming look that could kill, voicelessly condemning him for what Stiles was trying to forget.

Stiles had not even wanted to go to the hospital in the first place! But Derek…AKA asswipe made him.

When they arrived a young redheaded male intern was assigned to stitch Stiles up. The intern didn’t even have a chance to properly introduce himself as Stiles’ physician before a growling Derek grabbed the man by the scruff of his neck and hurled him out of the room—demanding an older physician.

The staff fearing the rage and power of the alpha paged an accomplished plastic surgeon. A brunette older gentleman, yet again, a growling Derek proceeded to shove the physician out of the room and demanded someone older.

The third had been a balding and wrinkled physician, wiry white hair bordering the lower part of his head—again Derek growled, kicked out the physician and instead demanded for a older female physician.

The staff produced an older woman who appeared to be in her late fifties, gray hair and kind eyes seeming to emit a nurturing presence. Stiles lay on his stomach on the hospital bed and smiled in greeting to his physician. Derek who’d taken to seating himself on the bed near Stiles’ waist seemed at peace within her company.

Still, it was an awkward situation having the physician clean and stitch up his wound while his husband kept a watchful eye on her. Nevertheless, the physician delivered a shot to numb the pain, stitched and patched up the wound soon after and he’d been released. Only…the damage was already done—word would spread that Derek Hale, sovereign of werewolves…and his husband visited a hospital during their honeymoon. He could only imagine what the rumor mill would blow about was the cause for such an injury.

However, the total trip had been worth it, because he’d gained some interesting and heartening news soon after he’d been attended to.

Derek followed the doctor out to sign his release forms while Stiles bumbled around the small room and redressed. When Stiles completed the task with a few grumbles and curses, his bum being sensitive and his jeans being just a fraction too tight for his bandaged rear, Stiles went to the front of the hospital. There, he leaned against one of the pillars of the building, pressing his weight against his shoulders rather than his bum. Wrapping his imitation of an army coat close he waited for the alpha to come join him. The brute assuring him he’d drive the car up front to pick him up when he finished signing paperwork.

Stiles had been waiting for several minutes when a petite young beauty, dressed in pink scrubs bounded the stairs of the hospital towards the entrance and indirectly in Stiles’ path. The blond beauty wasn’t paying close attention where she was stepping and Stiles pinpointed from the way her right foot twisted and pressed against the edge of the top step, she would slip. Reacting fast and
on pure instincts he lunged forwards just as she let out a fearful shriek and fell back. He effortlessly grasped a hold of her left wrist, yanking her against him and wrapped his free arm around her waist reeling her up the final step and easing her back on steady ground.

Kind chestnut brown depths blinked with amazement and Stiles smiled with reassurance.

“Alright there?”

The nurse blushed. The two were standing quite close and to anyone remaining none the wiser the two appeared to be in a lovers embrace.

“Gosh, thanks a million. That would have been disastrous.” The nurse laughed at her own clumsiness.

Stiles grinned and slowly released the beauty, studying her stance to detect any instability.

“Glad to be of assistance. Good thing we’re at a hospital, you might have needed some attention if I’d not been here.” Stiles jested good-humouredly.

The nurse smiled and only then did Stiles take note of her name tag.

“Patricia, you be careful now.” Stiles heeded thoughtfully, believing their conversation had come to its end and not wishing to keep her from her schedule as she’d appeared to be in a rush.

Patricia on the other hand didn’t leave, just stood there staring with consideration, furrowing brows full of concentration and deliberation.

“What is it? Is there something on my face?” Stiles nervously patted at his face, searchingly.

“What? No, sorry, I just…it’s just…have we met? I never forget a face and I just feel that I’ve seen you before.” Patricia conveyed; brows still tense with thoughtfulness.

Stiles frowned; since he’d married Derek he wouldn’t be surprised if his face was steadily circulating through the media. Derek was a powerful man and he was married to him. The first few months of their engagement, Stiles took note of his photograph in the local papers and magazines, though the paparazzi seemed to leave him alone. Stiles had a sneaking suspension it had something to do with Derek being his fiancé and now mate. Alphas were extremely territorial—common knowledge. Alphas wouldn’t much like other’s following their mates and photographing them everywhere they went.

A great deal of Stiles’ pictures that were spread through the media were old photographs taken and distributed by unnamed sources—some old friends in high school choosing to sell him out and make a buck with the photographs they possessed of him.

Scratching the back of his neck nervously Stiles met the woman’s scrutiny with awkwardness. “Well, yeah, that’s probably because I’m mated to—”

“I remember!” Patricia exclaimed, coming alight as something sparked and she was suddenly grinning goofily.

“You came in several months ago—werewolf bite I believe.”

Stiles paled. Peter Hale’s attack—that had been months earlier. Stiles glanced back at the hospital briefly. This was the same hospital he and the gang came to after the attack. It wasn’t the main one in Beacon Hills. This facility was the closet hospital for those who lived in the forest—and tenants
near the mountains of Fergusons’ lodge.

“Yeah.” Stiles conceded.

“Didn’t you marry Alpha Hale?” Patricia acknowledged boldly.

Stiles blushed sheepishly, eyes lowering with embarrassment. It felt strange for someone to refer to him as married and as Derek’s spouse—strange, meaning it felt pleasantly comforting and reassuring. Derek was his and he was Derek’s. Husbands—God, it felt good referring to Derek as his husband and himself as Derek’s husband. Married—bound, forevermore.

“Yes.” Stiles sighed dreamily, grinning much like a loon.

Patricia’s smile brightened. “Such a lovely couple; it makes perfect sense when you really think about it.”

Stiles’ smile dulled just a fraction with uncertainty as to what Patricia was insinuating. “What do you mean by that?”

Was she referring to the treaty enacted by their marriage?

“Just that—you know, the way he was when you were hospitalized.” Patricia hurriedly explained, unsettled as if she’d said something wrong and feared having upset him.

Stiles was really lost now. “What are you talking about?”

“I’d been assigned as your nurse during your stay. I had the night shift and I clearly remember Alpha Hale came the night you were brought in and every night after. He spent his nights at your bedside; he kept coming back every night until you’d woken.”

Stiles’ eyes bulged by this new information. Derek…he… God, he really... God.

“Stiles.” Came a familiar snarl.

Stiles lowered his gaze to the base of the staircase and to the alpha himself as the beast exited the Camaro, slamming his door shut and glaring murderously at him and Patricia.

“Oh, I’m going to be late!” Patricia exclaimed with a glance at her wristwatch, peering from Stiles to the approaching brooding alpha and back at Stiles, she grinned toothily. “Lovely, indeed. Thanks again.”

Patricia winked with a look that said more than words and sped past the sliding glass doors of the hospital and disappeared from sight.

Stiles beamed dopily content at a brooding Derek who was all but marching up the staircase and towards Stiles now.

When Derek stood before him, Stiles didn’t give the brute a chance to let out a slew of rants pertaining to his tendency to cheat, because he wasn’t. Why would he, when he had a husband who clearly cared for him—cared for him since childhood? Stiles clasped the sides of his brute’s heated face, raised himself on the tips of his toes and claimed Derek’s lips with his own in a kiss full of tenderness and love.

Derek’s features lazed in his grasp, lips parting and willingly welcomed him in the warmth of his cavern where a devilishly crafty tongue awaited him. A heavy exhale of contentment broke free
from Stiles, his body set at ease when the alpha’s arms wrapped him in a cocoon of warmth.

Derek’s nails scraped through his fuzz, clasping the nape of Stiles’ neck in one hand while his other spread to plaster itself at his jaw and the underside of his left ear, fingers pressing into his skin, kneading flesh and muscle. Drawing him closer still, Derek shoved his tongue fully into Stiles’ mouth and hungrily lapped at his inner core—tasting with insistency and an unquenchable thirst, growling much like the untamed beast he could become.

The kiss rapidly altered, grew longer, deeper, fingers clawing desperately—need for a closeness inaccessible. Derek’s need for mating clearly evident by the way he kissed Stiles with lewdness and powerful hankering, by the rumbling of a beast urged to ravage its mate, of a husband desperate for closeness with their spouse.

Even with the inaccessibility hindering their actions to a certain degree, Derek devoured Stiles with eagerness, pushing him back—manhandling him with force and dominance in his attack as he slammed him against the cemented pillar of the building. The same pillar he’d been leaning on moments earlier and it turned Stiles on, sent his horny-o-meter on danger. His tender buttocks shoved callously against the hard and unforgiving pillar was just another ping on the meter that accelerated his own needs and his libido was overcome.

Stiles trembled dependently, quivered with an urge for more—desperately wanting the beast to rip their clothes off all so he could feel the warmth of Derek’s flesh, taste and sex him up with all the dirty thoughts suddenly flashing in his mind.

Stiles’ arousal flared fully, fingers digging against the sides of Derek’s neck, scratching and bruising already healing flesh, broken breathless moans echoing in the coolness of night.

“Yes… Gods, yes! I’m so… I… Wolfie.” Stiles pled alongside Derek’s lips, meeting hazel depths and whimpered keenly when the alpha nibbled on his bottom lip, tugged ruthlessly and drove his achingly-hard-hot erection against his own pulsing desire, through the roughness of thickly laced jeans.

“You…” Derek snarled, digging his teeth further against Stiles’ bottom lip until it hurt—hurt, yet felt absolutely amazing. Stiles groaned deep and thrust forwards again, needing friction when Derek released his agrivated and bruised lip and slammed their mouths together for one last hard smack and rough chafing of tongues. “—are a cheater. You think you can distract me—have me forget that I smell her all over you, adulterer.” Derek spat wrathfully, shoving Stiles away, against the pillar and swerved on his heel, descending the steps with evident hostility.

Stiles gawked at the departing brute, winded and suffering from thoroughly-kissed-itis, heart thundering and arousal weeping from the emotional abuse…and still…begging for more.

“I fucking hate you.” Stiles swore, following after his hormonal husband. “—and I wasn’t cheating! Not like you fucking listen.” He complained, miffed by the last bit.

Stiles felt his anger rise to an all time high by the sight of Derek moping on their bed.

“You can’t still be mad at me. I just got forty-four stitches on my ass, because of you—you God-damn-brute!” Stiles threw his hands up with emphasis.

“You forced me to conform to what you wanted. You don’t care to understand how I feel.” Derek began and Stiles snorted.
“Oooh that’s rich, coming from you!” Stiles snipped and Derek’s eyes narrowed portentously.

“What is that supposed to mean?”

“It means; you never want to tell me how you feel!” Stiles was losing his mind, it felt like they were always arguing about the same things.

“I have my reasons.” Derek graved.

“And what are they? Hmm?” Stiles raised a brow, soliciting an answer he knew would never come. “I’m waiting.”

Derek’s eyes lowered and he focused his sights on his knees, hands currently placed on the peaks and digging through with unforgiving might. “Let’s drop it.”

Stiles really lost it then. This was the last straw for him. If Derek wanted to be an asshole and keep things from him, if he wanted to continue to be a bossy ass, Derek would have to contend with an equally stubborn and forceful, Stiles.

Stiles opened his mouth in the starting of ranting, though his words fell away as he watched the brute rise to his feet and start to remove his clothing. Stiles’ mouth shut then, gazing with much interest. Derek stood before him stripped in the nude, arousal still achingly unattended to and desiring contact. Stiles’ anger evaporated just like that in the sights of an in-heat alpha, his mate, needing his touch and all Stiles wanted to do now was to ease his mate’s heat.

Stiles took several steps towards Derek, raising an arm out and palmed the alpha’s face—a grimace of a glare meeting his gaze.

“No.” Derek spoke clearly, gaze harsh—accusing.

“No?” Stiles blanched, raised brows of disbelief.

Derek—he…

Stiles’ eyes widened with incredulity as the brute grasped a hold of his hand with one of his own and removed it from his face before releasing it as if repulsed to be touching him.

“You’re really…are you fucking rejecting me!” Stiles screeched, enraged—after all the hell Derek put him through, he was saying ‘no’. “Are you shitting me!”

Derek sent a fierce look of contempt. “My wolf nor human side feels inclined to copulate with a cheating, unfaithful mate.”

Stiles was shaking—shaking, unadulterated loathing strumming through his veins.

“Just like that—you won’t even, but you’re in-heat! You’re honestly telling me you can resist the urge to mate?”

“Alphas don’t have to mate when in heat—it will be difficult, but…I really don’t want to touch you when you reek of that nurse—cheat.”

Derek threw Stiles the dirtiest look of disdain as he rounded the bed and slipped under the sheets. Frustratingly tossing onto his side, giving Stiles his back and threw the covers up and over his shoulders.

Stiles bulked at the brute, stared at him in wonder.
I’ll fucking murder him…I really will kill him—with a frying pan—a shovel—bury him under the oak tree in the back of the lodge.

Stiles’ brows closed in together, tensing with boiling rage.

“Then what the hell was the deal with the mountain ash!”

“Transition from fever to heat is the most dangerous period of mating season—now that I’ve calmed and my fever has broken, I can deal with the heat. And as it is—my wolf and I are quite content with steering clear of an adulterer like you.”

“So what—not even going to growl or throw a fit like the last?”

Derek said nothing, just raised the sheets higher over his head and burrowed deep in the shadows it provided—wishing to remain out of view.

“You keep cheating.” Derek murmured almost sounding…despondent? As if he were…

Dear God...

Derek… Derek was upset with him…hurt.

“Come on!” Stiles pled, entreatning the alpha forgive him and believe his love to be true and constant. “I wasn’t cheating. The nurse was going to fall if I didn’t help her and as far as the stripper goes…that wasn’t my fault.”

Derek didn’t budge and Stiles waited, waited with the hope Derek would give in—accept his apology and let all this animosity go. “I care about you—I…well you know how I feel…I’d never. I only want you.” Stiles confessed the last timidly.

Stiles waited for some type of response, but received none. Sighing heavily, Stiles wandered over to his side of the bed; removed his clothes and tossed them to a corner chair, making note to tend to the mess later and shuffled under the covers. Snaking through the darkness of the sheets Stiles found Derek’s back and broad shoulders; wrapping his arms about the wolf’s waist he tucked his head at the crook of the alpha’s neck.

Derek grumbled tensely and shifted his head out of view and away from Stiles’ as the human planted light kisses, sprinkling them about the alpha’s neck and jaw seeking pardon.

“Wolfie, don’t be such a sour wolf. Come on love, that stripper—” Now that Stiles held the brute close, he could feel the exact moment Derek tensed by the mention of the exotic dancer and hastily finished his sentence. “—he wasn’t you, Derek. All I could think about was, he wasn’t you.”

Stiles admitted what he’d felt the night of the bachelor party, though lacked the opportunity to reassure the at the time high-strung fiancé. Stiles continued planting kisses of silent console and as he did so, he felt the brute respond, body relaxing and hands moving to brush the slight hair over his arms.

“Stiles.” Derek hummed, vibrations of a purr reverberating in the back of his throat.

Stiles shut his eyes at the feel of Derek’s soothing caress of his flesh. He loosened his hold about the alpha as Derek shifted and rolled over to face him. Stiles’ banded hand rose to cradle Derek’s strong jaw while his other stroked silky dark locks. Meeting the alpha’s gaze, Stiles was mesmerized by the pale shade of hazel the wolf possessed, flecks of vibrant emerald bleeding through.
“I—” Stiles fought the urge to express his feelings for Derek, knowing the alpha didn’t wish to hear those words. Derek had made it quite clear he didn’t like it when Stiles said it, but all Stiles wanted to do was to express those emotions to the one person he’d bound himself to and cared for more than he’d ever thought was possible.

Derek exhaled deeply and pressed closer, an arm tightening around Stiles’ waist and reeling him in whilst his other palmed the side of his knee, stroked the length of his thigh comfortingly.

“You can say it.” Derek voiced attentively, nudging the human’s nose with his own and inhaled deeply of his scent, moaning keenly and pressed his persistent hardness against Stiles’ most sensitive and affected of regions.

“What?” Stiles gasped, holding off a moan of his own by the alpha’s actions, his arousal kindled once more.

“I shouldn’t have reprimanded you for saying what it is you feel. If you want to say it…then say it, but even though I’ve accepted your amended proposition, don’t expect to hear those words from me.” Derek murmured breathily, lips grazing the corner of Stiles own as his nose ran the length of his cheek and his lips grazed receptive flesh.

Stiles couldn’t believe what Derek was telling him.

“So does this mean…our marriage…it’s—”

“Real in every sense of the word—one life, one room, one home, true marriage. I’ll let you in, but I can’t say those words—it’s just…not after everything that’s happened.” Derek planted affectionate kisses across the length of Stiles’ cheek leading to his ear where he devoted his full attention to sucking at the lobe.

Stiles could understand Derek’s reserve for expressions of affection. Derek lost all those he’d loved in such a terrible manner. Everyone dealt with grief in their own way and as it appeared, Derek had withdrawn from the world, kept to himself—kept his pain in. He refused to voice that of his devastation. Stiles was Derek’s husband and mate, because Stiles had asked it of him Derek gave in a fraction and let him see the surface of the pain and guilt he carried.

Stiles loved Derek, loved him enough to understand his reasons and could accept his need to hold off on expressions of love. Stiles knew Derek cared greatly for him. Enough so, he was sure the alpha would give him anything he asked for just to please the human’s wishes. He’d give him everything, but this one thing.

Stiles could accept this, because he knew Derek cared. That was all that mattered to him. To know Derek cared for him and would open himself up to a true marriage was all Stiles could ever want or ask for from the emotionally wounded wolf.

“Stiles…my Stiles” Derek hummed gently, so softly and full of concern, Stiles could trick himself in hearing a love not proven factual in that one utterance of his name. Pulling away from planting such affection to the human’s ear, Derek met Stiles’ gaze with precision, pawing the slighter’s face caringly. “My heart has always been yours.” Derek whispered before claiming Stiles’ lips with his own.

That was everything Stiles ever needed to know, all he could ever want to know. Stiles clamped a hold of the wolf’s face and yanked him close, near and against him, pressing his full weight on top of him—and God did that effect him. Derek groaned with need, Stiles’ arousal heightened to full completion and rubbing against the wolf’s own, causing the alpha to react and hard-press him to
the bed as he rolled completely on top of him and deepened the kiss.

This was what Stiles wanted. Sharp short piercing whines breaking through and passed the back of his throat, projected to full volume as Derek devoured him. Derek kissed him with such desperation and fervidness that Stiles’ body was set aflame, his most sensitive regions were burning and aching for attention. Stiles was about to burst with his want and by the insistent and commanding way Derek kissed him, it was evident Derek felt the same way.

“Please. I want to—” Stiles pleaded against hot lips, panting heavily, thrusting his hips upwards and connecting his desire with Derek’s own. He needed Derek to say they could, to let his animosity go and claim him. He was tired of fighting, tired of denying what it was he wanted. He wanted this—wanted Derek—to be mated and bound.

“I know.” Derek groaned huskily with beleaguered aspiration. “I want you.” Derek spoke softly, dipping his head to the curve of his human’s neck and nuzzled Stiles’ bruised tendon.

“Yes.” Stiles released an exhale of relief, needing this more than he’d ever needed anything.

Derek growled then, growl rising, pulsing and grating, vibrating deep and flowing passed the wolf’s body and trembled against Stiles’ own. Soon the two were jolted with the humming grumbles of concord Derek’s wolf sounded.

Stiles was going insane, the heat of the wolf rising, the friction intensifying with it as Stiles’ thrusts became keen zealous propelling of hips, pushing him closer and closer to the edge. Stiles’ hands planted themselves to grasp the alpha’s forearms and held to them with a vice grip, back arching upwards and pressing himself further against the wolf, until he was enclosing his arms around the brute, holding tight and moaning with his near completion.

Derek huffed hotly, growling ever constant—a steady purr of his wolf contenting in the scent of its mate’s sex.

“Derek,” Stiles gasped stridently, dipping his head and tilting it slightly to nuzzle the alpha’s exposed ear and breathed edgily against it, broken breaths in a rising rhythm following the build of release. “…so close.”

Stiles cried in protest in that moment as Derek was suddenly pulling away. Breaking their accelerating pace of thrusts and left Stiles writhing on the bed, frantically reaching out for his alpha, to bring him close and bring himself to completion.

“Why’d you stop?” Stiles whined with dissatisfaction, sitting up and raised a hand to palm the wolf’s face, leaning forwards and claiming the alpha’s lips for a kiss in the hopes of rekindling what they began.

Derek leaned back and pressed his hands against Stiles’ shoulders, shoving him back onto the bed.

“Need to taste.” Derek answered gruffly, hazel depths shifting to inhabit flecks of scarlet, little by little shifting as his incisors grew into thick sharpened fangs and his growls lowered several octaves resembling that of the true alpha.

“I love you.” Stiles declared caringly, grasping a hold of one of the alpha’s hands pressing against his shoulder and lifted it to his mouth to bestow several kisses of affection to the knuckles and felt the coolness of the wedding band.

“Mine.” Stiles smiled fondly up at the alpha before him struggling to remain human. Derek was the man whom he truly loved and was reassured by the affirmations of their bond.
“Yours.” Derek affirmed with just as much feeling.

Pulling away from the human’s hold, Derek shuffled back and straddled Stiles’ knees, laid his arms at either side of his waist and pressed in close, till they were mere centimeters from the other and enacted another kiss, full of tenderness, deep craving and ever constant consideration—a kiss that left Stiles trembling and butterflies fluttering about the entirety of his stomach.

Stiles moaned, allowed the alpha to slip his tongue into his warm cavern and take over the kiss. Only, Stiles felt the stirrings of his arousal spark once more as their kiss lengthened and Derek was surprised when Stiles took control over the kiss. Stiles kissed with a passion unparalleled. He was overcome by enthusiastic want and need with his manipulations. Opening his mouth wider, Derek groaned deeply when Stiles dominated him and claimed possession of him. Derek's hands went to cradle the sides of Stiles’ face as he strengthened their kiss, loving the way Stiles chafed their tongues together before whisking about and tasting.

Breaking their kiss, Derek’s lips trailed a pathway along the edge of his mouth and lower still. He evaded Stiles’ attempts when he tried to renew their kiss. Instead he lowered his tongue, down his smooth cheek, jaw line and to his neck where he lapped at the materialized sweat.

"Derek." Stiles pleaded.

Derek smirked knowingly, the arrogance of the wolf present even during their most intimate of moments. The wolf continued his path lower. He cleaned the human of sweat that plastered the length of his torso and abdomen. His unrelenting path lowered still to work his way further south. The alpha pressed openmouthed kisses along the human’s ankle he took hold of and slowly but surely made his way to the back of Stiles’ knee and swept his tongue over the flesh that was there.

“Derek… Please, I can’t wait anymore.”

Derek flashed a look of consideration, continued his path along a lean leg until he kissed at the warm flesh which conjoined the human’s hip with his manhood. The alpha didn’t miss the hitch in Stiles’ breathing as he let his lips press soft almost feather-light kisses along his erect member.

“I want you.” Stiles murmured a frenetic plea.

The alpha answered the human’s plea by running his hands from the human’s ankles, up his bent quaking legs, and down to the slant over his hips. Derek opened his mouth and stuck out his tongue and jabbed at the slit of the Stiles’ member. Stiles arched his back and gasped out in surprise as Derek continued to thrust out his tongue and nudge itself over the slit of Stiles’ manhood, until the human recoiled in on himself and yelped with tormented bliss.

Derek’s hands ran up further until he was stroking the human’s abdomen and wiping the sweat that covered his flushed skin. He lapped his way up the human’s shaft and back down before he spun his tongue over the swelled head. In one swift motion the alpha took the tip into his mouth where he suckled the pre-come.

“Derek.” Stiles breathed heavily as he reached out and gripped a hold of the alpha’s head and ran his hands through dark locks.

Derek hummed; his own adulthood twitched with need. Stiles cried out when the vibrations ran along his length and drove him closer to the edge. Derek salivated by the taste of Stiles’ salty velvety skin and pre-come that overwhelmed his senses. He loved the heady scent of Stiles’ sex as it wafted over him, and his nostrils flared taking in the scent all the more. The soft curls that tickled...
his nose as he engulfed Stiles fully into his throat made him moan once again and brought with it a whimper from the human.

Derek was stimulated by the feel of the human; Stiles’ veins that ran along his member beat a steady rhythm against his tongue and teeth grazed his manhood. The sound of needy and vulgar sucking and lapping of his tongue could be heard and evoked a cry from the human. The saliva that overwhelmed Derek’s mouth as he sucked Stiles, trying to bring about his release, proved to help lubricate his movements as he pumped his head in quick, swift motions.

Stiles’ face was rosy, a flush that had reddened further as hazel with flecks of scarlet met honey brown. His pouty lips, slackened and bruised from extensive kisses were damp and glistened, and his chest rose and fell rapidly while the sweat and saliva that was left there shimmered. Stiles’ gaze was unwavering as he peered down at Derek, his eyes dilated when the wolves flashed pure scarlet, his wolf strengthening and exposing itself fully as he’d shifted then. Derek sucked Stiles with so much force that it was on the borderline of magic and Stiles was losing it.

Derek hummed endlessly. He furthered the pleasure and made it all the more intense. Hands moving to grasp the base of his erection; Derek massaged him while he sucked thoroughly and caressed his tongue speedily along the underside of Stiles’ erection. Derek sucked with involuntarily power and Stiles belted with unmistakable gratification. Derek's teeth scraped against the spongy tip of his manhood before taking him whole and sucking as inhumanly hard as he could, calling upon his wolf-like abilities to assist him.

“Love, Derek…I—!” Stiles babbled as he felt the muscles in his thighs clench and a tingling sensation built in his lower region.

Stiles stiffened in one moment in time, before he went wild and groaned, uproars of groans and moans in every octave and length, expressing pleasure.

Hot slick release burst forth and filled Derek's mouth until he felt it clot his throat. Derek moaned long and loud and Stiles cried out again in ecstasy as the wolf sucked and cleaned the remains of liquid on his susceptible member.

Stiles lay panting and groaning out in bliss as Derek continued to clean him, his body now drenched in sweat. Much of his hair was sticky and wet, but he didn't care.

"Derek." Stiles croaked; voice rough.

Derek swiped his mouth of the remaining saliva and release with the back of his hand and stared down at him. The human was burning red, his body now covered in a blanket of sweat and his hair was a soaked mess. Eyes glazed over with lust and want.

The alpha towered the human, arms bracing his weight, claws digging deep into the sheets and mattress of the bed as the wolf eyed his prey with much intrigue and yearning.

Stiles’ heart sped, racing much like a skittish and vulnerable creature. The time had come; the way Derek looked at him now—staring at him as if he were the most delicious of meals. A virgin who’d slowly been concurred by the wolf was about to be fully taken, devoured and claimed.

Stiles felt like a sacrificial piece of meat, being given to the alpha as a means for mankind’s survival. And he was…in a way he was giving himself to the alpha to enact their treaty to protect humans, though the thought disturbed him. Stiles didn’t want to give his body to Derek to enact a treaty…he wanted—stupid and foolish as it might be…he wanted to give himself to Derek willingly, because Derek was the man who he carried deep within his heart.
“You trust me?” Came the whisper of a question from a wary wolf. Stiles knew then that Derek could sense it—hesitation and nervousness within the human.

Raising his hands to grip at the alpha’s broad shoulders, Stiles swallowed thickly and flashed a wry smile.

“I—yeah.” Stiles murmured and glanced away, Derek’s depths suddenly causing his heart to beat painfully fast.

Stiles’ eyes shut then when the alpha lowered himself and nudged his nose along the tendon of his mark.

"Please.” Derek spoke softly, pressing gentle kisses upon the bite that marked him as Derek’s.

“What is it?”

“Stay by my side…always.” Derek hummed low, dizzily, scenting the human. Any remains of logic drifting away as he scented him further and his fangs grazed healing flesh.

Stiles hollered in surprise and gripped tightly to the alpha’s shoulder. Whimpering broken disjointed mewls, Derek having bitten the healing mark and flaring on the old pains to life once more.

“Bastard.” Stiles hissed; his eyes clamped tight as the wolf proceeded to gnaw at the flesh.

When the alpha was satisfied with the mark he’d agitated by reopening and further destroyed healing flesh, he redirected his attention to lapping a path down the human’s chest before raising his legs to rest over his shoulders. He parted the cleft of Stiles’ buttocks, revealing the pert rosy entrance of the human and set upon licking at the outer region, each stroke was full of intent and eagerness; each evoked a stuttering breath of progression to escape.

Stiles’ hips quaked persistently, his hands grasped to the sheets with desperation, but it still wasn’t enough to ground him, to keep him from whimpering—much like a compliant mate would and this pleased the wolf greatly for he growled in answer.

Stiles shoved back and against the alpha’s vibrating tongue, growls so deep and wild, feral and dangerous—it was exciting the human. He was losing his mind as the starved wolf drank keenly and plundered his depths.

Derek swirled his tongue around the puckered skin in a circular motion and then proceeded to drive in, piercing the human’s core.

Stiles arched his back much like a withering bow of tension and delight, the sensation building up and racking him with pleasure. His tremulous legs struggled to support his own weight. Derek answered Stiles’ wordless plea, by sliding further through the narrow passage and twirled his tongue about with lively questing intrigue and passed the ringlets of muscles.

The taste of Stiles filled Derek’s senses with bitter saltiness that was laced in sweet honey. Lapping eagerly at the human’s entrance with greed, he was still filled with a need to have more—taste the human entirely. Shoving his tongue hard and curling through undulating cords of muscles he struck at the center of the human.

Stiles groaned, his flushed face clammy with sweat and pressing against the cool sheets. Derek’s tongue jabbing further, nose pressed at the crease he nuzzled the human as a finger slipped in to join his tongue. The alpha shoved his tongue deep and then withdrew it, before slipping further
back in to swivel about, following the movement with his finger. Stiles shifted his body against the wolf, meeting each of the alpha’s thrusts with his own.

Removing his tongue, Derek replaced it with another finger to further stretch the human’s contracting walls. Stiles huffed heavily, harsh breathing and soft mewls filling the room whilst his hips rocked unevenly and his grip on sheets increased.

While Derek added a third finger to stretch him, the wolf licked a wet trail under Stiles’ sack, slow and lazy-like. Fangs hooked over his bottom lip by the delectable taste of musk that rolled and filled the alpha’s taste buds, buzzing and dizzying. It clouded his senses. The heady flavor, along with Stiles’ moans and shudders made Derek’s hardness ache.

Derek’s body was overcome by heat. His constant need for pleasure mixed with that of having Stiles laid out in front of him—practically begging for his touch was enough to bring a starved beast to its knees. He couldn’t wait any longer. He wouldn’t. He’d waited long enough.

The sounds Stiles made gave the wolf the inclination he felt Derek’s need as if it was his own.

“Please...” Stiles huffed. “Just—need.”

Derek panted with hankering and removed his hands from out of Stiles.

"Please.” Stiles sobbed weakly, delirious with pleasure and still wanting more of it.

Derek grasped at Stiles’ buttocks, spreading them open and with great care and measured movements guided his throbbing arousal against the entrance. Pressing the head of his manhood passed the tightness of the human’s entrance Derek felt the muscular walls close around his mass in a vice-like grip and let out a feral snarl as he pressed forward and with one harsh thrust, claimed what had always been his.

“Mine.” Derek whispered and as he claimed his mate he took possession of pale lips and silenced Stiles’ grated and broken whine of distress. Derek drove forward still, passed the human’s protesting entrance and Stiles grunted in answer.

“Brute.” Stiles sneered a frustrated curse, wrapping his arms tight about Derek’s shoulders and holding him close, nails digging in flesh and bearing the alpha’s unforgiving steadfast thrusts, exhaling forcefully as he took in the fullness of the beast that stretched him far more than his fingers had.

Stiles’ body trembled consumed by an unearthly pleasure, building and growing, filling him and sending his body jolting with delights of a once thought unimaginable elation. Derek thrust back and forth at a swift pace, shoving into Stiles and managed to slip in halfway mid-thrust before Stiles’ muscles clamped around the wolf’s arousal, holding fast.

“Stiles.” Derek groaned lewdly against the human’s ear, before sucking at the blood of his neck and used his werewolf strength to battle against Stiles’ firmly clamped muscles of nerves and tension to drive fully into him once more.

Stiles hummed a mixture of encouragement and discomfort, though the encouragement seemed far more prominent in his vocalization. But there was still Stiles’ nerves that caused him to continue to clamp up and fight against the strong wolf’s thrusts and doing so inflicted a soreness to claim the human. The pain stung, but Stiles couldn’t deny the greatness that came with the never before felt phenomenal gratification; it surpassed any he every experienced with the wolf. He honestly couldn’t understand why he’d been so against mating in the first place. Stiles’ muscles broke their
death grip shaken by gratification that overcame him.

Growling lustfully, Derek clamped his teeth against Stiles tattered neck and sucked unsympathetically, swallowing the blood that overflowed his mouth. The alpha knew he was losing control, that his animal side was taking over almost completely and that if he didn’t reel it back soon, he could end up really hurting the human, but God, the human was drugging him with the scent of his arousal. Derek was finding it difficult to see reason. Stiles gasped stridently, the stinging pain of Derek’s razor sharp teeth buried deep in his neck was nothing compared to the waves of rapture sweeping over him and shivers of desire coursing through his spine.

"Derek…” Stiles struggled to voice, needing to calm the wolf, though finding the pleasure building to an all time high he lost himself to it. “Der—uhh!” Stiles whimpered, squinting eyes shut tight whilst gritting his teeth and moaning all at the same time.

"Mine." Derek graveled against Stiles’ neck.

Stiles nodded deliriously, unable to make clear sense of anything but what he was feeling; flinching and whimpering each time Derek gnawed at his neck.

Derek at last found the will to remove his fangs from out of Stiles and threw his head back to snarl with feral excitement. Blood coated his teeth and dripped from his mouth as he panted out in exertion. Stiles gasped in reply, feeling faint from the loss of blood in addition to the bliss that the alpha bestowed onto him as he sped his thrusts and struck gold.

“Derek, God, Derek!” Stiles praised, shoving his hips back to meet the wolf’s thrusts.

Leaning back into the crook of Stiles’ neck, Derek lapped at the wound with gentleness and love and Stiles moaned his forgiveness. Derek drew his hips back before pounding in and Stiles grumbled hoarsely by the power and momentum of his movements. They both amplified the tempo of their hips as Derek shifted and struck at the sensitive bundle of nerves within Stiles’ being, electrifying his pleasure point.

Stiles withered; head jerked back, teeth bared, bucking wildly. Derek drove in with force and without pause, all while his hand fondled the human with urgency, needing to have his release.

“Derek!” Stiles sobbed.

Stiles was so close now; he could feel his stomach coil in tingling sensations and the starting of release and a guttural noises deep in his chest was released all while he could hear Derek’s animalistic growls. Derek’s hand tightened around his sack while his other slid from his chest to grasp his throbbing arousal and stroked at it.

“Yes!” Stiles cried, thrusting up into the wolf’s hand and back down and against him. It was apparent Stiles was teetering on the edge of achieving paradise.

All at once, with little warning but that of his accelerating heart beat, Stiles was coming, spurring out all over Derek’s hand. Stiles whimpered as his hips squirmed in the aftershocks of his climax and he rocked into Derek’s open fist and rode the last waves of his orgasmic high. And as Stiles cooled, he collapsed against the bed, deadweight.

Spreading his legs farther apart, Stiles rested his damp head on a plush pillow and exposed more of his wounded neck for the wolf to devour. Stiles whimpered needing more as Derek continued to plow through him, hammering past his relaxed entrance, taking all he wanted from the compliant and quivering pile of sweaty human.
Derek leaned forward, pressing his temple against Stiles’ jaw and mouthed his bloodied and sticky with sweat neck as he pummeled his lover’s taunt entrance surrounding him in sweltering heat. Raising his head and tilting it to the side Derek met Stiles’ eyes with his own. Increasing his thrusts inhumanly, his stomach filled with the bundle of chaotic sensations that signaled his release and he came before he could make sense of it. Derek shuddered with his release, gritting his teeth to restrain his cries, yet was helpless to do so and roared out the primal call of a werewolf as his orgasm vibrated throughout his body.
Stiles couldn’t recall the precise moment he fell asleep, but he knew it came soon after he was overcome by bliss and Derek released his seed within him. His body was sore, rear achingly throbbing with the coarseness that had been Derek’s thrusts, his bandaged stitches blazed and aggravated. He woke early that morning to the soreness of that which claimed his rear and groaned groggily with protest as his head was buried deep in his pillow and his heavy husband was currently on top of him.

Stiles huffed a deep exhale and nudged the large bulking mass of muscles, attempting to throw off the slumbering brute, but found he was unsuccessful.

“Off!” Stiles grunted frustrated whilst smacking the beast’s rock-hard back. He wasn’t strong enough to shove his Hercules off and he seriously needed to take a piss.

The alpha grumbled unenthusiastically, half asleep as he rolled himself off the slighter and onto his back revealing himself to the human. Stiles flushed then. Derek was still hard, heat still present and he knew it best to allow the alpha some rest. It’d give him some time to tend to his aches and pains.

When Stiles entered the shower and the heat of the showerhead sprayed his body, he immediately felt his muscles slacken under the therapeutic heat. The soothing steaming waters easily washed away the dried blood sticking to his neck. His rear stung by the heat of the shower. Although, the painkillers he’d taken just before showering seemed to have kicked in.

As it was now, his wounded bum throbbed dully, slowly numbing out even that discomfort as the time passed.

Stiles shut his eyes and pressed his forehead against the tiled wall of the shower, his back taking on the brunt of its spray and further releasing his tensions.

The moment a pair of arms coiled about his waist and yanked him back into heated flesh Stiles cried out in fear, tensing. When a deep gravel of enjoyment escaped his attacker, Stiles calmed.

“You scared the hell out of me.” Stiles reprimanded, not amused in the least when Derek tucked his head at the crook of his neck and began lapping at the hideously bruised black and purple neck.

“Hmm.” Derek didn’t seem apologetic and this further agitated the human.

“An ‘I’m sorry’, would have been acceptable.”

“I’m not.”

“Such an ass.” Stiles’ eyes narrowed though he pressed himself closer to the wolf that frustrated him so and caressed the trunks encasing his waist.

“Mine.” Derek sighed almost with relief and pressed kind kisses upon his aching neck.

“Yeah.” Stiles confirmed and tilted his head away from the spray and against Derek’s right shoulder and stared at the ceiling.

“You can’t let people touch you, especially werewolves of other packs.” Derek murmured distractedly, a hand palming Stiles’ lower waist while his other wandered further south.
“And why’s that?” Stiles had no reservations on following Derek’s request, but he liked to agitate the wolf. If questioning the alpha on matters that seemed to stem from werewolves instinctually exhibiting territorial characteristics happened to piss the wolf, well that was a perk.

Derek grumbled unhappily, seeming to have wished Stiles conform to his request without questioning his plea.

“You can’t be this dense.”

“Excuse me.”

“We’re mated. Mates aren’t allowed to be scented by others.”

“And if we are?”

“Only by pack and family, even then it mustn’t occur too often and their scent mustn’t overpower my own.”

“Gosh, can you say possessive?”

“It’s not possessive.” Derek snapped and nipped Stiles’ neck for good measure earning a sob and a grumble in reply.

“Ass, you really need to lay off the neck.”

“Promise me.”

“I really don’t see what the issue it. So what if I happen to smell like someone else.” Stiles was teasing the brute, though Derek didn’t seem to realize this and immediately tensed.

“You really are a cheater.”

Stiles rolled his eyes at this.

“I’m a friendly guy. What’s so wrong with that?” Stiles struggled to restrain a laugh when the alpha tightened his hold about his waist as if to stake his claim.

“You…are you really?”

Stiles tilted his head towards Derek’s and the alpha finally came to realize the human was teasing him.

“So you wouldn’t find any issue with me scenting others?” Derek offered as a form of a challenge.

Stiles wasn’t amused, his smirk falling away instantly.

“You wouldn’t.”

“Cheat on me again and we’ll see.”

“Oh, for the love of GOD! I’ve never cheated on you, EVER!”

“I find that hard to believe. You keep on letting others scent you.”

“No trust, I swear man.” Stiles sighed irritably. “Fine, whatever, I’ll make sure I’m not scented again. Just stop calling me a cheat, because I didn’t and wouldn’t.”
“Good.” Derek smiled against Stiles’ cheek, his hands once more moving into motion; one stroking his abdomen while his other continued its path south.

“Derek.” Stiles breathed headily, burying his face against the crook of the wolf’s neck once more, panting harshly as a devious hand stroked at his arousal.

The heat of the shower, the dizzying steam and that of Derek’s stroking was enough to bring him off. He’d just about got off after the seventh stroke when Derek stilled his movements and within the cramped shower, spun him around, and wedged him into one corner of the shower, just under the showerhead.

Stiles whimpered when the alpha clasped a hold of his buttocks, his wound still present as was the pain—dulled as it might be.

“Sorry.” Derek murmured and without so much as another word planted eager kisses across the expanse of his neck.

The showerhead spouting water still managed to work its way between their bodies and slid about his pulsing length, greatening the pleasures the wolf was laying on him.

“Derek. I—hurry.” Stiles was so horny, it seemed as if all Derek had to do was kiss him and Stiles was on the verge of climaxing.

Derek didn’t seem all that interested in foreplay or drawing out the pleasure as he’d done the night before. Stiles could only assume that Derek had been keener on working Stiles up last night because it had been his first time, now however all sense of compassion and measured movements had been placed on a shelf far away and the werewolf only wanted to claim him.

“Fuck!” Stiles shuddered when cool fingers layered in shampoo slipped past his entrance as Derek swiftly worked on finding his pleasure point.

“Be easy, dude.” Stiles pleaded, biting into the wolf’s shoulder lightly in comparison to what he was used to from the alpha and struggled to breathe past the shivers of excitement.

“Be easy, dude? I’m not your dude.” Derek snorted amusedly.

“Oh, shut up.” Stiles grumbled with agitation, though soon found his features tensing as Derek struck heaven and soon after was a groaning pile of sweat and need.

“Derek.” Stiles whined clutching to his brute’s shoulders and wrapping his legs around the wolf’s waist. “God, feels, oh.” Stiles broke off in a throaty moan, tilting his head back and against the corner of the shower, nails digging deep into rejuvenating flesh.

Derek removed his fingers then and replaced them with his raging hard-on. The moment Derek pushed through compressing muscles and struck that spot of ultimate gratification Stiles was gone.

Derek was running on pure animal instinct now, driving with force, not pausing to allow the human to adjust or catch his breath. Just kept thrusting and striking that one place within him that sent Stiles’ mind a thousand different places and turned his words into meshed up vowels of piercing measures.

Stiles’ toes curled as he neared completion and the moment Derek took hold of his arousal to fondle with care whilst his other dug deep into his thankfully unwounded cheek was enough to bring him to his knees—or in this case to his end as he came now, hard and vociferously.
Derek growled deeply, heavily, overcome, primal as madder depths glowed and flashed up to meet his gaze. Their mouths were inches from the other, inhaling and exhaling each other’s harsh gasps and grunts for air.

Derek’s hand clamping hard on his rear suddenly pierced skin as his claws burst forth and his features hardened in a snarl of a beast. Derek shifted between the hub of a werewolf and a human. Eyes gleaming inhumanly, yet still bearing recognition.

Derek arched then, head thrown back as he roared out with bliss and came. Stiles moaned contentedly, feeling the very moment Derek released within his inner heat and filled him with his essence.

Only the very next moment Stiles tensed at the feel of Derek’s girth swelling—as if ready for another round. Though that wasn’t right, there was something different about this rekindled arousal. The swelled pulsing was occurring at the base of Derek’s length and at the brim of his entrance. Swelling and growing, pressing against his walls.

First it came as a dull throbbing as the base of Derek’s length swelled, but only too soon did it grow too broad; thick, it jammed his entrance and burned his protesting walls.

“Derek.” Stiles whimpered, body tensing once more, a grimace sprouting across his features as the swelling seemed to continue its growth and Stiles was seriously in pain now.

“Get—it out.” Stiles began squirming. Unsure what was happening, but knowing that whatever it was wasn’t good and he certainly didn’t want it in him.

“Stiles.” Derek started, voice rough post-sex and breathless, seeming to enjoy the human’s struggles. This obviously wasn’t causing Derek any pain.

“Out. Get it out.” Stiles sobbed. Fuck, because it really hurt. Tears were already overflowing the lids of his eyes as he continued to struggle. Hands gripping to the alpha’s shoulders while his hips twisted from side to side trying to get out of Derek’s hold. The werewolf didn’t seem to want to release the human as he was now gripping to Stiles’ waist with both hands and shoving the slighter harshly against the wall and pressing himself further inside him.

“God. It hurts. Stop it Derek. Take it out!” Stiles was hissing his plea now, struggling all the more as a choked sob escaped his lips and Derek was suddenly nuzzling his neck, almost apologetically, though he did nothing to answer Stiles’ plea.

“I can’t.” Derek finally replied.

“Why?” Stiles grunted, attempting to plant his feet against Derek’s hips in order to gain leverage, enough to shove the wolf away and get that pulsing swelled rock-like thing out of him. Derek simply shoved Stiles further against the wall and held tightly to his waist to counter the human’s attempts and Stiles sobbed once more.

“It’ll go away soon.” Derek attempted to appease Stiles’ displeasure and soothe his pain.

“What is it?” Stiles panted, overcome with fatigue, unsuccessful in his attempts to free himself from the pained bulge.

Derek leaned in close to press his forehead against Stiles’ shoulder, almost as if embarrassed and unable to make eye contact. “An alpha’s knot.”

Stiles stilled, brows furrowing confusedly. “What the hell is an alpha’s knot?”
Derek huffed a breath as if agitated, though Stiles felt he was justified in asking when said knot was currently raping his entrance.

“İt’s a werewolf thing—an alpha werewolf thing.”

Stiles could just strangle Derek—always mysterious and evasive.

“I figured as much, but why do alphas have it?” This was good; talking helped distract Stiles from the pain.

“It’s a part of mating.”

“Mating? Then why didn’t it happen any of the other times we were together?”

“It only happens during an alpha’s heat cycle.”

“Then why didn’t it happen yesterday?”

“That was different.”

“How’s that?”

“I’d never claimed you until last night. The first time an alpha mates with their true mate they can’t knot, though after the first they continue knotting during their heat.”

“How’s that possible?”

“True mates can’t hurt their partner. It’s only because of this I didn’t knot with you last night. If you weren’t my true mate I wouldn’t have been able to stop myself from knotting.”

“So you can’t control it.”

“No.”

“And you’re going to keep knotting with me?”

“Until my heat cycle ends.”

“Will it hurt less?”

“I’d assume so.”

“How long does this knot—it will go down right? We’re not going to have to tug it out?” Stiles seriously didn’t even want to imagine the pain of separating like this. Having struggled to do so earlier was unbelievably painful, but he’d been in shock.

“It’ll recede.”

“How long till then?”

“I’m not sure. It’s different for every alpha.”

Stiles frowned then. “Estimate.”

“Thirty minutes to an hour, I’d assume.”

Stiles glared at the side of Derek’s face, the alpha sensing it was smart not to make eye contact
with the agitated human.

Stiles slammed his hand back against the knob of the shower, switching it off and wrapped his arms about the alpha’s shoulder’s to steady himself in his current position while relaxing his legs about the beast’s waist.

“Such an ass—you might have thought to explain this earlier.”

“I’m sorry.” Derek apologized, though Stiles was a bit too pissed to acknowledge it.

“Jerk.”

Derek didn’t respond, knowing it was best not to further annoy his mate.

“Is there anything else I should know about mating with an alpha?” Stiles was miffed, undoubtedly so.

“Nothing else.” Derek responded, and as Stiles sighed with relief he remained blind to that of Derek’s shifting gaze.

Once they completed washing themselves of the remains of a quite frenzied love session in the shower they wandered back to the bed, slipping under the sheets as they both were exhausted; Derek from his heat and Stiles because of Derek’s need to copulate.

Derek’s resting session and Stiles’ sleep was disturbed when the alpha’s heat rose and the need to copulate once again flared. Stiles awoke what could only be a quarter of an hour later to Derek nipping at the lower part of the back of his neck and to two intrusive fingers already pressing passed stinging walls and spreading him open once more.

Stiles drowsily grumbled his complaint of a disturbed slumber. Though that grumble swiftly shifted to a throaty groan as the wolf struck that place within him that sent jolts of delight.

Stiles was suddenly raising himself onto his knees, curling his arms around his pillow and burying his head in the center of his arms. He bit into the thick downy pillow in order to silence his groans, though they only became muffled and piercingly high as Derek’s devious tongue joined questing fingers.

Stiles was burning up in a matter of moments, his stiff arousal pulsing with every seizure of bliss and still craving more.

“Please.” Stiles was so beyond words, but still needed to plead just once, manage to formulate a single word that said everything.

Please, it seemed to be a word the wolf could comprehend as the alpha had shifted and claws now deep within cautiously slid from out of him. When the head of Derek’s massive girth pressed at his entrance and the alpha’s fangs dug into his tattered neck, Stiles hummed his enjoyment.

It didn’t take long for Derek to charge forwards and begin a rough unforgiving pace, Derek’s thrusts were far too fast for Stiles to count or brace himself for. Stiles collapsed against the bed and pressed his face against the pillow, crying muffled moans of pleasure.

Derek immediately laid himself on Stiles much like another layer of skin and their bodies rocked together as one by their new position. Stiles found it hard to breathe or catch his breath enough to
ask for more, but Derek still gave him more—gave him his all—filled him deep and completely.

Stiles couldn’t hold back and came soon after; his compressed arousal couldn’t take the heat and friction. Stiles was riding a rollercoaster of pleasures as Derek seemed to strengthen his thrusts all the more and his speed therefore increasing, a sign he was near and ready.

Stiles attempted to prepare himself for that moment and what would follow after, knotting.

Derek’s fangs dug unkindly against his destroyed neck and all Stiles could do was bear the pain, whining, hopeful that Derek would regain enough consideration and logic to realize Stiles was human and could only take so much.

True mates being unable to hurt their spouse be damned, it seemed marking their mates was a total freebee which sucked unbelievably so for the human Stiles. Just how much blood had he lost? Derek needed to back down some or Stiles was sure he’d pass out if the wolf continued to chomp on his neck every time they mated.

Derek growled deep, hunched, pressing his full weight against Stiles as he came, filling him with his seed, breeding him thoroughly. God that thought made Stiles feel all types of horny and so soon after climaxing.

But any sparks of a rekindled arousal died away as soon as that growth thickened, swelled.

“Fuck!” Stiles burst out and bit deeply into his pillow; eyes shimmering as that blasted knot stretched him further, seeming to want to rip him apart.

“Shhh.” A humanized Derek hummed.

Stiles jerked his legs against the bed attempting to make himself comfortable, as much as he could with a massive amount of werewolf release, jaw dropping length and knot all overwhelming his sacred place. Stiles didn’t think he’d ever adjust to the alpha’s knot. No way in hell.

Stiles tried to endure it as best he could. The alpha laid gentle, fond kisses upon his face and neck, cooed sweetly in his ear and lapped up the blood from off his injured neck, but Stiles only grumbled unhappily.

“Brute.” Stiles cursed.

“You’re beautiful.”

Stiles stiffened, his right eye twitching just slightly.

“Don’t even try sweet talking your way out of this.”

“I’m not.”

“You are beautiful… Any children you have would be just as beautiful.” Came the alpha’s soft contemplation.

Stiles choked on spit.

“What!” Stiles squawked unmanly.

“What?” Derek parroted.

Stiles felt a dozen—hundred—thousand—million butterflies swarm the pit of his stomach.
“I—I thought I said to stop the damn sweet talking. St—still pissed, here.” Stiles stuttered out, attempting to appear unfazed, though it didn’t seem to be working out for him.

“I wasn’t.” Derek whispered bowing himself as close to Stiles as he could and brushed his nose along the length of his right shoulder and neck.

All at once it was hard to breathe, much less formulate a response. Derek—that damn brute was teasing Stiles. It had to be the case, because there was no way in hell Derek actually meant what he was saying right now.

“S—stop teasing.” Stiles blundered, voice wavering with the possibility Derek wasn’t—that he meant what he’d said—implied.

Having children was a sensitive subject to Stiles. He’d always wanted a family, bigger now since he was the last of the Stilinskis’. After losing his father, Stiles had felt a sense of abandonment and loneliness, even when he had more than a handful of friends and they treated him like family—it wasn’t the same.

“I’m not.”

From their current position it was difficult to meet the wolf’s face, especially now that Derek was making a point to caress the human’s neck with his nose and mouth, planting breathless wet kisses.

“Are you saying you want children?” Stiles became blunt, voice harsh, not in the mood for any of Derek’s games. If the wolf was teasing him, he needed to say so now. Stiles didn’t want to allow himself to hope. Hoping wherever Derek was involved had hurt him so many times in the past.

“I’m not saying that,” Derek deliberated with consideration.

Stiles felt his shoulders sag by the alpha’s response—so matter-of-fact and without hesitation.

“I’m not saying I wouldn’t either.” Derek added a beat later.

Stiles wasn’t sure what that meant. Derek wasn’t saying he wanted children, but he still wasn’t saying he didn't wanted them either. What could this mean for them?

“I care for you.” Derek added fondly.

“I know.” Stiles wasn’t surprised by the alpha’s statement, he knew Derek held some fondness for him. But was it enough that he’d be open to the possibility of having a family with him?

“I’ve never wanted children.” Derek finally voiced and with his admission Stiles felt disheartened.

“I lost my family, my uncle murdered my sister to become the alpha and I killed him to bring peace. I haven’t had the most perfect life.”

“Still…that doesn’t mean you can’t have children?” Stiles objected, seeing where Derek was headed with his reflection.

“Doesn’t it? Even now things are still rocky. I’m a newly appointed head alpha with a massive pack and there are many disputes between the lot of them needing my attention, causing me to travel and monitor alphas daily.”

So that was why Derek left him for alpha business and needed to call and answer his phone so much? Suddenly Stiles felt guilty for giving Derek such a hard time for his need to attend to his
alpha business.

“You still make time for me. I’m sure you could do the same for a child.”

Derek didn’t speak for several moments and Stiles could feel the very moment Derek pursed his lips against the flesh of his shoulder.

“There is always a chance an enemy pack would threaten the life of an alpha’s child.”

Stiles smiled softly at this, though he knew it wasn’t a laughable moment, seeing the amount of caution Derek held for a figurative child was heartening.

“You sound like a father now. One who worries about being able to offer the child a loving environment, stability and protection. From what I see, I think you would make a wonderful parent.”

Derek pressed a grateful kiss upon Stiles’ shoulder, wordlessly thanking him for his kind words and exhaled his worries.

“You want children.” Derek stated more than asked.

“Many, many children.” Stiles supplied buoyant.

Derek released a sudden and surprised chuckle.

“Have you chosen any names?”


Derek’s smile practically pinched the ends of his lips as he snorted with amusement near Stiles’ neck.

“What? You don’t like them?”

“No. I like them.”

“Really?”

“Mmm.”

“Seriously?”

“Yes.”

“So does this mean you’d definitely want children with me?”

“Mmm.” Derek hummed his agreement, nuzzling up Stiles’ neck to his check and kissed him firmly there.

Stiles grinned goofily then.

Stiles had been so distracted with their conversation that he hadn’t noticed when Derek’s knot retreated. Only when Derek removed himself from out of him and turned him over so that Stiles finally stared up at Derek and met his hazel depths did it fully dawn on him.

Raising a hand, Stiles ran his fingers through Derek’s unjelled, silk-like and dark as ebony mane.
“I’d love it if our child had your hair. I love running my hands through it. I believe it’s my new obsession.”

Derek laughed victoriously then, true and pure, no facades or barriers built to protect himself. To Stiles, Derek was open, vulnerable. The alpha willingly allowing Stiles to see a side to himself known to no one else and this made Stiles feel special in the best of ways.

“God, do I love you.” Stiles huffed readily.

Derek’s smile broadened and Stiles’ heart sped by the sight. Just that look alone made Stiles the happiest he’d ever been and he could truly die a happy man knowing it had been him who made the broody sour wolf smile like that. That smile was deemed as Derek’s smile only made for Stiles.

“Stiles…” Derek murmured and there…right there, Stiles could hear it—the gratefulness, compassion and tenderness. When Derek said his name like that he knew it was his way of voicing his love—or as close to love sentiments to him.

He was blissfully happy. This was the life that Stiles had always wanted, yet never thought he’d want. Derek the moodiest, grumpiest wolf he’d ever met. Derek: a hot-headed, infuriating, though thoughtful, protective, devoted and loyal mate.
Love & Marriage

Stiles was sore. That damn brute had worn him out. After his ass of a husband surprised him from his sleep to mate they’d fallen asleep again—rather Stiles slept while Derek remained up, massaging his aching body and stroking his skin with a new found need and unflagging arousal. Stiles grumbled and slapped Derek’s wandering hands as they roamed his most private areas attempting to bring him up for another round.

However, Stiles was not a werewolf nor was he in heat, so the needy alpha would need to wait a bit. Give Stiles some real rest before Stiles would even think about going in for another round. Derek had not given up though. He’d caressed and stroked, mouthed, nibbled and sucked at every other place, but for where Stiles had stupidly disciplined Derek for touching. Unwanted as it might have been, Stiles became aroused and several moments later he begged Derek to forgive him for his stubbornness and to please continue his attentions further south. Thankfully, Derek had and therefore ensued several more rounds of mating. Stiles lost count after the fourth and just allowed the wolf to take control.

Drowsy from sleep deprivation and having a sex driven alpha laying pursuit onto his body was oddly enough the most exotic combination. Stiles became a moaning pile of sweat, manhandled into all types of different positions: upright straddling Derek as he plowed through and against his receptive gland. Stiles struggled to remain upright while grasping desperately to an in-heat alpha’s broad shoulders as they came to completion. Another time with Derek on top and Stiles’ legs jammed between them. Again, Derek on top and burying himself deep into Stiles, pressing him into the bed, leaving him to shrivel up in bliss and grasp at the sheets in disarray. Derek and Stiles, both, losing themselves in the throes of passion, rolling about in the sheets, tangling themselves up in them, gasping for air and hanging on for dear life as they reached their climax and rolled off the bed shouting uproars of ecstasy. Derek pinning Stiles to the floor as he groaned dizzily, Stiles wet with sweat and entrance full of release, enough so that by that point it was spilling out of him with every outward thrust Derek made.

By the time Derek was appeased and allowed the human rest, Stiles was trembling with all the pleasures that the alpha gave, moaning with relief and post orgasmic elation. The two fell asleep soon after that.

Stiles was more than surprised when he realized Derek was slumbering beside him and he’s woken first. Stiles couldn't help but feel clammy covered in sweat and having an equally sweaty Derek holding on tight.

Stiles winced as he shifted slightly and his entranced flared, sore beyond belief. All he wanted to do now was to slip into a shower and allow the soothing heat to wash his tension away—along with his own sticky release slathering his lower regions, stomach and chest.

Glancing up and at the slumbering alpha, arms wrapped tight around his waist and head centimeters from his own, Stiles realized he needed to be cautious when disentangling himself from the wolf or he might risk waking the brute and ensuing another mating marathon.

Stiles held his breath and pressed through, taking each step as it came. First he had to untangle himself from the alpha’s arms, then slowly slide his legs out from under one of the alpha’s own, before shifting off the bed inch by inch.

Stiles finally escaped the clutches of the slumbering alpha and hurriedly made his way to the
bathroom when a whine startled him and made him still in his steps. Glancing to the bed, he raised a brow with confusion as Derek appeared to be slumbering still.

Stiles jumped, startled when something brushed against his legs. Turning his sights to the ground, he found the reason for the whine as it was Dasher who’d cried out for him. Only then did he realize it was morning and Dasher had yet to eat. The poor pup was undoubtedly hungry.

Stiles glanced forlornly at the bathroom where the shower was, quickly retrieved his robe and wandered into the kitchen to feed Dasher.

After Stiles prepared Dasher’s meal his stomach growled, prompted by seeing Dasher happily eat her own meal, his stomach pleaded for nourishment.

Stiles promised himself to shower after he ate and began to make the largest sandwich he’d ever made in his entire life; full of four different types of meat, tomatoes, salad, cilantro, red onions and bell peppers.

Stiles didn’t waste any time with sitting himself on the counter and began eating his meal standing upright. The first bite was heaven, the second divine and the third absolutely amazing—almost better than sex.

What was wrong with him? Sex with Derek was so much better than the sandwich—still, moderation of sex was lovely.

As Stiles took a fourth bite he tensed when arms wrapped around his waist.

“You shouldn’t leave your in-heat mate alone in bed.” Derek murmured, mouthing hungrily at Stiles’ neck. “It makes them anxious and their wolf instincts kick in.”

“But I had to feed Dasher and I can’t remain in bed permanently. I need to eat and shower.” Stiles muffled out through his bite-full, shifting on his feet when Derek thrust his hips forwards and his hardness pressed through the thin fabric of his robe and against his buttocks.

Derek groaned lewdly at the motion of his own hips and began to thrust continuously against Stiles’ firm buttocks. Stiles was reminded of a dog humping a bitch—and that so wasn’t supposed to turn him on.

“I’m going to breed you so thoroughly.” Derek growled and thrust his hips ruthlessly then, his promise clearly acted out as Stiles fell forwards by the power and he dropped his sandwich onto the plate.

Stiles swallowed his mouthful loudly and moaned when one of Derek’s sneaky hands weaved through his robe and took hold of his hardening length.

“Oh God.” Stiles gasped, struggling to remain in control, but quickly losing himself to the alpha.

“Fuck your cum consumed entrance raw.”

Stiles’ knees buckled and his hands slapped against the counters edge to hold himself upright.

“Derek, as much as that’s nice to hear, can’t we do that after I eat?” Stiles whispered throatily, hungry for both food and Derek, but needing to replenish himself. “You should eat too.”

“I’m not hungry.” Derek answered having not been wavered by Stiles’ plea.
“Still, I need to eat!” Stiles exclaimed the last as Derek’s other hand raised the robe and with one hard thrust Derek entered him.

“Oh God!” Stiles exclaimed, bending over against the counter, sliding his plate away and spreading his legs open.

Derek wasn’t going to wait and give in to foreplay. Immediately, he began a harsh and quick pace, pounding into him, until Stiles had to brace himself.

Derek stroked Stiles just as quickly, thumb rubbing the slit of his head speedily and Stiles was already struggling to hold on and not give in too quickly.

Stiles couldn’t last as long as he wanted to and came with a shout of bliss followed by mortification, realizing Dasher was in the room.

Derek grunting low, hips pistons of strength slammed and smacked Stiles’ sensitive rear, flaring trills to erupt from slackened jaws.

When Derek finally came it was with a roar, chilling enough to cause Dasher to leave the room and make Stiles stomach churn with excitement.

A total of three weeks passed before Derek’s heat fizzed out and Stiles felt as if he’d die. Derek’s promise that he’d fuck him raw had undoubtedly been true as Stiles had been thoroughly mated and his entrance pulverized.

Thankfully as the mating continued, Derek became gentler and the mating in itself became less unremitting.

By the third week their mating was almost back to how it had been before Derek’s heat. Derek was considerate, took his time and thankfully preformed foreplay to help ease things for Stiles. Derek still struggled to remain within his human form and his alpha tendencies made him possessive, domineering and coarse in claiming.

By the third week Stiles was so exhausted and sore he’d taken to resting his entire day in bed—on his stomach, as even laying on his buttocks was causing agitation. Derek brought him wondrous culinary meals and gave wonderful massages. Stiles could tell Derek felt guilty for losing his sense for reason during his heat and was obviously trying to make up for it.

Stiles would read books and watch television while Derek nuzzled close and scented him—though it really wasn’t needed and Derek would grin whenever near him and murmur something about Stiles reeking of his scent. It seemed to thrill Derek that Stiles was drenched in his scent that no matter how many showers he took he still smelled of the wolf. Stiles, a human could even smell it. He truly had been claimed and that still amazed him.

When Derek’s heat finally broke, Derek had apologized for his brute like behavior and promised to give Stiles time to heal and would wait until he was ready. Stiles was grateful and relieved, for although sex was wonderful, too much sex wasn’t all that it was cracked up to be. There was so such a thing as too much sex and if any one said otherwise, he had a whole list of reasons why.

They spent the remainder of their honeymoon in bed talking about nothing and everything, making each other laugh and it was great. Stiles couldn’t remember a time that he’d been this happy in years.
When it was finally time for them to go back to Beacon Hills, Stiles was disappointed. He loved having so much alone time with Derek and it seemed too short. He didn’t want to go back to the city where drama and trouble seemed to always be lurking at the corner.

But all good things must come to an end—otherwise known as, Mr. Moody made an appearance once more. On the day they were heading back to Beacon Hills, Derek received a call and after, remained in a sour mood.

Derek spent the remainder time at the cabin bossing Stiles around, hurrying him to finish packing so they could begin their journey back.

Within the car Derek remained silent and Stiles stared at him.

“Are you going to tell me what that phone call was about earlier?”

“No.”

“And why not?”

“It doesn’t concern you.”

“Excuse me?” Stiles hissed.

“It doesn’t.”

Stiles snorted unhappily. “Here I thought we just got married, had a great honeymoon and were going to start our marriage on the best of terms, but I guess I was wrong.”

“Alpha business doesn’t concern you. Our marriage is perfectly fine.” Derek argued.

Stiles glared at the absurdity of Derek’s logic. “I think I just might kill you. You should heal up afterwards, right?”

Derek flashed his own glare as if challenging Stiles to put his actions to where his words seemed to be implying.

“You are the most stubborn man I’ve had the misfortune of knowing.”

“Thank you.” Derek grumbled.

“I can’t stand you sometimes.”

“And I you.”

“What!”

“You think everything is so black and white. It isn’t.”

“And you lay hidden meanings in every subtext of a sentence, infuriating.”

“…..”

“Oh that’s nice. Don’t say anything. Just keep being a jerk.”

“…….”

“Really?”
............

“You’re really going to be like this?”

............

“Fine! You’re unbelievable.”

“...”

Stiles was going to kill Derek. He was sure the jury would sympathize with him, once they realized he’d married a complete idiot.

They spent the whole time driving home in absolute silence. Derek grinding his teeth and gripping the steering wheel with such force, Stiles was amazed it didn’t break under the power.

When they finally pulled up to their home, Stiles didn’t wait for the brute to switch off the engine before he slipped out of the car, grabbed his bags and stomped his way to the entrance of the home. He made it a point to slam the front door in Derek’s face before bounding the stairs two at a time and lastly slamming his bedroom door shut.

Within the bedroom Stiles managed to hear the moment Derek entered the house, heard the distant barking of Dasher and padding of clumsy paws—Stiles could imagine the pup following Derek much like a duckling would its mother.

Stiles listened intently as the alpha ascended the stairs and furrowed his brows when the wolf passed his room and wandered further across the hall. Stiles leaned closer to the shut door of the room and strained to hear all the more, breathing softly and closing his eyes using his sense of hearing to discern what Derek was doing.

A door creaked open and thumping and shuffling sounded soon after. Derek was moving into the room next to his own.

Stiles swallowed thickly and frowned.

That jerk really wanted separate rooms even after they agreed to live as one—a married couple in every sense of the word.

Stiles slid down the door and kneeled on the ground, sighing heavily when Derek scuffled out of the adjacent room, passed his own, down the stairs and shut the front door behind him. The revving of the Camaro as it sped off was a confirmation to the Sheriff that Derek had left without so much as a goodbye.

“Jerk.” Stiles grumbled, followed by scratching at his door and Dasher whimpering, begging to be let in to the room to join him.

Stiles huffed with agitation, before rising and allowed Dasher to join him in the room where he spent the next few hours unpacking and grumbling curses about his douche bag husband.

Later that evening there came incessant ringing of the bell at the front of the door and when he opened it to find Allison, Scott and Lydia, he wasn’t surprised. They knew when he planned to
arrive back at Beacon Hills and he knew they’d be curious as to how his trip was.

Stiles led the three to the kitchen where the girls fished through his fridge and cabinets and retrieved all sweets and junk foods. Allison and Lydia shared the chocolate peanut butter ice cream and baked potato chips, while Scott pigged out on beef jerky and gingersnaps. Stiles settled with chocolate chip cookies and a glass of milk.

Allison and Lydia were dying to know how the mating went; Scott on the other hand was concerned on whether Derek kept his reserve.

The scar on his neck told the three all they needed to know and Stiles wasn’t so forthcoming on what occurred during Derek and his mating season.

Allison and Lydia pouted sadly and whined wanting plenty of details while Scott was thankful Stiles was keeping his intimate life secret. The only thing Stiles said that referred to mating was the knotting and that for Lydia having not warned him about this; he’d inflicted payback without warning.

Lydia laughed it off, saying she didn’t think it was her place and thought it’d be amusing.

Stiles did tell them that they did talk and were able to work through a lot of the blockages concerning their trust for one another and that they’d found themselves sharing a closer bond with one another—that is until their fight, but Stiles wasn’t going to tell them about that.

For the later part of their get together they talked about everything else but his relationship with the alpha.

Scott and Stiles left the girls to barbeque some meat, deciding they might as well have dinner together. Scott talked about work and that Allison and he was debating on whether to start a family. Stiles noted he had to meet a therapist soon and be evaluated to see if he would be approved to start working again, but he wasn’t so worried about that. He wasn’t suffering from PSTD or anything else. His wounds were almost completely healed and only hurt when he pressed too harshly on them, his mobility was fine though.

They had a great dinner together, full of laughs and when they wandered to the living room to watch a movie that was the exact time Jackson and Danny arrived. Apparently they were supposed to meet up with the trio on their route to his home, but were otherwise occupied. No wanted clarity on what it was that kept them for so long. They had brains so they knew logically what it was, but didn’t want it confirmed.

It was late when the gang left and Stiles was exhausted.

Without having Derek for the length of a day, it left Stiles to think more over the cause of their argument. In all their time spent together Derek had never been willingly forthcoming—about anything. True they were married. But that was because of the treaty. The only reason they were going to live as a true couple was because Stiles had grown a set and exerted his dominance.

He really couldn’t blame the man. Derek was a reserved man by nature. Having your entire family murdered plus a crazy uncle tended to cause some standoffish hostility.

Realizing that the tension built between the two would only diminish if Stiles gave in a bit wasn’t all that pleasing for the Sheriff’s ego. Still, it was necessary.

Later that night the familiar humming of a car sounded and Stiles rose from his seat in the living room, switching off the television to greet the alpha as he entered the home moments after.
“I’m sorry.” They spoke in unison, both surprised by the other.

Silence followed as they began a stare down, waiting for the other to give first.

“I shouldn’t have pressured you. You have your own responsibilities that don’t concern me.”

“No. I shouldn’t have snapped at you. I’m just so used to handling things on my own.”

Silence once more and Stiles couldn’t help but to grin.

“Look at that, we had our first marital fight and we made up all in the same day. Does that mean now comes the makeup sex?”

Derek smirked and shook his head. “I’m so sated from mating that I just don’t have the drive.”

Stiles frowned. “Are you seriously turning down the sha-bang-bang alleluia? Are you *that* old?”

“I’m still open for scenting. I’d love to purge the scent of your friends.” Derek noted, voice rasped and taking that low tone that made Stiles feel all types of good. Derek ignored Stiles’ jibe and made a slight furl of his nose, scenting Stiles’ direction with displeasure.

Stiles sighed dramatically; showcasing utter disappointment at the fact they wouldn’t be knotting themselves up in love making.

Though the idea of Derek rubbing his scent on him wasn’t all that bad an idea. Stiles hadn’t liked that Derek unpacked in the room next to his. Now, however, they were going to share a room together and all was right again.

“Well, let’s get to it then.”
Ten months of wedded bliss came and went with many changes, but throughout it all, Stiles had remained happy—ridiculously happy. Sure Derek and Stiles would argue, which were followed by wounding insults. Having spent so much time bonding gave them leverage on the other and made for some smarting comebacks. Regardless, once the wolf calmed and Stiles reasoned logically with him, they would make up. It was usually then that they’d have fantastic makeup sex, if not that then affectionate scenting and cuddling.

Derek was more open about his feelings and expressed caring for Stiles with many heartening admissions of; ‘I missed you’ after spending a lengthy time away for alpha business, ‘I love your laugh’ when spending the day together, and so much more.

Most days Stiles came home early and Derek was always home by then, preparing a meal. They’d eat together at the kitchen island, in the dining room or curled close on the couch while watching a movie.

They always made it a point to spend the weekends together. They’d visit Stiles’ friends, have meals together. Derek was always reserved and tended to listen more when Stiles joked around with his friends. They would take Dasher to parks and spend hours in the comfort of each others presence.

Stiles didn’t even take notice to the citizens gaping when the two displayed public displays of affection. Stiles still wasn’t comfortable about kissing in public, but holding hands or embracing was all fine with him.

Stiles finally got his revenge on Lydia and secretly set her up on a date with Matt. She’d thought she was going to meet Stiles for dinner when instead she found herself on a date with the photographer, who’d expressed to him he was interested in the fiery redhead.

Surprisingly, the date went well and three months later, Lydia and Matt became a devoted pair. Stiles couldn’t have been more thrilled.

On a clear night, Stiles sat next to Derek in a dimly lit theater; arms folded across his chest and stared at the screen. He’d been looking forward to the RomCom Convention.

They were in the middle of the first film when Derek reached out; pried one of his hands folded across his chest and placed it onto his lap. The brute began to cradle it with care, swiping his fingers over the tense flesh and calming the human steadily.

Stiles raised his gaze and met Derek’s own, his face cast in a light blue hue reflecting off the screen. The alpha seemed serene, smiling softly at the human while gripping his hand with affection.

“What?” Stiles questioned.

“Nothing.” Derek murmured, tilted his head to lean against Stiles’ forehead.

“Really now?”

“Just…”
“What?”

“You make me happy.”

Stiles stilled, genuinely surprised. He never expected Derek to ever say something like this, such a simple phrase, but it still brought with it a havoc of emotions.

Stiles’ heart began to pound loudly against his chest, slamming in a rapid pace whilst he leaned in closer still, brushing their lips together in greeting. Derek nudged Stiles’ nose in reply, scenting his human.

“You make me happy too.” Stiles answered, a slight smile tugging the ends of his lips as his frustrations vanished and left blissful comfort. As they curled into one another, the distant sound of the film played a jovial instrumental piece while Stiles threaded his fingers in Derek’s hair and nuzzled his ear to whisper, “I love you.”

Derek shivered in response and Stiles chuckled with glee.

Another month passed and it was now November. The air was crisp; the sky was pale grey and the softest blues. The leaves were colorful and bright and it was Thanksgiving.

Derek and Stiles decided to spend their Thanksgiving lunch at Melisa and Chris Argent’s home with Scott and Allison, before the four headed over to Lydia’s to eat dinner with her, Matt, Jackson and Danny. The meals went by as civil as they could be. The first had been far tenser; Chris and Derek didn’t speak all that much with one another. They’d been taught to hate the other, and no matter that a peace treaty had been made and the humans were steadily growing in numbers now that werewolves were forbidden to kill or turn them, nothing would change between the two men.

Chris Argent was a hunter and Derek was a werewolf. Still, the two hadn’t lost their tempers and having chosen to keep their distance had been a real life saver.

Dinner at Lydia’s had been great. Everyone seemed to have been getting along with one another. Jackson kept Danny away from the alcohol while Matt spoke with them. Lydia and Allison began giggling like school girls talking about the most interesting of gossips. Scott indulged them and grumbled when Stiles slowly tuned out of Scott in his discussion to further envelope himself in the girl talk.

Derek stayed near Stiles the majority of the night and would talk with the group every once in a while.

Jackson and Danny were the first to leave as Jackson became distracted in his discussion with Matt that Danny had helped himself to some alcohol—the human batch thankfully, and stated he thought it best they leave as Danny appeared sluggish.

Stiles had to work early the next morning so he and Derek were second in leaving and Scott and Allison decided they’d head off too.

Derek drove them home as Stiles was a bit tired from the day and drank a glass of alcohol.

When they arrived home, Dasher was there to greet them and Stiles gave her as much attention as his tired state would permit him before he wandered up stairs and after the silent wolf. Derek removed his day wear and slipped under their bed in his lovely boxer-briefs that did so much for Stiles’ libido.
Stiles redressed in a pair of gray cotton slacks and a white t-shirt before joining the wolf and once in bed he sighed with contentment when the alpha brought him in within his warm embrace.

“I love you.” Stiles breathed.

“Mmm.” Derek hummed in reply and silently stroked his back.

“I really love you. Like ‘OMG, I’, capital, ‘L.O.V.E you’.” Stiles teased and nuzzled the alpha’s neck, inhaled his scent deeply and exhaled with contentment.

Derek snorted, sleep, obviously filling his voice, but with it came heartening adoration as the wolf answered, “I have such a sweet mate.”

“That’s me, you know, the sweetest, cutest of mates.”

Derek laughed harder and raised a hand to brush the human’s fuzzed hair.

“So true.”

“I miss you even when you’re in my arms, does that make any sense?” Stiles contemplated out loud.

“Mmm.” Derek sounded with thought.

“You’re a wonderful person, Derek.”

The wolf remained silent and stilled his caressing.

“I love everything about you, even your stubbornness.”

“What is it?”

“What?”

“You want something?”

“What? I can’t tell you how much I love you and that you’re the most wonderful mate a man could have without it meaning I want something?”

“Yes.”

“Ridiculous!”

“Stiles.” Derek’s tone solidified with purpose.

“Okayokayokay. I do want something, but…um…” Stiles stuttered unsure how to voice his request.

“Stiles.” Derek stressed, never one for patience.

Stiles knew the best approach was just coming out and saying it, but still…it’d be difficult.

“I’m waiting.”

Stiles clenched his eyes shut, took a deep breath and spoke his request aloud.

“I want your babies.”
Silence, deafening silence.

Stiles scrounged up all the courage he had in him and raised his head to look down at the alpha and read his expression. His stomach knotted in an instant when he found shock and fear.

“What?” Derek choked, losing all sense of composure and shoving Stiles off of him so he was sitting upright.

“I’m ready to start a family and you told me we could talk about it when I was ready and I am.”

“Stiles.” Derek started, palming his forehead seemingly overwhelmed. “I meant later on in the future.”

“I researched all our options; surrogacy, adoption, but then um…Lydia told me that… and I really want to…”

“What?”

Stiles lowered his gaze and placed a hand on Derek’s sheeted thigh.

“I want your child…our child…I…”

Derek tensed further and Stiles knew the wolf finally understood what he was asking.

“I…no.” Derek deadpanned.

Stiles raised his head and gave his best puppy dog eyes.

“It’s the only way we could have a child together and I want a child that is both of ours!”

“No.” Derek snapped.

“Lydia said the only time in which an alpha can conceive is when they’re in heat. I could claim you then. It wouldn’t be dangerous and your wolf wouldn’t feel demeaned, because I’m your true mate.”

“Accidents can always happen, regardless if my wolf side accepted you. When in heat, it’s different, I could unintentionally harm you”

“My ass knows that already.” Stiles noted humorously; the scars marring it were proof.

“No Stiles. We can talk about other options.”

“No.” Stiles objected. “I want us to have our own child. Why didn’t you tell me?”

“Lydia shouldn’t have said anything. I—it’s dangerous. That’s why I never told you. It’s extremely rare for an alpha male to allow another to claim them during their heat and even rarer for the alpha to conceive.”

“Still, there is a chance and your heat lasted for three weeks—we could at least try.”

“Stiles.” Derek’s eyes were stern with purpose, revealing an unwillingness to give in.

Silence filled the room as the two began a stare down. Neither wishing to give in to the other’s will. Stiles could see Derek was about to end their conversation on such a topic and went for a preemptive last move and whimpered.
Derek’s eyes widened with disbelief, followed by profuse hissing and cursing, “Jesus Christ, Stiles!”

“Derek!” Stiles sputtered when the alpha rose from bed and stormed out of the room, though it was useless.

Still, even as the door slammed shut behind the wolf Stiles projected. “As your mate, I have a say!” followed by a harsh bark of mocking amusement from the distancing and disgruntled wolf.

“Give me a baby!” Stiles whined fussily, plunking back onto the bed and exhaled with aggravation.

Sooo, convincing Derek to bear their child was far from easy. In fact the first time Stiles brought it up he’d expected Derek to be reluctant, but to move into the guest room was absurd. Stiles thought Derek was overreacting, but the wolf didn’t seem to believe he was.

Breakfasts were awkward. Derek still cared enough for his husband to prepare Stiles a warm meal before he went off to the precinct. There was always an uncomfortable silence that would pass during their meals and most times it would begin because Stiles would attempt to bring up that topic Derek didn’t want to talk about.

Lydia soon found Stiles and gave him a severe lashing, because apparently she didn’t want her name brought into their conversation about child bearing. The alpha wasn’t pleased with her and gave her hell for it and therefore she’d sought Stiles out to give him some of that hell. Though it really wasn’t needed, Derek was making up for it.

Two weeks went by with hostile silence and sleeping in separate rooms. One night as the two sat beside one another within the living room watching the news, Derek finally spoke.

“Children…I know you want them.”

Stiles stared away from the distant droning of the television newscaster and listened intently to the alpha then. Finally, he’d get an answer to his question. Finally, Derek wasn’t going to ignore it.

“I’ve been thinking about your request.” Derek added, staring down at the television, eyes tensing with much consideration.

“I’m not sure I’d make a good father…but I’ve given you much burden and pain. I would do anything to make up for it and give you a happy life.”

Stiles swallowed away his tears and felt a lightness fill his heart.

“Are you saying you…that you will…?” Stiles was struggling to find his words, his emotions getting the better of him.

Derek met his gaze then and flashed a wary smile. “It’s not easy for a male alpha to conceive and it might not happen this year, but we can try.”

Stiles chuckled a giddy chortle of joy before springing himself onto the unprepared wolf and slobbering uncoordinated and enthused kisses upon his face, mumbling a mantra of, “Thank you, thank you, thank you, I love you, thank you, you’re wonderful, you’ll be a wonderful father, you’ve made me so happy. I love you, I love you, I love, love, love you!”

Derek wrapped Stiles close and laughed low, nestling his head at the crook of Stiles’ neck and
murmured, “You’ll be the finest father.”
Stiles had anticipated werewolf mating season while the alpha noticeably dreaded it. Stiles was excited for the after math of it. Derek, a werewolf whose genetics were different from a human’s, could carry a child. Derek on the other hand was apprehensive about his alpha instincts to dominate and feared he’d become violent with Stiles in the rough and tumbles of wrestling for control and dominance.

In the end, when that time came Stiles had been thoroughly educated by Lydia, all books on werewolves and the alpha himself, Derek. There had been a struggle and at some points Stiles had to admit it was frightening and Derek nearly lost himself with forcefulness and Stiles had to exert his authoritativeness. Through this and their tie as true mates he was able to have the alpha submit and took control and successfully mated.

A month later Stiles anxiously awaited the moment Derek’s senses would shift, alerting him of his pregnancy. Derek grumpily moved about his daily routine glaring at Stiles, daring him to ask for the umpteenth time if he felt it.

Unlike humans pregnancy tests, wolves instinctively knew if they were pregnant. So for the time being they waited. But when it was nearing two months, Derek, reluctant, acknowledged what Stiles didn’t want to hear. Derek was not pregnant and they would need to try again, next year.

Stiles knew it was a possibility, but he’d tried to only think positively, though now it seemed he should have prepared himself for this.

“Are you mad?” Derek asked Stiles one morning as the two ate breakfast on the backyard patio and watched a significantly larger Dasher prance around the yard with her toys.

“No.” Stiles muttered sipping from his mug of green tea.

“You are.”

“I’m not. Just… disappointed.”

Derek lowered his elbows, pressing them against the patio table while he dipped his head near his clasped hands.

“I told you it’s rare for a male werewolf to—”

“I know. I just…I wanted it so badly.”

Derek didn’t reply, silently acknowledging Stiles’ desire.

“It will happen.”

“When? Next year, the year after that? Will it ever happen?”

Derek’s gaze remained fixed on his hands.

“There is just a small window of an opportunity.”

“It’s happened for other werewolves.”
“Yeah.” Stiles heaved as Dasher sat herself beside his seat and the Sheriff mindlessly pet silk-like fur.

“Are you disappointed with me?”

Stiles raised his gaze to Derek, the alpha refusing to meet his gaze.

“No, Derek. I love you for trying.” Stiles’ eyes were soft pools of compassion even when the alpha couldn’t see them. “I just really, *really* wanted to have a child that could be ours.”

Derek raised his head and met Stiles’ gaze, understanding and sympathy flashing within warm hazel.

Stiles slid a hand across the table and stroked the alpha’s arm wordlessly desiring to hold the wolf’s hand. Derek answered that silent request and took hold of the human’s outstretched hand. Stroking the back of the Sheriff’s palm with his thumb as the two stared with such warmth at the other that all of Stiles’ disappointments faded in that moment.

That week Derek stayed particularly close to Stiles, sensing that the human was feeling slightly vulnerable and wanting to comfort him. Stiles felt better after that one morning they spent talking about it, still having Derek near him felt reassuring and strengthening.

But too soon their time together came to an end when Derek received a mysterious call pertaining to alpha business. Though this one seemed stranger than the rest; Derek received the call when they were seated at a local café drinking their beverages and laughing over Stiles recanting over a well loved story pertaining to his and Scott’s youthful antics.

Derek’s softened features of affection and admiration as he smiled over at Stiles’ drastically altered to one of tense calculation. His features seeming to pale as whoever he was on the line with spoke further.

With harshness in his voice the alpha demanded that the stranger relay their location before hanging up. Derek growled something about urgent business needing his attention and that he’d be leaving and not to wait up for him.

Derek was an idiot if he thought he wasn’t going to wait up after him. Even if he didn’t want to, he couldn’t sleep unless Derek was lying next to him and holding him close.

Derek didn’t come home that night which made Stiles fret. He called him, but Derek didn’t reply. He left troubled voice messages, followed by frustrated ones, until lastly he was screaming at his phone demanding his husband call him.

Derek didn’t call him back.

The next night, Stiles sat in the silent living room, every so often rising from his couch and looking out the curtains facing the neighborhood when he heard a noise, hopeful it was Derek having come home. It wasn’t.

Stiles paced the living room, bit his nails and stared at the clock as time slowly trickled by and the sun rose.

This wasn’t normal. Derek would have at least called him if he was planning on staying out of town for a few days to handle alpha business.
That afternoon, Stiles finally received a text message brief and to the point.

4:23PM

*I won’t be coming back for a while. I’ll text when I can.*
-Derek-

After that, the alpha did keep in contact. Texting once or twice a day, but Stiles couldn’t shake the feeling that something was off. He’d called and every time he did, Derek never answered, only texted him back explaining he was driving, or meeting with someone. But Stiles could recall a few times Derek spoke with him just briefly even when in meetings.

Derek finally called him two days later and assured Stiles he was on his way back home, but something sounded off with his voice. It was edgy and a bit hoarse. When Stiles asked if he was alright, Derek assured him he was, but Stiles didn’t quite believe him.

Stiles wouldn’t be able to rest right until he could be in front of Derek and see for himself that the wolf was in fact *hale and hearty* (pun intended).

Later that evening Derek entered their home just as Stiles finished dinner and was preparing himself for bed. When the alpha entered their room, Stiles finished dressing in his pajamas and greeted the brute with a steadfast embrace.

Stiles pulled away from their embrace and only then did he see how haggard Derek looked. The alpha’s skin was no longer the appealing olive Stiles enjoyed admiring, but pale. Dark bags shadowed the bottom of his eyes and he appeared to have lost a bit of weight in such little time.

“What happened?” Stiles rushed worriedly and palmed the wolf’s face, stroked across pasty flesh as if willing it to rub away and show his lively mate.

“Nothing.” Derek shrugged off; batting the human’s touch away and slipping past him to retrieve his clothing from the closet, preparing for a shower.

“It doesn’t seem like nothing. You look horrible.”

“I look just fine.”

“I think not.”

“God, Stiles. I just got back.”

“So, what? I’m just supposed to shut up and not take notice to how different you look?”

“Urgh!”

“Fine. *Fine.* Go shower and ignore me. I’m just your husband.”

“Really? Just one day Stiles. Can we go just *one day* without arguing?”

“I don’t know. You tell me?”

Derek growled low, flashing a glare before walking past the human, towel in hand and heading for the bathroom.
Stiles glared at the brute’s back with displeasure, simmering. Every time he tried to be nice to Derek, he always wound up getting burned. The wolf was far too temperamental.

When Derek entered their room after showering and slipped into a new pair of boxer-briefs, Stiles rolled over on the bed, facing away from the jerk. Sensitive after Derek snapped at him so soon after returning back home. Stiles wasn’t so willing to talk with the wolf.

It was probably best he allow the brute time to cool off before they spoke once more anyways. Derek had appeared exhausted and most certainly wasn’t feeling too forthcoming at the moment.

Stiles curled the sheets over his shoulders, retaining the heat within as Derek slipped into bed and pressed his bare chest against Stiles’ clothed back. Stiles huffed not amused, though he had to admit it was nice having an always warm husband as his life-size heater and knowing he’d get a restful sleep.

The next morning things were far more civil between the two. Derek woke early to pick them up some donuts for breakfast and served them freshly brewed green tea.

Stiles noticed almost immediately Derek’s features appeared healthier. It would seem that sleep really did do wonders.

“Are you going to tell me what happened?”

“Alpha business.”

Shutting his eyes slowly, Stiles palmed his forehead and struggled to remain calm. He put great efforts as to not lose control and start yelling at the dumb wolf, even if that was all he wanted to do at the moment.

“Do you mind elaborating?”

Derek pursed his lips. He didn’t want to, or that was what Stiles picked up from the alpha’s apathetic expression.

“Indulge me.” Stiles led.

“Hunters killed the alpha of New York and a good number of his pack.” Derek’s words were dripping of venomous hate.

Stiles wasn’t anticipating that.

“Hunters? They’re still out there?” Other than Chris and Allison, Stiles was under the impression hunters had gone extinct. One of the first things Peter Hale had done was to send out his minions to exterminate hunters in all parts of the world.

“Apparently they are still active. I arrived too late to do much to salvage New York’s pack.” Derek grumbled and took a long swig of his drink.

“Did you confront them?”

Derek glanced up and met Stiles’ gaze briefly before glaring at his mug.

“Derek.” Stiles persisted.
“Bastards shot me with wolfsbane.”

“What!” Stiles barked. “Why didn’t you tell me?”

“I brought some of our pack. They tracked the hunter who shot me and retrieved the bullet shell in time. I didn’t think it was best I tell you about it, besides everything worked out in the end.”

Stiles seethed. “What if it hadn’t? What then? How can you be so selfish?”

Derek grumbled and glowered back at the human, but really it was Stiles who should be mad. He had every right to chastise Derek’s choices.

“You have no right to glare at me like I did something wrong.”

“You have no right intervening in alpha business.”

“Derek, how does that make sense when I’m your successor?”

“That’s different.”

“No it’s not.”

“You’ll be an alpha, but hunters won’t be handled by you.”

“If alphas are not in charge of all matters, including hunters, who then?”

Derek’s features tensed significantly at this. “I assigned the alpha of New York to be in charge of all conflicts concerning werewolves, he was to be your collaborator of sorts.”

Stiles contemplated Derek’s reasoning.

“I believe the hunters knew this and killed him for that very reason. He was a powerful alpha, one that wouldn’t have gone down easily.”

“How then could they have killed him?”

Derek’s stoic features became solemn creases of concern and reflection.

“What is it?” Stiles knew Derek well enough to know when he was hiding something.

“The wolf mating matrimony; the hunters must have used his bond with a human to bring him down. His mate went missing several days before the alpha’s death. The alpha went searching for her and they killed them both using their bond. Killing off the rest of the pack wasn’t difficult after they’d taken down the alpha.”

Stiles felt a chill run through him at the thought that both alpha and human were murdered by hunters. These hunters didn’t sound like they carried a code of ethics as the Argents did. They’d murdered an alpha and pack that conformed to the treaty reinforced by Derek and Stiles. They even killed a human.

“We weren’t able to find all the hunters responsible and the one we captured wasn’t talking.”

“Where is he now?” Stiles quizzed edgily.

“In jail...” Derek spoke, scanning Stiles’ features with incredulity, “I’m not as ruthless as you might believe me to be.” he continued.
“I wasn’t—” Stiles started, stilling himself to lower his head, ashamed he’d thought for a moment—brief as it might be, Derek didn’t stray from Peter and would have taken care of the hunter in another way.

The screeching of Derek’s chair as it skidded back and he rose drew Stiles’ attention.

“I need to head back to New York and take over things there for a while.”

“Huh?” Stiles stuttered, dumbly.

“I only came to pack properly.” Derek added, setting his dishes in the dish washer and rounding to face Stiles unnervingly, avoidant of his gaze.

“Derek, I don’t really believe you’d—”

“It’s fine. Really, I understand… I… should pack.”

Stiles didn’t have the chance to react before Derek was out of the room, leaving Stiles to feel terrible. That wasn’t how he’d intended Derek to take his question. He knew Derek was a good man, he just…Derek was an alpha and although he’d never done anything to make Stiles question his sense of humanity, he still was a werewolf. He still shared the same blood as Peter Hale.

If Stiles was completely honest with himself, he had to admit sometimes he wondered just how human Derek really was. He was an alpha and they were prone to blood lust, so there was always a possibility he could turn for the worse, let his desire for power and bloodshed destroy the lives of others like Peter had done so easily.

He knew better though. He knew, somehow he knew Derek was different—better…good. But his one moment of question and hesitation was enough to cause Derek to take note of those truths and to distance himself from Stiles.

He’d really messed things up and as he rose to speak to Derek the wolf was already bounding the stairs, luggage in hand.

“I’ll text you when I get there.” Derek started, cutting Stiles off before he could even have a chance to attempt to make things right.

“Okay...”

“I really should be heading off, I booked a flight and I don’t want to be late checking in.”

“Okay, but Derek—”

Derek brushed Stiles’ lips with his own in a chaste kiss and effectively stilled his words, yet this kiss felt different from the many they’d shared in the past. This one felt detached even if it were an affectionate token.

Stiles exhaled heavily as Derek wasn’t going to give him a chance to right his wrongs as he was already out the door and Stiles’ stomach tied in knots of an unsettling nature. He’d just managed to alienate his own mate with his uncertainties.

Still the occurrences in New York caused Stiles to worry. Something was stirring in the world. Hunters were organizing once more; they were even killing werewolves and an innocent human. No ethics. Killing werewolves that had agreed to a treaty and a human caught in a bond with a werewolf reaffirming that treaty.
Call it intuition, but Stiles couldn’t shake the feeling that something wicked was brewing and coming their way.
Stiles couldn’t breathe. Tears were overflowing too quickly for him to stop, blink them away or even still the pounding of his heart as they were all raging with havoc because of one person.

One person he thought he could trust among all else. One person he thought he loved.

God, he’d been so wrong. He’d always thought he was a good judge of character. He thought Derek was a kind man; a good honest man.

He was wrong.

He loved Derek. Loved him so completely and he’d been wrong to do so—so wrong to trust him.

Stiles strangled a cry of grief, eyes blurred by tears, heart racing as too was his Jeep while he sped on the dirt road leading away from the Hale Manor.

How could he have trusted Derek so completely? How could he have so easily allowed that man into his heart? How could he have been so blind?

Now it was clear. So many times Derek had looked over the edge of letting something spill out from such tightly sealed lips. So many times he’d tried to keep Stiles at an arm’s length, physically and emotionally.

A distant howl pierced through the silent wood and strummed in the Jeep, stabbing Stiles’ heart.

“God, help me!” Stiles wept and mourned all at once, wishing the soreness plaguing his heart would subside, but all it did was strengthen until it was on the verge of agony.

Derek had lied to him. Time and time again, he’d kept a truth Stiles deserved to know to himself. He’d betrayed him. He’d destroyed him.

Still, sickening as it was…all Stiles wanted now was to be in that traitor’s arms; held by Derek’s warm embrace and hear his soothing words of comfort.

“Derek.” Stiles whimpered, clenching his eyes shut, face hot and damp with tears, “Derek.” Stiles wretched brokenly, snapping his eyes open once more and seeing blurred surroundings.

Pressing the accelerator fully, speeding dangerously down the mountain road, needing to get the hell away from the one person anchoring him and destroying him all at once.

Another howl vibrated through the Jeep, its vocalization wavering in Stiles’ ears and he knew it was Derek crying out for him, shattered and losing himself to self-hate and Stiles was ruined.

Stiles was torn, unable to comfort the man he loved—still loved though he knew it was wrong and hated himself for it. He hated that all he wanted to do was turn the car around and go back, back to the Hale Manor and find his crumpled husband he’d deserted, when he felt that the act would mean he’d betray another…the memory of his father.

Stiles gripped to the steering wheel with all of his might, staring ahead of him. He couldn’t turn back, he could never go to Derek’s side, not ever, not even if his heart was screaming for him to do so. His mind was too caught up in the lies that had kept the truth from him.
How could he comfort the man he’d loved so immensely and with all of his heart, when he knew the truth.

Four Hours Earlier

It had been six months since the attack in New York, and ever since then hell had officially broken loose. Derek was driving and flying to different cities, states, even countries attending to alpha matters. New York’s attack was only the first, after; alpha leaders from all over the world were being killed, one by one, causing chaos in its wake.

After the second attack, Derek assigned Stiles’ gang and several members of Beacon Hills pack to keep watch of the Sheriff while Derek was away taking care of matters, which was all the time now. Boyd, Isaac, Erica had even moved into his home. NOT by Stiles’ choice, but by an aggravated and blaring alpha on the other line of his cell phone.

Derek had even threatened to rip Stiles’ throat from his neck if he didn’t conform to his wishes via phone chat. Stiles knew it was a bogus threat, being true mates and all proved to be his lifesaver. Still, Stiles conformed; grumbling, moaning, bitching, and complaining as he did so.

Stiles missed Derek; missed him so terribly. In six months, Derek had spent two nights back home, before heading out once more to handle alpha matters.

Stiles hated it and complained all the time through the phone. Derek wasn’t understanding, not until the exotic dancer Ronan expressed interest in him at a bar he and the gang hung out one night and Stiles’ stealthily interjected it into one of their conversations.

A day later, Derek had arrived home. First making a stop to Ronan’s where he’d asserted his dominance over Stiles before returning home and asserting his claim on Stiles. Stiles was absolutely delighted, especially when he found out Derek would be staying for a whole week.

However, he hadn’t expected that Derek’s whole week back home would be spent reinforcing his pack’s training, combat tactics and briefings.

Derek spent the majority of the week at the Hale Manor or out patrolling. Stiles. Was. Not. Happy.

Stiles hated the Hale Manor, dreaded ever going to that place again. Still, he knew Derek was most likely there training his pack and that this was probably the only time he could spend quality time with his husband. This was the only thing that gave Stiles the incentive to drive to the dreaded manor.

It’d taken a great deal of courage to go up the stairway of what appeared to be a vacant manor and past the unlocked door. As Stiles understood it, the Hale Manor was the packs den, mostly used for pack meetings. So it would make sense the doors were unlocked. Derek was always going to and from with his pack.

Stiles couldn’t believe the difference of the once destroyed charred remains of a home to the now stunning and elegantly renovated and refurnished home before him. Stiles took his time going from room to room. The lighting was bright, full of open space and decorated in warm colors.

Stiles had been in the home only a few times when Peter and Lydia lived in the manor. It had been nicely decorated, but far less welcoming and warm. Where it once had been furnished with black, gray, silver and ice blue it was now warm oranges, browns, reds and yellows.
If Stiles didn’t have such bad memories in this manor, it might have made a nice home for the two. Then again, Derek probably wouldn’t like to live in the home his family died in if he could help it.

Stiles checked every room down stairs in search of the wolf, but with no sign. Moving his search upstairs he found it was less furnished, most of the rooms were completely empty or used for storage, all except for one. The last room Stiles checked was furnished with a Queen Size bed, a mahogany dresser that matched the bed frame and two stands at either side of the bed.

Stiles scanned the room like the rest and found no Derek, still even though his search of the home was fruitless, he couldn’t help but to linger in the room. This was the only room that had a bed which had to mean this was Derek’s bedroom and Stiles could feel his curiosity starting to flare and get the better of him.

His husband was a reserved and hard to read man. Would it really be all that horrible for him to snoop about the alpha’s room to achieve a better understanding of the wolf?

Yes, it would. Stiles conscience told him, but Stiles was never one to follow his conscience—not entirely.

Several minutes later Stiles had gone through all the drawers of the room and had worked his way to the walk in closet, browsing through the alpha’s clothing collection and even trying and keeping on one of the many leather coats the alpha possessed. Sadly it didn’t look as good on him as it did on the ever gorgeous alpha and wasn’t that depressing.

Stiles was just about to call it quits when his foot knocked over one of the shoe boxes set under the coat section of the closet. The roughed up brown shoe box fell over and spilled their contents. However, where Stiles expected to find a pair of shoes he found journals. Small leather bound black journals. Each journals binding of standard white paper varied in colors ranging from the darkest of yellows to the purest of whites.

Stiles could hardly believe his eyes. These journals couldn’t possibly be Derek’s diaries? Stiles snickered and plunked down in the middle of the closet, retrieving an ochre tinged journal.

Stiles flipped to the first page and felt his stomach churn with disbelief at what he was reading. Derek-fucking-Hale had diaries/journals, whatever, dude wrote his thoughts on paper—bit sentimental?

October 23, 2003

Mother has instructed that I write journals expressing my thought process as I’ve reached full adulthood—or werewolf adulthood.

“God, he was so uptight even as a teenager?” Stiles mumbled under his breath and continued to read on.

I’m unsure as to how this is supposed to assist me, but I’ll indulge her wish for the time being.

My sense of hearing has intensified, so too has my sense of smell.

The sounds of nature are proving to be bothersome at night. I’m finding it increasingly hard to sleep, but mother says that it will improve in time and soon I won’t be bothered by it. I hope that’s true. I don’t understand how they do it.

My sense of smell, however…it’s strange, the first time it happened I could smell roasted beef from the cafeteria within my classroom. I could practically taste it. I then could smell the people around
me and even pinpointed Laura’s scent somewhere on campus. Then things became confusing.

I could smell something that resembled my own scent, but wasn’t quite my own. It bothered me throughout class. I found it increasingly hard to pay attention because the scent was teasing, it tickled my nose each time I inhaled and I found my need to shift increasing the longer I sniffed at the scent.

After school, as Laura and I walked home, the scent became stronger, especially as we passed the elementary school two blocks from our high school. If Laura hadn’t been there with me I would have followed the scent inside. I didn’t even realize I was about to enter the school grounds until Laura stopped me.

I don’t understand what’s happening?

October 25, 2003

Mother has explained what I’ve been scenting for the past few days; my true mate.

I didn’t even know what a true mate was until today. I’m not sure I’m comfortable with having this type of bond with someone. Mother says as I grow my wolf will become compliant with the idea of submitting to a true mate, but for now all that my wolf wants to do is dominate.

I still don’t know who my mate is. Laura’s been especially vigilant. I believe Mother’s assigned her to keep watch of me. My mate must be young to be in elementary school. I feel disgusted with myself for wanting them, but mother says it’s normal to want to claim my mate. ‘It’s animal instincts to mark your mate as yours’ she says, but I don’t want to claim anyone.

I don’t like the idea of my wolf being tied down. Uncle Peter isn’t tied down. He says it’s better to be free. I like the idea of being a free wolf.

Stiles frowned at the young Derek wanting to be just a little bit like his maniac uncle, but then again, Peter wasn’t crazy then.

October 26, 2003

I hate myself. I really hate myself. I escaped my sister’s watchful eye and entered the elementary school this afternoon, during my lunch break.

I thought I was fine. I was, but then I smelled my mate and their tears. I believe it was instinct. I hate my wolf. I couldn’t help it. I had to find my mate.

It’s a boy.

I’m not gay.

I thought I wasn’t, but this boy…when I saw him, he was crying on the soccer field with a scraped knee and all I wanted to do was hold him.

I don’t know what stopped me. My sister wasn’t there to do so, but…he’s so young—8 or 9 years old, I believe.

I’m disgusted with myself. I hate this. Why couldn’t he be older? Why couldn’t he be female?
Stiles’ frown creased further as he decided to skip several dates after, mostly of Derek struggling to accept his sexuality.

December 13, 2003

I saw my mate today. He was at the park with his parents. My family was there for a barbeque. All I did was watch him and his parents play soccer and have a picnic. If my family wasn’t watching me so intently, I might have gone over to him.

They call him Stiles. What’s a Stiles? What kind of a name is that?

“Bastard.” Stiles grumbled reading on.

Another boy and his mother joined Stiles’ family, his friend, Scott. They spent the afternoon rough housing. They were never too far from each other. I hate him. I’m jealous of him. I want to be him. He’s the same age as Stiles—I want to be him so badly.

Why couldn’t I have been born earlier or he later. It would make things so much easier.

I want him so badly. My hormones are all over the place. Laura’s tightened her reins. She’s spending her free time with me instead of with her friends. My mother even appears worried.

Last night I woke up after a dream… and I…if my mother hadn’t scented my lust, I would have gone to Stiles’ home and claimed him.

Laura’s getting her things ready to move in and share my room with me. Mother and father have even moved into the guest room next to mine.

The family knows, as embarrassing as it is, they know my true mate is a boy and my wolf is horny for a child.

I’m sick.

They tell me it will get better. When? I’m about to rape a child and they tell me it’s normal. Why was I born into this kind of life?

Stiles stumbled onto the Holy Grail. Derek was the Fort Knox of secrets and ever since Stiles slip when learning of New York’s pack attack, Derek kept him at a distance more than before.

Stiles knew Derek wanted him since a teenager, his wolf instincts desiring to claim him. Still, it was almost heartening to read it from the alpha’s journal. Almost like solid proof validating his importance in Derek’s life.

Stiles read on about Derek’s pining, need to be with him, watching him and desiring him. As his frustration and hormones intensified, Derek’s family grew increasingly worried. It’d gotten so bad, his mother began locking him in his room at night and baring his windows.

Stiles was alarmed at how Derek’s young wolf pined and needed to be with him—how had Derek controlled himself for so long? How had he restrained himself during their bonding?

Stiles read as fast as he could, wanting to get through as much as was possible. He read through Derek’s first meeting with Kate, of his growing friendship with the hunter in disguise. How he’d trusted her.

Read about Derek continuously arguing with his mother and sister; Derek wanting to claim a then,
eleven year old Stiles. His parents attempted to reason with him—a fifteen, almost sixteen year old, raging hormonal and horny werewolf. They promised to allow him to approach Stiles when he was eighteen, but Derek couldn’t accept their promise nor wait that long.

Then the journal entries stopped for several months before picking back up with a solemn Derek contemplations of Kate’s betrayal and his sister’s tense relationship with him. Derek blaming himself for his family’s death and feeling he didn’t deserve to have Laura in his life. How he felt guilty every time he looked at her, saw the face of his parents and knowing he’d destroyed his family.

Another period of absence before again Derek contemplating his life choices and coming to the decision to leave Beacon Hills and his mate, he no longer felt he had the right to want. He was in no shape to care for anyone, depression consuming him.

Stiles switched journals then, struggling to find the next that matched the date and year, it didn’t take him long to find it and continue on.

Derek began writing soon after returning to Beacon Hills. He was no longer depressed, but angry. Angry for the death of his sister and furious with the mysterious alpha who’d murdered her.

Derek wrote soon after, immaculate handwriting now hurried scribbles of frustration. Dark ink dug deep into the paper as it appeared he’d pressed hard when writing his next entry.

Derek found out who’d murdered his sister. It was his Uncle Peter. He’d murdered her to become an alpha and wanted Derek to join him in his pack as he slowly began to take over Beacon Hills.

Derek refused, many times, but Peter wasn’t giving up. Derek was his last remaining relative and he wanted to keep him close.

*June 10, 2011*

*Peter will not back down. The alpha inside won’t let him. He wants me as a part of his pack. How can I? I hate him. He murdered Laura—family. There is no forgiveness for this betrayal, but I’m unsure what I can do. I’ve tried fighting him off alone, but he’s too powerful. I need allies, but there isn’t anyone. Most of the world remains blind; the rest are too loyal to their alpha, Peter, too loyal to trust.*

*I want to kill him.*

*He approached me again today and threatened to murder Stiles...what can I do? He’s given me a day to decide. I can’t refuse him. If I do, he’ll follow through with his threat.*

*I hate him.*

*I want him dead.*

*I will kill him.*

*June 11, 2011*

*I’ve become Peter’s right hand man. The things he plans to do...he’s insane. He wants to change the world. He’s going against every werewolf code ever created. He wants chaos.*
November 14, 2011

I need to find allies and soon, before he really follows through with his plans.

I believe I’ve found an ally. I’ve watched him for weeks now. I believe he can help me kill Peter. John Stilinski, the Sheriff of Beacon Hills. He’s the only human who isn’t afraid to confront the werewolves and Peter. Peter won’t harm him because he’s the father of my true mate and I’ve pledged my allegiance to him on the agreement he spare both the Sheriff’s and Stiles’ life.

I need to find the perfect moment to proposition the Sheriff.

November 19, 2011

John and I have come to an agreement. Now we plan for Peter’s demise. We must go about it cautiously.

Stiles was bewildered. His father had been Derek’s ally? Why hadn’t he heard anything about it? He’d been a teenager at the time, so he understood why his father might not have wanted him to know, but why wouldn’t Derek tell him?

November 25, 2011

Peter’s growing suspicious. He hasn’t said anything, but I can sense it. For the time being I’ve stopped meeting up with John. Peter’s having me followed.

Stiles turned to the next entry and found the alpha’s handwriting was unsteady, as if he’d been trembling while writing. Unlike the other entries black ink was smeared and the paper was rough and crumbled in other areas almost as if dampened by liquid.

November 26, 2011

I’ve failed.
I’ve failed.
I’ve…failed.

Stiles stared blankly at the paper, so little was written, but still, even so…something had gone wrong.

As Stiles flipped the page he was surprised by how much of a gap was placed within their journals entries by a mere glance of the date.

August 13, 2012

Months have gone by, but I’m unable to forget that night. I can’t forgive myself. I can’t.

I hate myself more than I ever thought possible. I’ve destroyed everything for my selfish act. I’ve destroyed Stiles. God…how can I even imagine ever courting him after what I’ve done.
I...wanted to kill Peter.

I want him dead.

I never meant for this to happen.

I. Never. Did.

Now, I've destroyed him. I've destroyed my mate, and I can’t fix this. Never. I could never fix this.

I bumped into him today at the hardware store. He looked beautiful and smelled wonderful. He smelled delicious. I could scent his fear and embarrassment when he realized it was me. I could see the attraction spark in his youthful gaze, but I can’t allow this. I had to leave before I lost control. I believe he thinks I dislike him and that’s so far from the truth. If only he knew he was my true mate and what that meant for werewolves.

No. It shouldn’t matter.

I won’t let myself have him. I won’t let myself desire him. I can’t. Not now. Not after what I did to him.

Because of me...John...

I to Stiles, because I was selfish—so selfish I...

He thinks Peter killed his father. Everyone thinks Peter murdered Sheriff Stilinski, but that is only because Peter won’t tell them the truth. I’ve repented for deceiving and betraying Peter, but at the cost of a life.

Stiles doesn’t know and all I want to do is tell him, but I’m afraid. I don’t want him to hate me. I don’t want him to hate himself.

I must carry this burden on my own. I must carry the secrets of what happened that night to myself. I can never tell Stiles. It would devastate him. I owe John that at least.

I promised to never tell Stiles. How pathetic I am to honor the Sheriff’s wishes right before he died and knowing his death is my fault; knowing the truth, that Peter didn’t kill the Sheriff alone...but that I helped kill John Stilinski.

Stiles’ breath hitched, suddenly finding his lungs unable to retain oxygen. Gasps escaped trembling salty lips, tears overflowing and drowning him inside and out. Gasps soon altered to panic inhales and sharp exhales, whimpering followed, destroyed hollers ensued before he was pounding on his chest, struggling to breathe, struggling to calm his suddenly racing heart.

There on the floor of the walk in closet as Stiles struggled to breathe, not to black out or scream his agonizing grief did there come a creaking of the floorboards from outside of the closet. Raising his gaze to the noise and finding concerned hazel staring at him as the man he loved with all his heart stood before him evidently worried, did he wish to be anywhere else than in the presence of the man who’d murdered his father.

Derek’s gaze lowered from the human’s to the journals surrounding him in a mess of disarray, and slowly did Stiles see the look of recognition and horror reflect from his gaze.

Derek knew. Derek knew Stiles finally attained the truths to all of Derek’s secrets.
“Stiles.” Derek exhaled, gushed with trepidation and desolation.
Grief

“Stiles.” Derek exhaled, gushed with trepidation and desolation.

In one swift motion Stiles was on his feet and stumbling back further into the closet. Legs unsteady in their movement, knees buckling slightly and he had to grasp at the coat rack in order to keep himself suspended. Hands shaking with such velocity the pole shook and hangers clattered, while others fell and pooled on the ground.

“Stiles.” Derek hoarsely expressed, scenting the human’s fear—no, it was more than fear; Stiles was petrified.

“Y—” Stiles’ vowel fell away into a shuddering whine, tears fogging his vision.

“Yooo—” Stiles was cut off by another vocalization of anguish.

Derek took several steps away from the closet and raised a hand to shield his own eyes. The wolf’s breathing was harsh and uneven, fraught to attain control of his emotion.

“Y—yo—yooou…” Stiles bawled, clasping at the center of his chest and tightening his hold on his shirt, his heart stabbing with soreness, throbbing for relief.

Derek lowered his hand from over his eyes, revealing pained hazel. They gleamed with regret and Stiles understood then, it was true. Derek wasn’t denying the truth.


Derek lowered his gaze and remained as still as a statue.

Stiles waited. He waited for some type of explanation, but Derek gave him none and he realized that the wolf didn’t plan to give him one. As he understood from the journal, his father’s dying wish was that Derek not say anything to anyone.

Stiles felt anger boil through him. How dare the alpha keep a promise he’d made to his father when in that same moment he’d murdered him. Stiles had the right to know what happened that day.

“Tell me!” Stiles demanded, but the alpha said nothing. Only stared unwavering at the ground before him, unable to even meet Stiles’ gaze and this only stirred the boiling furnace of rage within him.

“You killed my father. I have the right to know why! Tell me!” Stiles bellowed, strength returning to his briefly weakened form and with purpose he marched up to the silent alpha.

_The alpha didn’t look like his normal authoritative self; his head dipped low, eyes downcast, shoulders slackened._ As Stiles neared him, Derek seemed to shrink under him, almost sensing his fury and needing to atone.

“Tell me.” Stiles voiced throatily, raising a still ever vacillating hand to palm the alpha’s face.

_He hated Derek for hurting him, for lying to him. He couldn’t help the fact that even now—in the presence of the man responsible for his father’s death—he still cared for Derek and it confused him._
“I can’t.”

“Tell me.” Stiles wasn’t deterred, Derek would tell him. He wasn’t going to allow the alpha to keep this from him.

“I…can’t.”

“Tell me.” Stiles hissed, struggling to control himself enough to coax the alpha.

Derek pulled away from the human’s touch and took several steps away from the Sheriff, giving them some distance.

“Peter…” Derek strained, voice breaking on him and needing to clear his throat of overwhelming emotions before speaking once more, “he knew, he knew about my alliance with your father.”

“I know that already. Tell me about that night you…” Stiles couldn’t finish the sentence aloud, ‘you helped kill my father’.

“Peter ordered that I meet him in the forest that night…” Derek began, recalling the event, eyes thickly layered in unshed tears as he continued.

“When I arrived, Peter was there with your father. He’d somehow found out John was my ally.”

Stiles wept harder. Besieged with pain and attempted to not give into the instincts of running away, out on the werewolf before he’d finished telling him the truth about that night.

“I fought Peter. I tried to save your father, but Peter was too strong and when he had subdued me…he gave me a choice as punishment for my betrayal.”

“What choice?” Stiles graveled, fatigued from remaining lamented and staggered the distance to the bed, sinking at the foot of it, a load of weight pressing down on him. It was a burdening presence making itself at home.

“He’d sent subordinates to your home and they were awaiting orders. I was left with the choice of who would live and die; you or your father.” Derek palmed his face, shielding it away from view.

Stiles felt clammy, old tears drying while new ones replaced them. “And you chose my father.” Stiles affirmed.

“I didn’t want to choose.” Derek explained despairingly, lowering his hands and allowing Stiles to view how worn out the wolf appeared to be. “I told him I wouldn’t choose. Peter knew well enough that I wouldn’t. He ordered that I choose, and if I still refused, he would kill you both.”

Stiles’ heart ached horrendously, the pain his father must have gone through when he knew death was imminent.

“So you sentenced my father to his death.” Stiles whimpered and heard Derek’s soft choke of misery.

“You’re my true mate, how could I possibly let you die. My wolf and I couldn’t and your father wanted the same.”

Stiles knew Derek couldn’t be lying. He’d known his father well enough that the late Sheriff loved him more than himself and would gladly die for Stiles to live. Still…Derek should have chosen his father. His father was his ally, together they could have killed Peter way before the world was
thrown to chaos and much blood was spilled.

His father deserved to live. Now Stiles hated himself, hated himself for living while his father died. How could he live now, knowing that for his life his father paid it with his own.

“You killed my father.” Stiles accused, logically understanding that it was Peter who murdered his father, but that Derek made the choice leading to his father’s death.

Derek said nothing and Stiles could only wrap his arms around himself and bend low as he silently cried over the loss of his father, all over again.

“You murdered my father. You killed him. You selfish bastard!...because of you...because of you...” Stiles raised a hand to palm his forehead and blubbered uncontrollably.

Derek remained as still as ever, taking all the blame.

“I was selfish and I betrayed you.” Derek accepted remorsefully.

Stiles said nothing. What could he say? Derek had chosen him, cared enough about Stiles to want him to live even when it meant his mate’s father would die. His father had wanted the same. Regardless of the two men he loved wanting him to live more than anything, it still cost him a beloved father.

Now, Stiles was left with the cold hard truth of the matter he lived in place of his father. Because of him, his father had died. How ironic was it for Stiles to have blamed himself for his father’s death all these years and now finally learning the truth, that he was in fact the cause of his father’s death. Stiles didn’t share this blame alone, the man he’d accepted into his heart also carried the blame.

Stiles didn’t want to hate Derek. He understood why Derek did what he did and could accept it. What he could not accept was the lies, the lies he’d been told countless times and the truth of his father’s death having remained unknown.

“Stiles, say something.” Derek requested of the human who was so caught up within his contemplations.

Raising tired chestnut depths to meet Derek’s hazel, Stiles felt that heavy weight claim his heart too. He couldn’t look at Derek without wanting to break to pieces.

“When I look at you now...all I think about is my father. I can’t look at you and feel the joy I’d once felt.”

Derek said nothing, blinked hesitatingly; mouth parted allowing uneven breaths to escape.

“I feel such grief for my father.”

Derek’s gaze broke from Stiles’ own and stared down at the ground, chest noticeably heaving large bouts of air.

“Because of you, I’ve spent the past eleven years grieving. For eleven years I’ve lived without a father. Can you imagine how hard that must have been? For so long I felt abandoned. I was so alone.”

Stiles shut his eyes then and shook his head as if refusing to give in and take back his words, because they were all true. But there was still the unwanted truth that Stiles loved Derek. He
couldn’t let himself love Derek anymore though. If he did, he felt as if he would be betraying his father.

He couldn’t love Derek for his father’s memory.

“The treaty’s been made.” Stiles began, heart speeding once more as he’d come to his decision.

Confusion layered the alpha’s features at the sudden change of topic.

“I’ve completed the treaty, but I can’t do this anymore.” Stiles exhaled resignedly.

Stiles wanted out. He wanted out of the room, this manor—away from Derek. He couldn’t take this. He didn’t want to hear anymore explanations. He didn’t want to hear the truth. He needed air; he needed to get away from all the pain swarming his heart, but knew no matter where he ran, the heartbreak would follow him. Regardless of these truths, he wasn’t going to be here when he broke down completely. He wasn’t going to seek comfort from the man he thought he’d always run to.

“What do you want me to do? How can I fix this?” Derek implored desolately.

Stiles almost wanted to laugh. Derek was taking the blame and responsibility, just like he took the responsibility of everything else; his family, Laura, Peter, John, humankind and now him. Stiles knew too well Derek’s heart. Knew he’d regret his choices that led to his families death, led to Peter’s madness, the loss of his sister, the murder of the late Sheriff and Stiles, his true mate who bared the chaos that came with it.

Stiles hated how Derek took the blame and responsibility for everyone, even going as far as creating a treaty and protecting werewolves and humans. He hated that, to Derek, he was seen as a burden.

He hated himself for sympathizing for the alpha and wishing he could do more to help soothe the alpha’s pain. He hated himself for being a horrible son and still wanting to comfort the man responsible for his father’s death. He hated every breath he inhaled knowing it was because of his father’s death he was allowed to breathe now.

He’d betrayed his father’s memories by loving Derek. He should hate Derek for propositioning him into a marriage and not telling him the truth, but he didn’t. He only hated himself. Hated himself for so many reasons, but the most strongest of hates was for not hating the one person he should, Derek.

“I don’t know.” Stiles mewed, bowing his head in his hands. “I don’t know.”

Stiles tensed when cool fingers brushed against one of his trembling hands and reared away from the wolf’s touch. In less than three steps Stiles crossed the room and effectively separated the two.

“Stiles.” Derek entreated, a doleful gaze wordlessly seeking pardon.

“I can’t forgive you.” Stiles confessed, feeling stretched to his limits, tears running in a never ending supply making it all the more difficult to breathe.

“I—can’t you understand why I chose you?”

Stiles didn’t want to understand, but he knew. “Because I’m your true mate… but still, why? Why would you do this to me? You should have chosen my father. You’ve hurt me more than if I’d died, at least I would have accepted the outcome.”
Derek grimaced by the mere idea of having chosen Stiles, having allowed Peter to send in his wolves to complete their task.

“I couldn’t do that.”

“Because of your wolf’s instincts to protect me, you allowed that bastard to murder my father.” Stiles spat, thick with odium.

“It wasn’t just that.” Derek’s eyes lowered, ashamed.

“Then what? My father told you to pick me? You shouldn’t have listened to him!” Stiles sobbed.

He didn’t want to argue over what should have—could have been and rushed for the door. He wanted to get away, now, right now, because he could feel the sense of grief smothering him and taking over completely.

“I couldn’t let you die!” Derek whimpered. Stiles could sense the urgency in the alpha’s voice, the desperate and fearful need to keep Stiles near, apprehensive about letting the human leave now, worried he’d never want to come back.

Stiles couldn’t dispute those fears, because he knew their truths.

Stiles didn’t want to stop; he sped quickly along the hall, taking two steps at a time down the staircase before bolting through of the open door leading out to his awaiting Jeep.

“Don’t go!” Derek shouted with aggravation and a hint of a sob.

Stiles didn’t stop.

“I said, don’t go!” Derek demanded, a growl surfacing as he was losing himself to emotion; his wolf slowly being brought out to the forefront in the sights of his departing mate.

“You really don’t understand me.” Derek’s voice was gruff now, cut thin, almost unrecognizable—it was raw, laced heavily in human emotions Stiles never thought he’d hear coming from the alpha.

Stiles’ heart plummeted at the octave of the wolf’s voice, his whole body willing him to stay, but his mind was a tempest of outrage and full of the grief for his father’s untimely death. Stiles could hardly hold his keys within a tremulous grasp.

“Don’t leave me.” Derek pierced a noise that was a clear sob and Stiles clenched his jaw with purpose, managing to shift through the many keys and retrieve the Jeep’s.

“I didn’t choose you because you’re my true mate!” Derek elucidated urgently as Stiles swung the driver’s door open and hastily clamored inside.

“I didn’t choose you because you’re my true mate!” Derek roared, breaking off in a disjointed howl of defeat.

Stiles fell back into his seat and heaved a quaking breath. More tears flooding to the surface by the alpha’s sudden declaration.

“I couldn’t let you go…I picked you...because, always…it’s always been you…I’ve loved you since the beginning...since I first scented you...you fool.” Derek waveringly breathed out.

Stiles whimpered, turning in the direction of the alpha and found him standing just outside of the manor’s door, a hand grasping a hold of the door frame while his other planted against his chest,
claws digging deep and blood staining his white shirt. Scarlet orbs were thickly layered with unshed tears as the alpha wrestled a war within himself for some semblance of control.

“Damn it, Stiles…I love you.” Derek panted, features tensing with pain whilst letting out soft whines from the back of his throat and reverberating deep in his chest.

Stiles couldn’t take this. He shut his eyes for one moment before slamming the door closed; he revved his engine to life and pressed on the accelerator. Staring straight ahead as he drove away from the Hale Manor, away from the reason for his breaking heart.

Stiles was crying so harshly now, he really couldn’t see all that much of the road. The signs around him were indistinct and he was unable to read them, and then he saw something.

Several yards away, a distorted figure stood in the middle of the road. Stiles’ eyes widened as he steadily got closer to the figure. Realizing he was going too fast to stop in time and relying on instincts, Stiles pressed the brakes all while swerving and making a hard right.

The car skidded and the tires screeched their way off the road. Stiles shouted in horror as the Jeep slammed hard against the guardrail and tipped over. The Jeep rolled speedily off the roads edge and down the steep hill of the deserted forest and excruciating pain overwhelmed in a muddled jumble.

Stiles’ last memory was crashing into an immovable tree on the last roll and smashing his head into the driver’s window before everything went black.
Derek stood in the stillness of the Hale estate staring off in the direction Stiles had driven off in. Energy coursed deep within his veins, rushed through him, pulsing frenziedly.

Stiles hated him. The human didn’t have to say it aloud for Derek to know that it was so. Stiles blamed Derek for his father’s death, as he should, rightfully so. All the same, it still hurt. It pained him greatly. This pain coursed deep and brought his wolf to its knees, insides coiling with the agony.

His wolf demanded he right this wrong, to bring their mate back, but Derek couldn’t do that. How could he bring Stiles back to him, after everything he’d done?

A distressed howl spilled past his lips, his wolf exploding forth from dormancy and called out for its mate.

Derek never wanted this. He had never wanted to be with Stiles, but the damn alphas wouldn’t comply with his orders to bind themselves to humans unless he did so himself. Derek would have chosen anyone else, but he couldn’t when he knew who his true mate was. His wolf would never betray its mate, nor would his heart.

It had to be Stiles.

Even so, he promised himself to not cross the line. He knew he shouldn’t have bonded with Stiles, knowing the actions he’d taken against his mate’s father, but he’d been selfish. So long as he didn’t cross the line, didn’t let himself love Stiles or have their union be anything but a treaty enacted, he thought it would be okay.

He’d been erroneous.

It had been so difficult to stop himself from wanting Stiles, from loving him. But now everything was ruined. He’d broken his promise to John, he’d crossed the line he’d drawn himself and destroyed his mate.

Now, he was left to suffer and his wolf was left to mourn. Derek felt suffocated from the disarray and loss. His wolf was scratching at the surface. A strong instinct to shift and pursue their mate and hold Stiles close—keep him near until he forgave him—was ever strong.

Derek couldn’t allow his wolf to take over, but even from their distance he could hear him. Stiles’ cries were so strident they pierced the distance and overwhelmed his senses.

“God help me!” Stiles mourned and Derek clenched his red depths, attempting to drown out the shrill plea for assistance.

Derek’s wolf needed to comfort Stiles, but Derek knew he wasn’t the person to do that now. Derek would never be that person for Stiles, because the human wouldn’t let him.

Stiles didn’t want Derek and that broke the wolf’s back and tore out his beating heart. Clenching to the frame of the door even tighter now, Derek projected a ragged growl deep within his chest, struggling to contain himself.

“Derek……Derek.” Stiles whimpered and the alpha’s body tensed, his wolf roaring for release, urgent to find and console its mate. Derek couldn’t listen anymore. He needed to get away, create
more distance than Stiles and his Jeep were making.

Staggering away from the manor and down the stairs, Derek faced the opposite direction Stiles had departed from and ran. He ran as fast as was supernaturally possible for his species, trees whizzing by as he glided effortlessly and headed for the mountains, knowing there he’d be able to free himself from the sound of Stiles’ heartache and allow his wolf to mourn.

Derek couldn’t restrain his sorrows as a mournful howl escaped his lips.

He’d lost Stiles.

Stiles felt a fog of consciousness, dull, disjointed, yet still present. Confusion and uncertainty seemed to fill his thoughts with a hundred questions. All he felt in the darkness of his confusion was an inability to wake fully, to open his eyes no matter how he strained to do so.

His skin felt tight, dry and rough. Blood seeped from his throbbing head and soaked his hair in it further, gliding past his left temple and slicking across his face.

A darkness enrapt him and slowly beckoned him to oblivion. The murkiness of his distorted consciousness slowly faded away. The sudden sensation of hands grasping ahold of his wrists and dragging him across a cool surface dulled out as he sagged and gave to darkness once more.

The second time Stiles consciousness flooded towards awareness, he felt far more rested. The achingly raw spasms of pain that once plagued his tender head even within the darkness of sleep appeared to have dissipated to a dull throbbing.

Weak eyes warily opened, the coolness of the room causing an involuntary shudder to course through him. Blinking several times, his tender eyes were momentarily blinded by a radiant light overhead and he unhurriedly surveyed his surroundings. The walls of the room were painted red; the paint was chipped and revealed dark wood.

Blinking several more times, the bright lights lessened in intensity and shapes became illuminated; colors intensified from what had once appeared to be pale whites and grays. Stiles strained to make sense of the jumbled mess around him, his eye sight gradually returning in clarity.

Finally, he was able to piece together blurred images.

He was in a basement—or that was what he assumed; the room was empty of furniture save for the water heater which was installed at one corner of the room. An overhead light shone directly above him and made it difficult for his fogged senses to return.

Stiles’ head pounded with a vehemence unparallel, pain coiling through his neck and gripping his body in tremors. The sensation of dried blood layered thickly against his head and neck and as he craned his head to gain a sense of his bearings, flakes of blood crumpled and fell away.

Stiles strived to move his limbs, but quickly recognized he couldn’t because something was holding him down. Squinting orbs with concentration and blocking out as much of the radiating sun of light above him, Stiles realized why he couldn’t move.

A cold chill ran through him while alarm bells sounded. He tugged at his arms and felt the burn of rope chafe against his wrists. When Stiles kicked out his feet, he felt the bindings of another set of ropes and stiffened.
Someone had bound him to a chair within a basement. Nothing good could come from this.

“You’re finally awake.” A raspy voice noted from the darkness.

Stiles endeavored to distinguish anything within the darkness, but failed, not even a shape of a form was visible. When footsteps clacked against the ground, he pinpointed the noise from coming to his left and the clanging of metal followed suit. Stiles directed his sights in the direction of the noise and the familiar sound of squealing tires rolling on hard wood followed suit.

“Who’s there?” Stiles demanded and groaned by the act, a new surge of pain stabbing through his pulsing head.

All at once a figure emerged from the shadows of the room, carting with them a tray remaining out of view. Stiles stared at the stranger before him; a tall elderly man, thinning white hair casting a glow under the hanging lamp. Green depths twinkling with amusement, sizing him up in a way Stiles didn’t like. Something was off with this man and by the way he was smirking at him, he knew something was truly amiss.

“It’s so nice to finally meet you Stiles” The stranger cooed sweetly, leading the tray behind him to curve around his body and placed it between the two. “It is alright that I call you Stiles, yes? I mean, by the time I’m through with you we’ll be well acquainted with each other.”

Stiles glanced to the tray and felt the air sucked out from his lungs by the sight of what lay before him; weapons of every kind. Knives, scalpels and hooks of all types and sizes—thick, thin, jagged and smooth. There were small and large syringes and colorful vials ranging in all colors of the spectrum. There was even a wireless drill and a nail gun placed on the tray.

“Are you afraid?” The man chuckled, seeming to read the fear in Stiles’ eyes.

“No.” Stiles denied, lying through his teeth and they both knew it.

“I’m Gerard, but you can refer to me as your tormentor.” Gerard murmured distractedly, raising a clear vial and small syringe.

“What’s that for?” Stiles insisted Gerard explain himself.

“Oh this…” The man’s eyes twinkled, “this is to keep you awake, because when I’m through with you, you’ll be wishing you weren’t.” Gerard chuckled and filled the syringe full of the liquid within the vial.

“What are you doing this?” Stiles pleaded weakly, twisting at his bound wrists attempting to free them even when it was useless.

Gerard’s features turned sour. Stepping towards Stiles with a calloused hand he gripped the Sheriff’s head and harshly yanked it to one side and pierced him with the needle, injecting its contents within his neck.

Stiles groaned, his head jarred with shooting pain and felt the liquid as it strummed through his body.

“You’re more valuable than you realize.”

“If I’m so valuable, why are you planning on torturing me?”

Gerard smiled. “I highly doubt you’d willingly murder your husband, so what better way is there
than to break you and build you up again.”

Stiles’ blood ran cold. “You’re the hunter who has been murdering alphas and their mates?”

“You aren’t as brainless as I thought you might be.”

“Why would you need me? You’re wasting your time. Derek could easily kill me.”

Stiles wouldn’t kill Derek. Derek broke his heart, but that didn’t mean he hated the wolf enough to kill him. How could he harm the person he still loved. He’d be damned if Gerard thought he could torture Stiles into murdering Derek.

Gerard didn’t seem fazed in the least. “Alpha Hale is sired to you by the wolf mating matrimony. You are the only one who can catch the alpha off guard. It wouldn’t be difficult for you to kill him, because he trusts you.”

Stiles frowned. “You might as well kill me now; because I can guarantee you I won’t do it.”

Stiles didn’t know what he was saying. How could he sacrifice his life so easily? Maybe it was because he’d just learned the truth about his father’s death and that made him just a fraction insane. Just a little bit on edge and regretting living in the first place, but still, he shouldn’t risk his own life. It was wrong for him to want death, mainly because it would mean his father’s life had been sacrificed for nothing. Regardless, it didn’t make living any easier. God, Stiles was confused, emotional and now he’d been kidnapped to boot.

“I find the more stubborn ones tend to break quicker.” Gerard removed the syringe and placed it back onto the tray, surveying his weapons as if torn to pieces over which to use first.

“I haven’t used this one in a while.” Gerard simpered, retrieving a serrated iron hook, raising it in view for Stiles to see.

“The best part is we have a hunter upstairs, who also happens to be a surgeon. What are the odds? Hmmm? Too bad we don’t have any anesthesia, that in itself will be all the more of an incentive to see things my way, don’t you think?”

Stiles paled as the mad hunter made to stand before him, scanning his body with deliberation. Suddenly that sly smile curled about his lips; a smile that caused panic to course deep.

In one swift motion the hunter grabbed a hold of Stiles’ left shoulder; his other raised the serrated hook overhead before swinging downwards and stabbed through the back of Stiles’ right shoulder blade, the tip of the hook bursting forth and out of the junction of his collar bone.

Stiles let out a scream full of agony, breaking off into a sob as the hunter yanked the hook back out and took with it a chunk of flesh. Tears brimmed the lids of his eyes as his tormentor gripped his chin and forcefully raised Stiles’ head to meet his gaze.

“Now then, just tell me ‘when’ and the pain will stop.”

Stiles fisted his hands tightly, knuckles whitening while gritting his teeth. Tears burst forth and washed away dried blood as his breathing became frayed in an effort to focus his mind on something else, something other than the excruciating pain.

He wouldn’t give in. He’d never give in. Gerard didn’t understand him, didn’t understand just how much he loved Derek. Although the alpha had lied to him and hurt him deeply, they had bonded and Stiles would never break that bond.
Shutting his eyes he tried to will away the image of Gerard standing before him. The way he looked at him...calculatingly deciding where else he could inflict pain on his tattered body. Stiles brought forth the memory of Derek’s confession to the forefront of his mind. Though the alpha appeared in pain when confessing his love, he’d seen the truth of his admission and he knew that—

Stiles sobbed throatily as Gerard struck another blow and the hook stab through the meaty flesh of his bicep and a moment later snagging back flesh as it was removed. The sickening splash the slab of flesh made as it slid off the hook and fell to the ground caused an unsettling terror in its wake.

Stiles clenched his eyes tighter, willing the pain away, willing that this be a trick of his imagination, but knowing it wasn’t. This wasn’t a nightmare.

Derek.

He’d never betray him, regardless of his pains and regrets, he would never betray Derek. Though Stiles couldn’t forgive him, Derek was kin and that meant more to him than anything else in this world. He knew of Derek’s feelings and he knew that he could survive with that knowledge.

Derek would come looking for him. He had to…

Stiles just needed to wait for Derek to find him.

Derek had confessed to having loved Stiles from the very beginning. They were true mates and Stiles had seen the way Derek’s wolf struggled for some sense of control when he’d left. Derek needed him and Stiles knew that this need would spur the alpha’s need to find him.

Stiles could endure this torture with the knowledge Derek would do everything in his power to bring him back.

All Stiles needed to do now was stay strong and not break before that time.
Broken

Stiles waited for Derek.
He endured countless hours of torture.
He was drugged and mutilated.
He was operated on.
He suffered fevers and infections.
He was skinned of flesh.
He was drowned and brought back to life, only to be drowned once more.
He was burned by hot irons.
He was stabbed and drilled through.
He bled.
He shouted.
He wept.
And…nothing…no one…
He lost count of time and lost himself.
His tormentor destroyed him…broke him.
Stiles thought of Derek. Thought of him for the hours in which Gerard experimented on him.
He’d bitten through his tongue many times to hold in his words and told himself he would not give in. All he was left with was the bitter metallic flavor of blood and gnawed tongue.
Months had passed before Stiles understood Derek had lied. If Derek really loved him he would have saved him by now. Stiles had been wrong to believe the alpha’s confession. Now he understood why Derek lied to him—told him he loved him when he didn’t. Derek lied to keep Stiles with him. His wolf couldn’t bear parting from its mate and the alpha had selfishly lied to keep him. He’d done the same thing to keep the truth about Stiles’ father from him.
Chapped and bloody lips curled into a grin as Stiles hung like deadweight, shackles restraining his arms above him and were pinned to the wall behind him.
His bare feet, soaked in dirt and blood, hung limply, no longer attempting to support his weight.
Stiles shivered, the room was so cold. His skin was deathly pale and layered in scars. Not a single patch of skin was unmarred across his bare chest and legs. His gray boxers were not enough to keep him warm in the chilled and darkened room.
Hanging his head low, Stiles exhaled a shuddering breath and shut his eyes, exhausted.
The cracking of gunfire erupted from above him. Stiles immediately tensed and raised his head to
survey the ceiling almost as if he could look through it and above to the home. Shouting soon followed the cracking of guns and then Stiles heard it—a vociferous roar, a werewolf’s howl.

Pounding of footsteps creaked across the ceiling of the basement, dust trickling from the creases of the wooden ceiling. Screams and angered hollers of pain exploded down to the basement, until they were drowned out by animalistic growls and snarls.

Then there was silence and not a whisper of a sound slipped through.

Stiles didn’t breathe, nor did he move. He listened, straining to hear anything but the maddening silence. His heart pounded harshly against his chest, thundering with trepidation.

Footsteps paced the floorboards of the ceiling, softly treading an unknown path. Stiles stressed his senses, focusing on the muffled voices that broke through the silence. Except, no matter how he tried to comprehend the voices he failed.

Another moment of silence followed.

An echoing of shattering wood broke through the stillness and a moment later, light from above a staircase leading out of the basement, burst through.

Stiles’ eyes squinted, blinded by the burst of light shining through the cracked door. Figures stood at the entrance of the doorway, blurred and shaded.

A graveling snarl grated through the room and filled Stiles’ body with tremors of fright. Stiles didn’t understand himself, nor the reason why he was torn between apprehension and reprieve by the feral growl strumming through the room.

Stiles couldn’t stop his body vexed by tremors nor the dampness steadily growing and fogging his vision all the more.

The figures were moving, making quick strides down the stairs and further being consumed in the shadows of the room.

Their forms disappeared in the darkness of the unlit room. Haggard panting, harsh heaving and gruff growls became earsplitting as they approached him. Metal scraping against metal rang with an echoing clang and Stiles felt the restraints of the chains binding him release.

He was falling to his knees in that instant and was met by a damp heated weight, arms enfolding him in a tight embrace. Raising glazed eyes up and struggling to make sense of everything in the darkness, Stiles saw a flicker of crimson.

“Stiles.” Came a choked whine and suddenly a face was burrowing deep into the crook of his neck.

In a blink, the lamp hanging in the middle of the room was lit and with it everything became illuminated.

Lydia stood under the lamp, hand still grasping at the switch of the light. She was a mess of blood, mouth smeared in red and Stiles knew, somehow he knew it wasn’t hers but the hunters’. Beside her stood Scott, eyes wild, on edge, staring around him and taking notice of the filth; filth of blood and rotting flesh—his blood and his flesh.

Jackson stood further away from the crowd, surveying the room further and found the tray of weapons. Once they had been sterile, only now they were rusted with blood, pieces of tissue wedged in the crevasses of serrated blades.
The trio turned to face him, stared at him with disbelief and clemency.

“Stiles” Came the same hoarse call of his name. Stiles didn’t want to look at the person holding him; he didn’t want to accept the truth that was so clear now.

A nose nuzzled the scar of his neck—the bite claiming him as his alpha’s and he couldn’t hold back the grief now. Frail arms rose to press into the back of his savior, bringing him close and tightly held to him.

“Stiles.” He whimpered and Stiles strangled out a cry of anguish.

Stiles dipped his head into the man’s neck, scented the metallic aroma of blood and felt no fear. Felt at peace.

“Derek.” Stiles murmured, nuzzling the alpha’s neck open to him and painting his face in red.

Forgiveness in that one gesture, love in that one word and the alpha was baying for the affection Stiles was laying on him.

“I searched everywhere for you.”

Stiles didn’t want to hear Derek’s explanations.

“I’m sorry.”

Stiles didn’t want to hear Derek’s apologizes.

“It took me too long.” Derek grieved.

Stiles knew this. He’d lived months being tortured.

“I want to leave.” Stiles whispered weakly. He didn’t want to be in this room anymore.

Derek didn’t seem to want to release him of his hold and even if he did, Stiles didn’t think he would have the strength to stand on his own.

Derek nodded his head with silent understanding. Without protest Stiles allowed the alpha to swoop him up into his arms. Stiles was exhausted and all he wanted now was to sleep. His arms were folded against his chest and he rested his head against the wolf’s broad shoulder, inhaling his scent deeply.

“Sleep.” Derek murmured, lips pressing against his forehead in a faint kiss.

Stiles shut his eyes as Derek carried him up the staircase. Lydia, Scott and Jackson silently followed after the two as they made their way out of the basement and through the deathly silent home.

Allison, Boyd, Erica and Isaac surveying the living room for any survivors took note of the group as they made their way passed them and out of the home.

“Stiles.” Allison gasped when she noticed the tattered body of the resting human in the alpha’s arms.

Stiles could hardly hear the distant call of his name exhaustion dragging him further into the darkness of slumber. He didn’t want to think right now, all he wanted was to blackout and rest forever.
“He still hasn’t woken up?” Lydia fretted worriedly, pacing the living room of the Sheriff’s home.

“He’s been through hell.” Scott noted, “I wouldn’t be surprised if he slept the whole day away.”

“We should take him to the hospital and have the doctors give him a once over.” Jackson suggested.

“The hospital is out of question. Derek won’t let anyone touch Stiles right now.” Isaac added, seating himself on the living room couch.

“We could try to convince him.” Boyd deliberated and sat beside Isaac.

“He won’t listen. He’s relying on animal instincts and will want to keep Stiles close.” Erica explained and leaned against the frame of the door leading out of the leaving room and to the dining room.

The room fell silent as they raised their gaze above them, knowing upstairs Stiles slept while the alpha watched over him.

“Do you think he’ll be fine now?” Alison apprehensively said.

The group remained unvoiced, losing themselves in reflection.

Stiles felt the press of a warm body against his back and the weight of an arm around his waist in the blindness of shut eyes. The sensation was so familiar, something he’d longed for and took pleasure in.

Within this solid and reassuring embrace he felt cared for, loved.

Stiles didn’t want to wake. He didn’t want to welcome the light of day and the clarity they brought.

“Stiles.” Derek murmured, laying affectionate kisses along the expanse of his neck.

Stiles shifted his head, stretching out his neck laying himself open for the alpha.

“I’m sorry…for everything.” Derek voiced contrite.

Stiles knew Derek had sensed he’d awoken, but Stiles didn’t want to acknowledge the truth. Derek regretted and mourned his decisions that broke Stiles’ heart and his inability to save him sooner. Stiles understood all this through the wolf’s apology, but it didn’t change anything. It couldn’t change anything. He wouldn’t let it.

Derek’s arms fastened tightly around his waist and encircled him in warmth and Stiles forced himself to sleep once more.

Three days had come and passed. Stiles spent the majority of that time in bed alongside an affectionately doting alpha. Stiles didn’t speak throughout that time, unsure of what he could say. Whenever Stiles’ stomach growled with hunger the alpha would leave him and shortly return with a plate of food. Stiles would eat in silence, avoiding the alpha’s gaze as the wolf stroked his sunken in cheeks and pale skin.
When Stiles attained all the rest he could possibly want and felt his energy return, he finally ventured outside of the room that he and Derek made into a den for those three days.

Stiles wandered down the stairs that evening and tried to ignore the fact that Derek followed silently after him as if he were the human’s shadow.

The moment Stiles entered the kitchen he met the kind eyes of Jackson, Scott, Allison and Lydia. The four of them were seated on the stools of the kitchen island, drinking coffee from their mugs.

Stiles had heard the chatter from downstairs even from his room and he’d known they’d been staying over. Support and sympathy was etched across their faces now.

Stiles conscientiously glanced at his clothing; an oversized cherry sweater and black sweatpants covered him from the neck down, but he knew they’d seen the grisly scars. He was well aware that the group knew the truth.

“Stiles.” Lydia choked, eyes bursting with tears as she rose from her seat. She hesitated in approaching him for a moment when she glanced over to Derek who stood no more than inches from him.

Whatever she was looking for in the alpha seemed to please her and a second later she was throwing herself into Stiles’ arms and sobbing into his neck.

“It’s okay.” Stiles consoled the redhead, raising his arms out to stroke soothing circles on her back.

“Stiles!” Allison blubbered a moment later and rushed to the two and Stiles welcomed her into their hug.

Stiles shut his eyes focusing and restraining his emotions as the two women he loved so much cried for him, cried for finally being reunited.

“I’m okay.” Stiles soothed, pressing his temple against Lydia’s while Allison’s tears stained his neck.

When the women’s cries died out and they’d calmed, the silent alpha grasped at the hem of Stiles’ sweater and tugged, in need of his mate. Stiles coming to comprehend the wolf’s silent request, released his hold of the women to press his back against the alpha’s side and the wolf wrapped him in a possessive hold of comfort.

Allison and Lydia took their respected seats and Stiles remained where he stood, not wanting to leave the alpha’s hold though he knew he should.

“Are you hungry?” Allison broke the silence.

Stiles smiled weakly at Allison offering him something to consume within his own home, though knowing she was doing so because she felt the desire to help him in any way she could.

“I’m fine.” Stiles breathed, leaning further into the alpha’s arms, needing to feel the reassurance in Derek’s hold though he found himself unable to meet the wolf’s gaze.

Stiles didn’t want to look into Derek’s eyes because it would make everything all that more difficult.

“Sit; I’ll make you some green tea.” Allison deflected the Sheriff’s refusal and stood to begin to brew him a warm drink.
Stiles didn’t have the strength to refuse the always stubborn Allison and pulled away from the alpha’s hold to take a seat in one of the two empty stools between Jackson and Scott.

Stiles sat himself beside Scott and Derek took the vacant seat beside his mate.

The room fell into silence once more and the group listened to Allison fill a kettle with water, switch the stove on and set the pot of water to boil.

Stiles glanced over to each one of his friends and met their ill at ease smiles they forced into place as a token of encouragement, but Stiles could see passed it and at the guilt. Guilt that they’d come too late, that Stiles had suffered and gone through hell.

“We tried everything to find you.” Jackson vocalized for the group, not one to hide his guilt through a smile, rather wishing to meet it head on.

Stiles focused his gaze on the stiffly sitting Jackson whose eyes were hardened with resolve.

“Derek was the one who found your car the night you’d disappeared. He recognized the scent from the car as the hunters responsible for the alpha and human killings. We knew they’d kidnapped you, but had no way to find them. Their scent had almost completely faded by the time Derek found the Jeep. Derek…we all did everything we could to find you.”

Stiles bowed his head, taking in Jackson’s words, Derek’s hand planting itself to lay across his knee and stroke it comfortingly.

“Jackson’s right.” Scott cut in. “Werewolves from every district began a search party. Jackson and I even left Beacon Hills searching for your scent. It wasn’t until a few nights ago a werewolf in Colorado caught your scent in the forests.”

Colorado? So that was where Stiles had been? Stiles had thought he’d been in Beacon Hills for several weeks, but when Gerard treaded down to torture him one night and Stiles had noticed the snow covering the older man’s boots, he’d realized he wasn’t in Beacon Hills anymore. Derek would have found him by then if he had been.

“We thought they’d try to draw Derek out to them, using you as bait to take him down, but we never received any message.” Lydia contemplated.

“We don’t understand why they did this to you.” Jackson added.

“It makes no sense. They weren’t even prepared for us when we arrived. It all seems strange.” Allison noted, placing the brewed tea before Stiles on the counter.

Stiles stared at the mug of tea in stillness.

“Did they say anything to you?” Derek finally spoke, voice throaty, thickly laced with concern, free hand rising to caress his temple.

Stiles wanted to laugh and was mildly surprised when he did; first an abrupt snort projecting forth followed by a robust cackle and gruff laughter.

He could feel the worried stares of his friends and loved ones; they burned through him, but he didn’t want to meet their fretful gazes.

“Stiles.” Derek spoke softly, his hand sliding down away from Stiles’ face and clasped a reassuring hold on the back of his neck and dipped his head low to nuzzle his temple. The way in which
Derek said his name was full of alarm.

“I went through hell and you think I would be on talking terms with those bastards?”

“Stiles.” Derek strangulated, *pained*—that broke Stiles a fraction more than he cared to admit.

“They did things to me…I can’t forget even if that’s all I want to do and you want to know if they told me the reasons for kidnapping me?”

“That’s not what—”

“That’s all you care about?”

“Stiles, we just can’t understand why?” Lydia tried to reason.

“Why? Why they tortured me every day? Why they operated on me while I was awake? Why they drilled holes into me? How about, because I married an alpha and they thought they’d torture me before killing me. How about, because I’m a disgrace to human kind, that I’ve betrayed *my* kind by marrying a werewolf. They thought I should be punished and once they had their fun with me, they thought they could lure Derek to me. Then they could murder the both of us. Maybe that was why!” Stiles quivered with resentment and aggravation; unable to stop his body from losing itself to the desperation he’d felt for so long.

Stiles didn’t want to be touched, didn’t want to be held now, not now after remembering all the pain he’d gone through because of his one decision. One stupid decision he’d made to make peace with the werewolves and because of that, he was tortured and brought down to hell.

“Don’t touch me.” Stiles whimpered sorrowfully; not able to bear the alpha’s tender caress, nor the sympathy coming from his friends.

Stiles reared back away from the alpha’s touch and slid off his seat, raising a hand to clutch forcefully to his sweater and ground himself.

“*Stiles.*” Derek pled and no matter how Stiles tried not to, he raised his gaze and met Derek’s.

Hazel depths were full of hurt and regret, face worn and tattered with what appeared to be sleepless nights and missed meals. Derek was slimmer, less brawny. It was apparent Derek suffered his own hell without his mate, but Stiles didn’t want to acknowledge this truth.

He couldn’t.

“I don’t want to talk. I don’t need everyone staying here and watching over me like I’m about to break. I’m fine—I’ll be fine.” Stiles amended. “Just go and leave me be. All of you.” Stiles focused his gaze on Derek, voicelessly asserting he wanted to be alone from his friends and alone from Derek.

Stiles didn’t wait for a response from the others. He didn’t wait to hear their protests or comforting words. He left the room and headed back up the stairs to his room and slammed the bedroom door shut behind him.

Pressing his weight against the door Stiles palmed his face and gulped in ragged breaths. He needed to remain strong, the hell he’d gone through. He wouldn’t give in and break. The lies Derek had told him, the pain of his father’s death and the suffering he’d endured from Gerard.

He was a sick human who’d fallen for a werewolf, made a treaty with an unnatural species and
destroyed countless human lives who’d been mated by alphas because of his decision.

He could never falter. Derek had left him in the hands of Gerard for too long. He’d tried to remain strong, to not break—*God help him, he did try*—but he wasn’t a werewolf—he was only human and he’d given. He’d given in and broke and was pieced back together by the psycho path Gerard.

Now, he knew what his purpose in life was. He knew what he had to do.

Gerard and his group of hunter’s had murdered all the alphas, leaders of Derek’s pack, all the leaders of each district and much of the district packs. The few that survived were now following their only leader, Derek.

Stiles would kill Derek. Stiles would destroy the leader of the alpha pack. With Derek’s death and the alpha leaders to retrain their own packs from seeking dominance of districts, the packs of wolves would become leaderless and seek to become the head alpha. Many of the werewolves would die during this period and the rest to survive would be purged from this world by Gerard and Stiles.

Stiles had waited for Derek as long as he could, but gave in when he couldn’t take the torture and Gerard had saved him. The older hunter patched his wounds and left him in the basement to wait until Derek found him. Left him in the form of a Trojan horse, bringing the alpha and his pack to save Stiles and kill the unaware hunters Gerard sacrificed for the greater good.

Now, Stiles was back at home. Derek believed he’d saved him. Derek was open for the taking and Stiles could have killed him already, but Stiles wasn’t going to do it just yet. He wanted to make Derek suffer; he wanted to take revenge for the death of his father.

Stiles once thought he was better than that. Thought he wouldn’t ever want to harm the man he loved, but something had changed the moment he’d been broken to nothing in that dreaded basement.

All he wanted now was release and pardon and he knew he’d gain that through the killing of Derek—the man he once loved.
Stiles never wanted to do this.

He never wanted to kill Derek and he thought he’d never be brought to this point, but the pain…

It had been hell. No…it was worse than that. Stiles had experienced pain; his father’s death, Peter’s attack, being shot and Derek’s lies, but Gerard’s punishment was something else.

Gerard knew just how to inflict the most unbearable of pain and still keep his victim conscious. Stiles wished he could pass out so many times after being tortured for hours, days, but no, he remained awake and highly aware of everything Gerard did to him.

Stiles was grateful when he glanced out of his bedroom window and watched each of his friends leave, one after the other. When their cars disappeared around the corner of the neighborhood, Stiles sighed with dissatisfaction.

The lone Camaro parked in the driveway remained and Stiles felt a weight press heavily against his chest when there came a knocking at his door

“Stiles.” Derek’s calming voice seeped past the door. “I think we should talk.”

Stiles didn’t want to talk. He really didn’t want to talk to Derek right now. He knew his purpose now, but he found it hard to come to terms with those actions it would require. The moment he met Derek’s pained gaze, something within him was screaming for him to stop this, stop himself from doing something he knew was wrong.

A moment later there came a dull thud, then shifting as the alpha slid down the wooden slab of the door as he seated himself in the hallway.

“I never meant to hurt you.”

Stiles wanted to laugh, but this time he managed to restrain himself.

“For three months we searched for you. If the hunters kidnapped you because of me, they would have made contact, but they didn’t. If they didn’t want me, that could only mean they wanted to hurt me by…killing you.”

Stiles understood Derek’s theory and had to admit it did make sense.

“We thought…but I couldn’t let myself give up. I needed to find you no matter what.” Derek’s voice sounded so weak, thickly laced with emotions. “We just can’t understand why they kept you alive for so long.”

Stiles said nothing and Derek silently listened in for a response he wasn’t going to receive.

“Stiles, hate me all you want, but you must know…I never gave up, because I love you.” Derek professed gruffly, overcome by emotions.

Stiles lowered his gaze to the ground. His eyes suddenly stinging as his knees gave way and he fell to the ground in a heaping mess of bewilderment and misery.

Stiles wasn’t a murderer. He’d never killed anyone, but he didn’t think he should be struggling this much with the thought of ending Derek’s life. He shouldn’t feel this grief-stricken for wanting to
kill a man he did not love…but he did.

“Leave.” Stiles swallowed dryly, overcome with the need to bury himself in the darkness of that dreaded basement. That basement was his hell, but in the sickest of ways it was his sanctuary. A safe haven away from people he loved and an alpha that made him feel a mess of emotions.

Derek didn’t leave and Stiles strained to hear when he’d set into motion, to finally give into Stiles’ will, but he didn’t.

“Leave.” Stiles repeated, louder and full of purpose.

Derek remained.

“I said to leave.” Stiles gritted out agitated; the alpha wasn’t giving in to his wish.

Stiles rolled onto his side and faced the door and could see the shadow of a body through the crease of the door.

“Leave!” Stiles raged.

Derek stayed.

“I hate you!”

“…”

“I really hate you!”

“…”

“I waited for you for so long and you never came!”

“…”

“You think I could ever forgive you for that!”

“…”

“I won’t forgive you!”

“…”

“No matter what happens; I’ll never forgive you!”

“…”

“Because of you they tortured me for three months! Three fucking months!”

“…”

“I thought because you loved me you would find me sooner!”

“…”

“You took so long!” Stiles’ anger fizzed out, voice hoarse and waverering on barley restrained sobs.

“…”
“You took too long… I hate you!” Stiles pounded a tightly clamped fist into his chest, struggling to control his breathing.

“…”

“I don’t want to be with you anymore. You murdered my father and because of you I was tortured for months. I should have never married you.” Stiles wasn’t even screaming anymore, he was far too fraught with sobs to feel anything else.

Derek remained in silence as Stiles wept; no longer having the vigor to speak. Derek pressed his head heavily against the door, breathing uneven, scarcely managing to hang onto control and taking in all of the human’s hurtful words.

Derek shut his eyes tightly, yet still…tears seemed to press forth, defying his will to force them away from being.

Derek deserved Stiles’ hate…he deserved his anger.

And still, Derek knew…he deserved far worse.

Stiles didn’t leave the room that day or the next. He slept under the sheets of the bed, burying his head deep, wishing to smother himself and rid the confusion that plagued him.

Without Gerard beside him to give orders; the presence of the alpha alone was causing him an uproar of emotions.

Gerard couldn’t come to him now, it was too risky and Derek refused to leave him alone.

That morning the alpha entered the room with a plate of breakfast before sitting himself beside Stiles. He silently set the plate of food on the bedside dresser, moved to stroke Stiles’ back layered in sheets and urged him to eat.

Stiles ignored Derek’s plea that he eat and was relieved when the alpha gave up and left him to brood.

It was later that evening when Stiles finally worked up the courage to leave his room of solitude and head downstairs. The house was silent and Stiles began to wonder if Derek had finally left their home, but as he entered the kitchen he took note that the sliding glass door leading out to the backyard was open.

Exhaling a heavy breath of disappointment, Stiles begrudgingly made his way out of the home and to the yard. There, he found Derek sitting at one end of the patio table, staring at the darkening sky as if trying to find the answer to his dilemma. Dasher lay sprawled out near the alpha’s feet, dozing off.

The two animal’s heightened senses discerned Stiles’ presence almost immediately and met his gaze in seconds of him having exited the home. Stiles hadn’t seen Dasher is so long and was amazed how much the borzoi had grown.

In a matter of seconds he was fighting to keep his balance as Dasher pounced on him with frantic kisses. Stiles felt a rush of warmth by his dog’s presence and frenzied kisses she planted on him,
evidence she’d noticed his absence and missed him.

Stiles wrapped his arms around her and held her close, fingers weaving into silk curls and scratching up and down her broad chest.

“Hey, girl, missed me? I missed you.” Stiles cooed kindly to Dasher’s adamant whining.

Stiles could feel Derek’s stare focused on him, but he didn’t want to meet the wolf’s gaze. Staring into those hazel depths made Stiles unsure of himself.

Stiles took the seat across from Derek’s—the furthest one available. Sitting himself there, Dasher wedged her way between his legs and leaned into his touch and groaned with pleasure as Stiles continued scratching her chest.

“I’m sorry.” Stiles voiced after long moments of silence.

“You have nothing to be sorry for.” Derek observed truth.

“Still, you didn’t deserve that.” Stiles feigned remorse.

“We both know I did.” Derek countered, sensing Stiles’ lie.

Another length of silence followed as they sat out in the patio, lost within their thoughts.

“What comes now?” Stiles began and glanced over to Derek and met his stare head-on. “I hate you for your lies and what they did to me.”

Derek’s gaze faltered, eyes becoming dark pools of grief and desolation and Stiles felt a sense of worry seep through him. Such despair, something Stiles had never seen in the alpha.

Derek appeared frayed and ready to lose himself with woe.

“Let us end it.”

“What?” Stiles felt the air within him dispel in a heavy exhale of incredulity.

“All I’ve ever given you is pain. The treaty doesn’t exist anymore, now that all the alphas and their mates who made them are dead. It would be better for you if we ended things here.”

Stiles knew that he should kill Derek and he wanted to follow through with Gerard’s commands, but this was different. Derek was leaving him, breaking their arrangement for Stiles’ sake and suddenly, Stiles didn’t want this. He didn’t want any of this and God nothing made sense to him anymore.

“Boyd, Erica and Isaac have arrived.” Derek sensed, rising to his feet.

Stiles gaped at the alpha, torn between a thousand feelings and a hundred more thoughts. The alpha stilled to stand before Stiles and rose out his hand to tenderly caress the scar marring the left side of his neck.

“I’m sorry I can’t take back this and everything that came with it.” Derek’s eyes were damp pools of regret and Stiles felt the hate in him intensify.

Slapping away the alpha’s touch, Stiles glared with abhorrence. “You think you can get rid of me that easily?”
Derek dared to smile, though his smile was faint and full of hurt. “I’m not trying to get rid of you. I’m removing myself from your life… You’re broken Stiles, deny it all you want, you’re broken and it’s because of me.” Derek rasped, stepping back, bowing his head with guilt and without another word left the human’s presence.

Stiles gritted his teeth and struggled to keep tears from blurring his eyes, but failed. He hated Derek…..he hated himself. The moment Stiles heard the faded sound of the front door closing as the alpha left him, he gave to anguish.

Bowing low, Stiles shielded his eyes with one hand and clutched tightly to his shirt with his other. Piercing whines erupted from deep within him; pained enough that Dasher began to nose as his face persistently. Dasher lapped at Stiles’ tears that managed to escape his trembling hand that attempted to conceal them from existence.

Derek was right.

Stiles was wrecked…damaged and there was nothing Stiles could do to fix it.
Stiles didn’t know how to react to Derek leaving him. It seemed that one moment he’d been there, his anchor, keeping him grounded. In the next, Derek was leaving—telling Stiles it was for him. Stiles would have laughed in Derek’s face, if it wasn’t so painful.

Stiles didn’t want this.

He knew he wanted Derek dead, but he didn’t want this. His drive to kill Derek was for Gerard—not necessarily for himself. He would never forgive Derek for the death of his father, but it wasn’t as if he felt that killing Derek was acceptable.

God. Derek was right, he was broken.

Stiles couldn’t even make up his mind. Rationally thinking through his feelings wasn’t helpful, because his emotions were far too chaotic and distorted to make sense of.

The one thing he knew for sure was that Gerard destroyed his mind and with it all sense of willpower and confidence. Stiles didn’t want to make any more decisions. He didn’t feel he had that right—he’d given it all up to Gerard.

Stiles looked up to Gerard in a sick Stockholm syndrome way.

Stiles was a pitiful pile of worries and turmoil. He couldn’t even function enough to remember if he’d showered or eaten.

Even though Stiles was home, he didn’t want to do anything but stay in his room. He didn’t want to be the Sheriff. He knew during his absence the city would have appointed a temporary Sheriff. Stiles wasn’t sure if he’d ever want to go back.

Days went by where Stiles spent it closing himself off within his home, curled in his bed and holding himself. Dasher spent most of her time lazing about the room or on the end of the bed, keeping near to Stiles—sensing the change in him and almost needed to be a comforting presence, though Stiles ignored her.

Stiles wanted to scream, to scratch at his face and slam his head against the head board until something made true sense.

He spent hours crying for the mess that was his mind and wishing for Gerard to return, to tell him what was right and wrong and to solidify his purpose.

Stiles knew too well the hunter couldn’t do that, but that everything now rested with him to follow through with their plan.

Only, now, without the older hunter’s presence Stiles didn’t want to follow through with it.

Four days passed before Stiles received a visitor, Lydia. Stiles hadn’t wanted to open the door and he’d ignored the persistent knocking and ringing of the doorbell. Regardless of his wish that whoever it was would leave him they’d refused to give to that wish.

Lydia used the key Stiles had given her so long ago and made her way up the stairs and to his bedroom, using her senses to locate him.
Stiles ignored the beauty the moment she entered his room and raised the sheets over his head, shielding himself away from view and curling himself into a ball of security within the darkness the sheets provided.

Lydia disregarded his attempts to discount her presence and seated herself on the other end of the bed; Derek’s side of the bed, Stiles noted desolately.

“Stiles.” Lydia started softly. “You can’t hide forever.”

“Watch me.” Stiles challenged.

“I can’t imagine what you’ve been through, but—”

“Just leave.” Stiles sighed, not wanting to be bothered. He quite liked keeping himself hidden away from the world.

Lydia paused for a moment and Stiles wondered if the most stubborn women he’d ever had the misfortune of knowing had truly given in.

“I saw Derek the other day.” Lydia relayed and Stiles tensed immediately.

“I don’t care.” Stiles groused, tightening the sheets around his body, tucking himself firmly within the darkness.

“He didn’t look well.”

Stiles wondered if Derek was sick, if he’d been eating enough, was it because of him? But as soon as those thoughts entered his mind he wanted to burn them from existence. How could he care about the murderer of his father—the man who left him when he was broken?

“You really don’t care about him?” Lydia asked incredulity.

Stiles affirmed within his mind not to give into Lydia. He’d let her talk without voicing a thought. Sooner or later, she’d become exhausted and leave.

“He loves you.”

*No, he doesn’t.* Stiles perturbed, told himself within his mind.

“I don’t think you fully grasp how lost he was without you.”

Stiles rolled his eyes within the darkness.

“He misses you, even now and you can’t even see it.”

*He feels sorry for me. Guilty.*

“Stiles. Come on. Talk to me, please? I’ve been so worried about you.”

*I know, Lydia.* Stiles was blameworthy. Lydia was only attempting to talk with him, but he didn’t want to talk. It was somehow hard for him to open himself up. Stiles didn’t think he could without revealing his turmoil.

“Stiles.” Lydia sighed wearily.

Stiles shut his eyes and willed the women to leave him already. He quite enjoyed his solitude.
“Stiles.” Lydia pressed on, though Stiles wasn’t giving in to the redhead’s persistence.

“Why are you acting this way? Can’t you see I’m here because I’m worried about you?”

Stiles laughed. He couldn’t help it. It seemed that everyone wanted him to just let it go, let go of all the pain and torture he’d endured for three months. They wanted the old Stiles, but that wasn’t going to ever happen. Stiles would never be as he once was. He’d been changed, why they couldn’t realize that yet amazed him.

“Stiles.” Lydia pronounced throatily. Stiles didn’t have to see Lydia, to know he’d hurt her with his callousness.

“Just go. I don’t really care to talk my heart out or whatever the hell else you want from me. I could care less about your concern.” Stiles snapped, a sudden bout of annoyance slipping out of him.

And God, that wasn’t what he’d wanted to say, but he really couldn’t seem to surmise what it was he wanted. Stiles was all over the place and the only relief to his bewilderment was a man he couldn’t even see, Gerard.

“Stiles.” Lydia choked out, sobs in the back of her throat and apprehension bleeding through her vocalization.

Stiles huffed and rolled over in the cocoon of sheets to face away from Lydia’s form.

“Go. I don’t need you. I don’t need anyone. Be sure to tell the others that. Stop bothering me, all of you.” Stiles stated dryly and dipped his head into the pillow under him. He inhaled his scent and the fading aroma that was singularly Derek’s, his once love, and gosh did that feel all kinds of wrong.

“What’s wrong with you?”

“My Dear Lydia, I’m perfectly fine. It’s the rest of you that thinks you know everything.”

“You aren’t fine at all. You’re not the Stiles I know.”

“That Stiles is dead.”

“So what, because of those hunters you’ve lost your mind? Is that it?”

Stiles giggled amusedly. “Maybe a little.”

“You….really…”

“What? You know what, I don’t care. Just get the hell out of my home and leave the key on your way out.”

“I don’t need to take this! You’ve seriously lost your mind.” Lydia snarled, standing to her feet.

Stiles heard the quick clicks of heels clang against the floor on Lydia’s way out. He strained to hear the moment the front door slammed shut behind her and finally, Stiles allowed a heavy breath to dispel from his chest, a breath he hadn’t even known he’d been holding.

This was better. He didn’t need Lydia or the others. All he needed was the solitary silence of the empty home to clear his head.
But something in Stiles felt unsettled, his stomach knotting tightly at the realization Lydia had
given up on him and as tears overflowed, unrestrained laughter poured out of him. Grasping at his
significantly grown hair, he fisted at it, mirthful chuckles bursting forth and tears smeared hot trails
across his flushed features.

Face twisting into a stressed grimace, Stiles wept harder, knowing something was seriously wrong
with him, but unsure how to fix it. Throwing off the sheets, the heat burning through him, Stiles’
ears filled with the echoing of his contagious laughter. His laughter so loud now, Dasher, who’d
been sprawled out near his feet sleeping sat up, alert, gazing at him as if he’d lost his mind and that
amused Stiles all the more.

Lydia was right, Stiles had lost his mind—regardless of the truth, Stiles was struggling to hang on
to his sanity that wasn’t all the way there anymore.

Derek wallowed in the silence of the Hale Manor. He didn’t have the strength to deal with all the
chaos that was in the world now. How could he reign in all the werewolves in the world tied to
him, it was impossible. The hunters murdered every alpha of each district and their mates—the
ones Derek had evaluated himself and approved to be the districts successors.

All Derek had ever wanted was to give the world back to humankind. He planned to give the
districts to humans and over time remove all the werewolves in the government and parliament.

Now, everything was thrown to chaos once more. Werewolves were looking to him for leadership,
but Derek couldn’t possibly be in every district at the same time. Now, as it were, his mate was
broken and barely hanging onto his sanity—no matter how Stiles attempted to hide it, Derek knew
Stiles was losing himself.

How was he going to fix the world and take care of Stiles—there was no possible way he could do
both. Stiles didn’t want him. Stiles hated Derek and blamed him for everything that went wrong in
his life and Derek knew it was all true.

Derek destroyed Stiles with his love and the only way he could pardon Stiles now was to release
him from their marriage. He needed to break those ties he’d hung to so tightly. Although, Derek
wanted to remain beside Stiles, keep him close now more than ever, he couldn’t do it. It would be
another selfish act and in the end, he knew that the best thing to do now was to let Stiles go.

Stiles needed his friends; he didn’t need Derek, the one responsible for the Sheriff’s death, the one
responsible for hunters using Stiles in a ploy to hurt the sovereign of werewolves.

Derek spent days dwelling in the darkly lit manor endeavoring to find the right answer to his
dilemma. The hunters were all dead. Now was the time to rebuild the crumpled districts and bring
back order. There were already reports that werewolves were beginning to attack humans and cause
mayhem, several murders having occurred in leaderless districts.

Derek had to leave Beacon Hills once more. He’d left shortly after Stiles recovered from Peter’s
attack to appoint leaders and their mates once already. It seems he would need to do the same thing
once more.

Except, there was Stiles—Stiles wasn’t all there, he was losing his sense of reality and that worried
Derek. Although, he’d ended it with Stiles, he couldn’t just leave him. Derek bound himself to
Stiles and his wolf wasn’t willing to leave its mate.
Regardless of Derek and his wolf’s wants, he needed to do this, though it didn’t make it all that easier for him to come to terms with his decision.

Later that evening as Derek returned from the woods and finished his patrol of Beacon Hills; he scented a familiar beta’s presence. Glancing up at the stairway leading to the manor Derek met the gaze of Lydia Martin.

“Derek.” Lydia addressed, features firmly set in a solemn scowl, brows pensive with reflection.

Derek ascended the stairs and stood before the beta and by the set of her jaw he knew she had something she wanted to say.

“What is it?” Derek spared the greetings, knowing Lydia was close to Stiles and that the only reason she’d come to him would be because of the human.

“Stiles, he’s…”

“What about Stiles?” Derek suspiciously questioned, suddenly on edge.

“No. It’s not that, it’s just…” Lydia made an effort to find the right words.

“What?” Derek barked; he was not patient when it came to Stiles. He was leaving Stiles’ friends in charge of caring for him now that he couldn’t.

“I think something’s wrong with Stiles. He’s so…”

“So what?”

“Different.”

“He’s been through hell.”

“Yes, I know that, but…even Allison agrees with me—Stiles isn’t the same.”

“Did you expect him to be the same, after all he’s been through?” Derek demanded critically, unsettled.

“No. I didn’t.” Lydia grumbled, raking a hand through her hair, irritated that the alpha didn’t seem to understand her uneasiness.

“He’s hostile. Stiles won’t let us close to him and he’s angry all the time.”

“It’s normal for him to be angry after everything he’s been through.” Derek deflected.

Lydia simmered; miffed Derek didn’t seem to notice what was so obvious to her and the rest of Stiles’ friends.

“Stiles was never this angry a person. Sure he’s had his moments, but he’s just…cold—so cold and reclusive.”

“Give him time. As long as you keep close to him, he’ll open up once more.” Derek advised, wishing that Stiles’ friends wouldn’t allow Stiles to push them away. When Derek left, he needed to know they’d be able to take the brunt of Stiles’ anger and find the hyperactive talkative dork they all knew and loved.

“You can’t leave.” Lydia declared resolutely.
“I have to.” Derek sighed, palming at his tired eyes and rubbed the tension away.

“You can’t just leave, Stiles needs you.”

Derek chuckled hardly amused, but needing to try to make light of the pained truth. Removing his hand from his eyes, Derek held Lydia’s gaze with his own. “I think he’ll be just fine without me, maybe better.”

“No, he won’t. You know he loves you.” Lydia argued and Derek refused to believe her words, knowing the truth of the matter. To Stiles, Derek would always be the one who murdered his father.

“He hates me and for good reason.”

“I’m worried those hunters brainwashed Stiles. You heard him; he drew a line between werewolves and humans. Stiles never talked like that.” Lydia pressed on.

Stiles thought he was a disgrace to human kind—that by marrying Derek, a werewolf, he betrayed his kind, humans. Stiles wasn’t the type to discriminate against species, but now…after the hunters.

Derek was at a loss of what to do. “What are you trying to say?”

Lydia licked her lips, scanning the ground with much deliberation. “These hunters kidnapped Stiles for a reason.”

“To hurt me by hurting my mate.” Derek stated what everyone knew, but not finding the relation.

“No. I don’t think that was it. If they really wanted to hurt you, they would have killed Stiles without bothering to torture him.”

“So why would they torture him?”

“Don’t you see, they wanted something from him.” Lydia explained as if it were the most simplest of things. “Something Stiles wouldn’t give them, unless they tortured him to get it.”


“The hunters weren’t expecting us. They were sitting ducks. They didn’t even have a lookout, so they thought they were safe.”

Derek’s brows furrowed considering the possibilities.

“Stiles’ scars…they were old.” Derek recalled the image of Stiles’ ruined flesh, none of them appearing to be recent.

“He wasn’t being tortured when we found him, which means he was just locked in the basement for no purpose. How would that make sense? Why would they keep him alive? They stopped torturing him because they got what they wanted. What was it they wanted?” Derek reflected aloud.

Lydia scrounged through her mind for the answer and when it came, she exhaled a heavy breath that which caught Derek’s gaze.

“What is it?”
“Oh God…” Lydia paled.

“Tell me.” Derek growled, needing to understand why the hunters had tortured his mate.

“The hunters…they were sacrificed to distract us from the truth. They wanted us to believe we were rescuing Stiles, but Stiles wasn’t being rescued. He was bait.”

“Bait?”

“Who is the one person powerful enough to kill the sovereign of alphas?”

Derek shook his head, wanting to remain undecided to what Lydia was implying. He couldn’t accept what was steadily beginning to make absolute sense.

“Stiles.” Derek whispered, strained and on the brink of destruction. The hunters tortured and broke Stiles down, ridding him of his sanity to shape him into the perfect weapon. “They tortured Stiles…all so they could convince him to kill me?”

Derek knew the truth now and he couldn’t leave. Derek couldn’t leave Stiles when he’d become something the hunters had manipulated him into being. Stiles wanted to kill Derek and where the alpha should feel dread…he felt at peace and wasn’t that the strangest of emotions.
Stiles somehow summoned up the willpower to reintegrate into the world. He wasn’t ready to go back to work, and even if he was, he wasn’t sure he’d pass the psychological exam.

Stiles took baby steps. He ran errands, went grocery shopping, and took Dasher for walks. As Stiles preformed these tasks, he felt the constant watchful gaze of his body guards. Though he couldn’t see them, he felt their presence and it exasperated him. He never liked being followed. It felt as if he had his own personal creepers.

Stiles knew why it had been important to have Boyd, Erica and Isaac as his body guards, but now that Derek and he were separated and the hunters were gone—Derek should have called them off. Maybe Derek felt at fault for Stiles being kidnapped. The day of his kidnapping, Derek had allowed Stiles to leave his home and hadn’t followed after him, or called any of the three betas to keep watch on his mate. Instead, he’d left Stiles open for the hunters.

So it was very likely that Derek was trying to make up for it, having him watched even now, but Stiles didn’t want this. It made it harder for Stiles to draw a line between them. Stiles couldn’t help, but take note of the fact that Derek was showing concern for his wellbeing. Everything would have been a lot easier if Derek completely left him alone. The knowledge that he was being watched and protected made it all the more difficult for Stiles to cut ties with Derek.

Scott and Allison came to visit several days later, and the two forced their way into his home, wishing to remain blind to the evident irritation radiating from Stiles. The two made themselves comfortable and spoke to him as if nothing had changed. Stiles understood they wanted to pretend like everything was fine, like Stiles hadn’t lost himself in the long hours of being tortured, but Stiles wasn’t going to play along.

They asked him questions and told him fun stories, but Stiles only listened half-heartedly, while stirring his spoon in his hot mug of tea. They were attempting to give him a sense of normalcy that just didn’t exist for Stiles anymore.

Scott and Allison talked without trying to lead Stiles into conversation when they realized he didn’t want to talk. Stiles gave them nothing to work with. He wanted them gone and he wanted to be left alone. Stiles told them as much and frustration marred their once kind smiles.

“So you’re going to be like this for the rest of your life?”

Stiles snorted at Allison’s words, so much like Lydia’s. “I rather like being alone.”

“You’ve been through hell, we know that, but let us help you. You know I can help you. I’ve helped many people like yourself.” Allison offered.

Stiles smirked, amused by the brunette. “People who were kidnapped and tortured?”

Allison pursed her lips into a thin scowl. “People who were kidnapped and tortured?”

Allison pursed her lips into a thin scowl.

“I thought so, now leave.” Stiles didn’t spare a moment’s glance at the two and felt their gaze follow him out the room. Wordlessly, he went up the stairs and to his bedroom, shutting the door behind him and sat himself on the foot of the bed, palmed at his forehead. Stiles heaved heavily as he tried to clear his mind.
It was a beautiful morning. The sun had risen and consumed all of Beacon Hills in its soothing warmth; tranquil and pleasing. It was a beautiful morning, but Stiles couldn’t seem to appreciate its loveliness, standing on his porch. He faintly heard the delivery man step back now that his job was done, down the stairs of the porch, before entering his car and driving off.

Stiles couldn’t look away from the documents in his hands. Reading it with disbelief, he licked his lips and reread the document several more times. Each time he felt a soreness consume him, heart constricting over and over again, until his knees felt the weight of truth and buckled.

He couldn’t breathe, breathing hurt too much, hurt more than the razor cords wrapping themselves around his heart and cutting it to shreds.

Divorce papers…

Derek filed for divorce.

Derek Hale was divorcing him.

This wasn’t just a separation; he’d gone to lawyers to make it official.

_Derek doesn’t…want me?_

Stiles wanted to hide away in his sanctuary of a bedroom, under the covers and lose himself to the pain, but he didn’t. Instead, Stiles began to laugh; laughing uproariously, the tears fogging his vision didn’t even seem to register.

Stiles wanted to hurt Derek in that one moment, he wanted him dead. He wanted to feel the air leave Derek as he strangled him. He wanted…he wanted…

Stiles was driving.

Stiles shook his head, trying to make sense of his actions, unable to recall ever getting into his rented Toyota Prius. But now, as it was, he was driving down the familiar deserted streets, surrounded by forest and up the pathway to the Hale Manor before his actions fully registered.

Stiles wanted blood. He wanted Derek’s blood and slammed the car door loudly on his way out, wishing that the bastard alpha would take notice of his presence.

“Derek!” Stiles hollered, enraged, marching the distance to the manor.

“Come out, Derek!” Stiles shook with wrath, ignoring the fact his tears hadn’t wavered and were ever constant, rushing out of him like a river of grief. “Come out right now!”

Stiles didn’t even know what the hell was wrong with him. Derek might not even be home, but it was the best option Stiles had at the moment, and he wasn’t really thinking all that clearly.

“_Derek_!” Stiles bellowed, his voice echoing around him.

Bounding up the steps of the home, his gaze focused on the front door with intent. Wrenching the unlocked door open, Stiles scanned the dimly lit home for the alpha.

“Derek, I have something to say!”

Storming through the halls, Stiles stilled when an eerily piercing creak of the stairs sounded swiftly followed by an ominous reverberating growl.
Stiles raised his gaze and met Derek’s scarlet eyes of intimidation. Stilling in that moment, Stiles scanned the alpha before him. Derek was bare of clothing, except for black boxer-briefs, but even those could not conceal the bulge of arousal. Sweat thickly coated blotchy, flushed skin, hair flattened and stuck to the alpha’s face. As the wolf panted heavily, slackened jaws revealed pearly fangs, his features tensed—shifting before him into a partial wolf form.

“Get away from me.” Derek threatened in a gravelly tone, staggering towards the human, contradicting his words.

Stiles’ anger dissipated in that instant. Lately, Stiles spent most of his time dwelling within his home all alone, and he seemed to lose track of time. But now, in the presence of Derek, Stiles came to realize his error.

Glancing to the front door, Stiles lowered his gaze and found what he now knew was the reason why Derek hadn’t come to greet him. Mountain ash lined the entrance of the door.

Derek was in heat and had barricaded himself within his home. Keeping himself caged and away—away from his mate who had unknowingly just crossed the divider.

“It’s January.” Derek whined, stilling his progression and clutching the railing of the staircase. The alpha resisted the urge to break the distance separating them from one another, grounding himself where he stood. “Why come…now of all times?”

“I received the divorce papers.” Stiles’ voice was weak, bordering hurt with a hint of aggravation. Derek gnashed fangs, restraining himself. The alpha doubled over, maintaining distance from his rightful mate was causing him physical pain.

“Get out.” Derek hissed.

“No.” Stiles surprised himself and by the dumbfounded look that crossed Derek’s features, the wolf wasn’t expecting it either. “Why did you send the papers?”

“Stiles.” Derek whimpered, breathing ever strident. “I can’t be this close to you right now.”

“You can’t do anything, unless I let you.” Stiles confirmed what they both knew to be true. They were true mates, and if Derek attempted to do something Stiles didn’t want, he could handle the alpha. Just like he’d managed to make Derek submit to his will during their second heat cycle, Stiles would do the same if the alpha lost himself.

“We’ll talk later.”

“No. We’ll talk now.” Stiles knew that this wasn’t the best of times to talk with the alpha, but this was too much. Derek couldn’t just give him divorce papers and expect Stiles to sign them like it was the most natural of things.

“Stiles... Get. Out.”

“No. You said you wanted to end it, but divorce? You never said anything about a divorce.”

“You don’t love me.”

“That’s not the point, damn it!” Stiles screeched, brought back to the edge of rage.

“What is it then?” Derek stressed weakly, scarlet orbs softening with misery.
“You have no right to divorce me. It should be my decision.”

“I thought you’d be happy. You’ve already made it quite clear what you think of me.” Derek murmured softly, lowering himself further, leaning over the railing and breathing in measured breaths.

Stiles wasn’t sure how to respond to that. Opening his mouth in the starting of speech, Stiles let out a bleat of frustration.

“I—I know.” Stiles breathed heavily, eyes blurring with tears, struggling to voice his thoughts, but he couldn’t seem to make up his mind.

“I don’t know what I want.” Stiles sobbed, collapsing to ground, drawing up his knees to his chest and shielded his face within his hands as his grief overwhelmed him.

“Stiles” Derek bayed, pained with regret, breathing uneven as he scented his mate’s distress.

“You need to go. I’m—I can’t—I want you still. I love you still.” Derek whispered hoarsely, raising himself up once more and steadily making his way towards Stiles.

“Why did you leave me then?” Stiles pleaded, helplessly, trembling hands falling away to land frailly at his sides, eyes open pools of vulnerability gazed up at the alpha that now stood before him.

Derek’s brows furrowed with pensive distress and he lowered himself to kneel before Stiles. “I told you…it’s better for you. I don’t deserve you. I’ve wronged you greatly.”

Stiles laughed then, full of amusement and watched as the concern in the alpha’s gaze doubled.

“I don’t know what’s wrong with me. I can’t stop it,” Stiles wept, palming at his mouth as he tried to stifle the laughter bubbling out of him. “I don’t know what’s wrong with me.”

Derek raised a hand to brush away the human’s tears, Stiles shied away from the touch, wincing as if burned, and the wolf removed his hand instantly.

Derek grimaced and fell back, seating himself a foot away from the human and dipping his head down into his hands, knees drawing up and supporting his elbows.

“Stiles, please, just go.”

“I—no. I—I don’t want a divorce.” Stiles uttered disheartened.

Derek met Stiles’ gaze, desperate and at a loss, “What do you want from me?”

“I don’t want a divorce and I don’t want to break ties.” Stiles declared, voice only slightly above a whisper.

“But you don’t want me,” Derek acknowledged the truth between Stiles’ words, scarlet depths losing themselves to inner suffering.

Stiles stared at those claret eyes of woe, and felt his heart bleed. He wanted nothing more than to erase the pain that was there. Derek was losing himself just like Stiles, and it hurt him to know that he was the reason for it. All Stiles wanted to do was embrace the alpha and tell him that he loved him, but he couldn’t. Derek was the enemy. Derek was the reason for his father’s death. The reason he’d been kidnapped and tortured. How could he possibly forgive Derek?
Stiles understood all the reasons Derek did what he did and it made it difficult for him to accept the truth, because he’d suffered the worst of betrayals and pain.

Still, Stiles was an emotional wreck without Derek. Though he hated him and knew he should kill the alpha…but he didn’t want to. Stiles didn’t want to kill Derek. Stiles needed Derek. If Stiles killed the alpha, he…he wouldn’t be able to function.

Though Derek had left him, and he’d remained alone, he still knew the alpha was keeping watch of him, having him followed to ensure his safety. Derek was his home, and only in the arms of his alpha did he feel the safest. But it was wrong. It was so wrong of him to want to keep the alpha near, knowing that he’d caused his father’s death—that by marrying and mating with the wolf, he’d been broken by hunters.

Sitting there, in the hall of the manor and staring into the wolf’s unnatural orbs, Stiles felt safer than within his dark sanctuary, safer than within that dreaded basement. Derek was his home, and it pained Stiles to be parted from him. Stiles’ need was growing the longer he looked into those eyes and all he wanted was to be with his mate.

“I—I do.” Stiles stammered, brows knitting with tension as he struggled to affirm the truths within the chaos of his mind. “I…don’t leave me. I need you by my side—I just—I’m so lost.” Stiles spoke brokenly, staring helplessly at the alpha, grief-stricken.

“Don’t leave me, ever.” Stiles pleaded, rubbing at his hot face with the sleeves of his shirt, ridding it of dampness.

“You don’t know what you need.” Derek stated, staring at Stiles with pained longing.

“I know that without you…I’d lose myself further.” Stiles confessed, honestly.

Derek lowered his gaze, breaking eye contact and glanced down at the floorboards, unable to accept the human’s words for truth. Stiles had said so many hurtful things to him, that it was difficult to believe the human now. He didn’t want to harbor hope that was non-existent.

Stiles rose to his knees and crawled the distance separating him from the alpha. Pressing his weight onto his knees, Stiles raised a hand and hesitated for a moment before he palmed at the wolf’s stubble. Derek met Stiles’ gaze, uncertainty and skepticism written in them.

Stiles’ free hand rose to join his other, stroking at the alpha’s significantly more slender cheekbones.

“You still want me, don’t you? You said you still loved me.” Stiles mumbled distractedly, leaning in close to the alpha and brushed their noses together. Stiles nudged Derek’s in the hopes of drawing the alpha to react.

“Stiles.” Derek mewed, flustered and leaned back and away from the human’s tender affection.

Stiles followed the alpha, sliding a hand along Derek’s neck and along a heated, damp chest, accidentally brushing over the alpha’s nipple. The wolf whimpered, needing the contact and the heat flared up.

“Stop.” Derek choked, losing rhythm in his breathing, panting, attempting to remain in control.

“Derek.” Stiles hummed, brushing his lips against the wolf’s and Derek purred a graveling grumble of contentment, fangs bearing, his eyes deepening in shade.
Stiles slipped down Derek's body and slanted himself between his legs; he griped at his boxer-briefs, intending to remove them. Derek never gave him that chance, large hands gripped at his wrists and held tight, stilling the human’s movements.

“Stiles, you need to stop this before I lose control,” Derek warned, huffing heavily, licking at his lips and swallowing dryly. He was staring at Stiles with so much want, Stiles was amazed that Derek was still resisting.

“Let it happen.” Stiles drawled thickly, leaning close to Derek and daringly wiped his tongue over the alpha’s lips, lapping at them much like wolves did and that broke the wolf.

Derek snarled, feral, chest rumbling with the resonances of his animal’s vocalization of craving. Derek’s grip loosened and Stiles didn’t falter in removing the wolf’s undergarment. Derek’s face flushed, staring up at Stiles, calculatingly.

Grasping a hold on the back of Derek’s knees, Stiles pressed them up and against his chest, holding them there; he stared upon the bright puckered entrance of the alpha.

“Let me have you.” Stiles asserted with an authoritativeness he hoped the wolf side of Derek would accept. Derek accepted him many times, but Derek’s wolf only accepted him when he felt the human’s power and possessiveness overpowered his own.

Derek insistently raised his hips up and towards Stiles, wordlessly giving himself to his mate and acknowledging his supremacy. Stiles answered the wolf’s need and slid his heated wet tongue from the underside of his sack, slowly down to his entrance. The musk and bitterness of Derek’s very being causing Stiles’ mind to be clouded with wanton need to have him, to taste him fully, and join himself with the other as one.

Derek arched his back, let out a low whimper, his hips squirming as his legs jerked sporadically at the pleasure that instantaneously rolled over his heated being. The heady scent of Derek made Stiles groan out with his own need, his manhood twitching with desire.

Planting the back of Derek's knees to hook over his back, Stiles leaned low and used his freed hands to spread Derek’s buttocks open to his full viewing pleasure. Stiles inhaled deeply of the wolf’s heady scent, slipping out his tongue to lave about the pert entrance. Whirling his tongue in a teasing and playful manner, Stiles hard-pressed the center and Derek’s back arched further by the action, his breathing becoming heavier as the seconds passed.

“Stiles.” Derek bayed, eyes shut, body trembling and his claws desperately grasped at air.

Tossing his head while baring down on his bottom lip, Derek tried to keep silent as Stiles’ tongue dove deeper. Tasting blood, Derek’s senses exploded in a swirl of disorder and as Stiles rolled his tongue in a spiral and shoved his face closer, he couldn’t control the trembling that consumed him. Stiles’ tongue pierced the core of Derek and the wolf’s whimpers became a constant; his squirming hips following his cries of need.

Stiles’ neglected arousal pulsated with desperate need, his libido running wild by the sounds the wolf was making; piercing whines and whimpers escaping the alpha.

Slipping his tongue from out of the dark pleasures it plundered, Stiles stared down at the man below him. Derek’s face was flushed and his eyes half lidded in delirious rapture.

“Derek.” Stiles breathed needing more, needing to be connected with the wolf.

“Stiles, I’ve been in heat too long.” Derek panted, sensing the human’s need for it was his own.
Stiles hastily removed himself from his clothing, and once he was nude he laid himself on top of the wolf. Palming at the alpha’s hip, he lowered his caress under the wolf’s cleft and passed to press a slender finger within Derek. Stiles shifted his finger through the dampness of his prior preparations. Stiles pulled back and forth with soft measured thrusts, and he felt the tensing muscles of the alpha’s entrance. Derek’s breathing intensified, his lips parted in the starting of a whine that soon erupted from pale pink lips.

Stiles slipped another finger within the tunnels of Derek’s closing walls while scissoring his fingers against his protesting muscles. Stretching and widening Derek’s entrance to accommodate another finger which slithered in with more ease than the first two.

Derek shuddered at the feel of Stiles’ fingers moving within him, shifting about, exploring his depths. Derek raised his hands and corded them through Stiles’ much longer hair. Tugging at the human’s hair and bringing Stiles in close to his chest, Derek raised his legs to rest over the human’s shoulders, a show that allowed Stiles to see the alpha was ready.

Stiles tucked his head in the crook of Derek’s neck and suckled at the flesh there, every once in a while baring his teeth and leaving in its wake love bites. Derek groaned each and every time Stiles bit him, vibrating with hunger and need for more contact. Needing the roughness of claiming, needing to be claimed by Stiles and feel complete with his mate’s possession over him. It’d been too long. Far too long Derek had lacked Stiles’ presence, his touches and affection. He needed more, always more than Stiles was willing to give him.

Stiles’ fingers brushed against a smooth hardness, and he felt in that very moment Derek tense before the alpha was gasping breathlessly, tightening his grasp around his hair and a deep moan escaped his lips.

“Stiles.” Derek moaned once more as Stiles’ fingers propelled against his core pleasure point.

Derek rocked his hips against Stiles’ fingers, wanting the other man deep in him, enough so that his fingers would brush against the spot that caused his arousal to peak at an all time high. Stiles couldn’t bear to be so close to Derek, yet unable to feel him. His own arousal was secreting pre-come and jolting with the desire to finally attain its own release.

Removing his hand from within Derek’s tightness, Stiles positioned his swelled manhood at the alpha’s ready entrance. Pressing the head of his manhood into the convulsing and undulating walls of Derek’s core, Stiles groaned. Derek’s body soon layered in an abundance of beads of sweat as Stiles slipped in further until he sheathed himself to the hilt within him.

Breathing out in exertion and refraining from losing control, Stiles slipped slightly back before thrusting as gently as he could within the wolf. Derek shifted by the fullness of having Stiles fill him. Stiles’ mass was stretching him far more than his fingers had and causing a burning soreness with each thrust he made inside of him. Waves of pleasure consumed Stiles as his thrusts became constant and Derek yowled. Stiles answered the wolf’s discomfort by grazing his lips against Derek’s ear, his arms wrapping themselves around him in a comforting embrace.

“Stiles.” Derek puffed; eyes shut tight, willing away the dampness, yet it was useless as they wet his lashes and a few salty droplets managed to escape.

“But.” Stiles groaned, pained. It’d been so hard for the both of them and as they were united now, it was heartbreaking they’d allowed such a distance to separate them. “I’m sorry I’ve hurt you.”

“Don’t apologize to me. I don’t deserve it.” Derek strangulated, slapping a hand to shadow his eyes
and ground his teeth, struggling not to lose himself in his turmoil.

“Don’t. You deserve better.” Stiles declared, pressing his lips apologetically over the alpha’s dampened lashes, bypassing the wolf’s hand to do so. His lips lingered there, planting affectionate kisses on the alpha he’d mistreated for so long.

Derek clenched his teeth, holding back a sob as Stiles’ thrusts became forceful movements, yet his pace remained the same—a slow and steady tempo. Derek couldn’t take the despondency that filled him, knowing even as Stiles said such kind words and bestowed affectionate tokens, he still wanted him dead.

Derek tugged severely onto Stiles’ hair, startling the human as he let out a surprised noise and Derek silenced him with a deep kiss. Trying to kiss away the pain that came with the realization, Stiles was seeking to hurt him more than he’d ever imagined. Stiles was using his heat to distract him, make him open himself up to the human, to later betray him...murder him.

Derek didn’t understand why he was letting all this happen. Maybe he was trying to right all the wrongs in his life and give Stiles the pardon he needed. If Stiles really wanted to kill him, maybe he should allow the human to do it. Let Stiles hurt him in every way he could before at last taking his life. Maybe this was what Derek deserved for all his mistakes.

Derek’s hands rose further until they grasped the sides of Stiles’ neck, interlacing his fingers at the human’s nape. Stiles nervously opened his mouth a tiny portion at Derek’s inquiring tongue, unsure of himself. A groan slipped out of Derek’s lips at Stiles’ timidity and tentativeness, needing more, wanting to taste the entirety of his human. His tongue slid further, past Stiles’ lips and pried the human’s mouth open widely, all so he could claim and devour him whole.

Derek moved a hand to splay out against Stiles’ lower back and press against it, drawing him all the closer. Derek’s other hand slid into unruly silken hair, his fingernails parting through and scraping against the scalp lightly with his claws. Stiles shivered by the sensation and leaned heavily against Derek, deepening the kiss, sending sprinklings of delight to course the expanse of the alpha’s being and vibrate within his sensitive regions, arousal becoming ever so prominent.

Derek ached to be touched everywhere; he needed it so badly, his wolf was crying out to him, needing to be claimed. Derek slowly, drew back away from the kiss. Stiles followed after his tongue, not quite willing to break so soon and Derek, pleased by this, pressed a chaste kiss, before fully breaking away.

“Claim me.” Derek requested, voice rasped, deep with hunger.

Stiles’ movements never faltered. His leisurely propelling of hips becoming measured swift motions, all while he pressed at Derek’s lips and loved at the alpha’s mouth with his tongue, until Derek welcomed him back for another kiss. Niether Stiles nor Derek could help but to gasp out in exertion, Stiles struggled with control and Derek willed the human to lose himself.

Kissing heatedly, they trembled in each other’s arms; Stiles’ swaying of hips became less gentle and soft and more frantic, needing of release. Derek rocked his hips to meet each of Stiles’ thrust with force and power, drawing out surprised moans and groans from the human whose thrusts wavered by pleasure.

Derek’s body tensed for one second in time as Stiles struck something within him and a low snarl broke through him.

“Yes.”
Moaning deeply, Derek’s grip tightened in Stiles’ hair, his breathing becoming irregular as Stiles continued to strike his pleasure point. The pain of being stretched to his limits dulled as Stiles repeatedly hit his receptive gland and his hips began to move on their own. Stiles, sensing the change in the alpha, sped his movements, his own breathing becoming strident.

“God, Derek, you’re so tight.” Stiles groaned huskily, hurrying his movements as Derek bucked wildly under him, meeting each of his propelling of hips with his own.

“Oh God, oh God, oh God.” Stiles rambled on edge, his body becoming consumed in need for gratification. Derek keened as Stiles drove his hips with more force, roughly shoving his manhood deep into Derek’s core.

Derek could feel the build of his climax near. He was so close, he could feel the pulsing flow of warning in his lower abdomen. A strangled mewl erupted from deep in his chest as Stiles’ hand wrapped around his throbbing length. Stroking, fondling, and speedily rubbing the head of the wolf’s manhood with his thumb, Stiles watched the alpha come undone.

“Stiles.” Derek wheezed with elation, shoving his hips up into Stiles’ ready hand.

Stiles pressed his thumb against the slit of Derek’s manhood and the wolf couldn’t hold on. Derek’s climax consumed him and a choked howl filled the home as he came. White hot release erupting and splattering across their chests and stomachs as Stiles’ rapid thrusts increased.

Spreading Derek’s jittery legs apart, Stiles plowed through Derek’s constricting entrance with savage force. Staring down at the immensely flushed alpha, he locked eyes with Derek as he plowed through him with newfound fierceness. Stiles’ body became consumed in spasms, his hips jerking sporadically as his climax overwhelmed him.

“Derek!” Stiles hollered as his orgasm broke through and his body shuddered as his release spilled out of his spouting mass and packed the alpha full of his essence.

Derek moaned adamantly affected, humming pleasantly, and enjoying the feel of Stiles’ hot cum filling him completely. The alpha lowered his legs to wrap around the human’s waist, keeping him close and inside of him, getting pleasure from the fullness of having Stiles in him and his liquid essence flowing through him in a seemingly never ending supply.

Stiles groaned, shuddering above the alpha, face twisted in an orgasmic grimace of delight, filling Derek.

“Derek.” Stiles breathlessly called, head dipping low and laid his forehead against the alpha’s chest, sagging heavily against the wolf.

Derek petted Stiles’ hair with one hand while his other travelled lower and to run along the human’s back, rubbing soothing circles.

“Stay like this.” Derek begged, locking his legs around Stiles, keeping the human there when he tried to pull away and out of him.

Stiles felt the swelling of Derek’s knot in his hand and curiously slid his lightly cuffed hand lower and wrapped tightly around the bulge.

“Stiles!” Derek exclaimed, eyes widening, startled, before the wolf shrivelled up on himself. Panting heavily, Derek reached out and clasped a hold of Stiles’ buttocks, shoving him deeper within him. Derek groaned lewdly as Stiles compressed his hand around his knot before relaxing his hold and twisting his wrist, tapering his hold once more. Stiles continued these actions and
swiveled his hips realigning himself, striking that place within Derek that had the wolf sobbing and his arousal pulsing.

“Don’t—I’m—Stiles.” Derek yowled, rotating his hips into Stiles' grasp while pressing himself against the human’s flaccid shaft that was still able to brush against that spot in him that made Derek feel all types of good.

Stiles pressed against the alpha further, nuzzling the wolf’s exposed neck and breathing him in. Stiles had missed the alpha’s scent and all he wanted now was to be Derek’s once more.

“Don’t ever leave my side.” Stiles entreated, roughly swiping his tongue across Derek’s neck.

“Stiles!” Derek bleated pitifully, digging claws into the human’s fatty flesh and Stiles shuddered out a breath of surprise, welcoming the stinging soreness that followed.

“Promise me.” Stiles insisted, quickening his tempo, firmly grabbing ahold of the alpha’s knot and jerking at it now.

Derek howled, body trembling as he neared his peak.

“Derek.” Stiles hummed, grazing his teeth against the soft flesh of the alpha’s neck.

“I’ll never leave you. I’ll withdraw the divorce proceedings.” Derek huffed, licking dry lips and moaning, barely hanging on.

“Say you love me.” Stiles was desperate to hear those words again, he needed to hear them more than anything else in this world.

Derek breathed in soft whines and moans, lost in the sensations Stiles was laying on him and Stiles was growing impatient.

“Tell me you still love me.” Stiles beseeched and bit into the alpha’s neck, not hard enough to break skin, but enough to get his point across.

“Stiles.” Derek voiced whiningly, eyes clamping shut, groaning low as his body tensed and in the next moment, he was spurting out hot release and further coating both of their bodies.

“Derek.” Stiles whispered, heavily, feeling a newfound arousal claiming him as the alpha’s body tensed and his walls clamped tightly around his mass.

“Stiles,” Derek answered, burying his head into Stiles' neck, raising his arms to wrap around the human and hold him close. “I’ll never stop loving you.”

Stiles shut his eyes, feeling a sense of reprieve at Derek’s admission, needing to feel that love—that he was the only one that truly mattered to the alpha.

Derek’s knot retreated and Stiles began to stroke at the heated and unflagging arousal of the alpha’s, gaining a rumble of enjoyment from the wolf.

“Derek. I... need, so badly.” Stiles wanted all of Derek’s love, all of his attention. He wanted Derek to scent him, wanted to feel the knot that stretched him to his brink, he needed the pain of it to solidify he was Derek’s.

Slipping out of the wolf, Stiles kissed away the soft whine that escaped the alpha, wrapped his arms around his waist and back before rolling them over, so that he now lay under Derek.
Derek stared down at him, eyes smoldering with heat and deepened their kiss. Derek’s large hand swiped across their chests, scooping up his release and coating his hand thickly with it.

Stiles without a sound raised his hips and a finger skillfully slid past his walls. Stiles welcomed it, moaning through their kiss. Tongues dancing along the other, reacquainting themselves whilst Derek added another finger. Stiles tensed slightly, breathing uneven and struggling to match Derek’s as the alpha stretched at his protesting walls.

When Derek added another finger, Stiles cry of protests was silenced by hot lips pressing harshly against his own. Derek’s lips clashed against Stiles’. The kiss was forceful, Derek’s tongue demanded more of the human, heat flaring his wolf’s need to mark and claim Stiles. Derek’s tongue slipped further in and deeper within Stiles’ cavern.

Derek’s lips were soft, wet, heated, and oh so addicting. He never wanted to stop kissing Derek. Stiles wrapped his arms around a muscular back and pulled the wolf closer, moaning with desire. Stiles’ tongue twirled playfully along Derek’s as the alpha grazed his fangs over his lips. Retreating slightly from the kiss, Derek stared down at him as if needing to affirm this was all real.

Stiles whimpered under Derek, ground his pulsing adulthood against the wolf’s own. The feel of Derek’s arousal sent a jolt of electricity to ignite through him. Stiles raised himself up and pressed a sloppy kiss across the alpha’s mouth. Derek growled with a feral craving and attacked the slighter man’s vulnerable neck with openmouthed kisses. Every so often Derek bared his teeth and grazed the flesh there. Stiles bit his bottom lip in an attempt to hold in a cry as Derek nibbled and suckled hungrily from his pale neck.

"Derek…” Stiles mewed, while Derek’s hands trailed ghostlike over his narrow hips.

Stiles’ arms wrapped themselves tightly around Derek. Bringing the man close, he pressed his lips softly against the alpha’s own.

Derek gently glided his hands over the barely visible muscles of Stiles’ body. His hands loved the human’s body. Stiles’ breath lodged in his chest as Derek’s warm breath grazed his neck and his cool hands stroked up his sternum to his upper chest.

Stiles put his all in kissing Derek, his tongue taunted Derek’s red and numbing lips, before driving into his mouth and setting ablaze the passion that dwelled deep within. Derek groaned against Stiles’ lips, causing the vibrations to tickle the human. Derek soon took dominance over the kiss and overwhelmed Stiles’ mouth, until he squirmed in need, causing their arousals to harden all the more.

Stiles could take no more of the slow pace of Derek’s ministrations, and removed the alpha’s hand from out of him and rolled them over before straddling the alpha’s thighs. Stiles’ tongue spun along Derek’s all while he rolled his hips against the considerable hardness. Stiles could feel the rush of their blood that heightened his senses and he suspected Derek’s own. The two were barely hanging on; the feeling of their combined needs echoed the pleasure of their actions and caused the other to hold on for dear life.

Derek rose up just a fraction to intensify the kiss. Both were breathless and running on little air, yet they refused to part for more than a few moments at a time. Stiles didn’t hesitate to deepen the kiss all while he grinded against Derek’s lap. Derek removed one hand away from caressing Stiles’ chest to run through his hair and down the nape of his neck. Grasping tightly to the nape of Stiles’ neck, Derek jerked the human’s head back and exposed his neck. Breaking the kiss, Derek focused his attention on loving the pale flesh of his husband’s neckline. Stiles groaned unabashed at the roughness of Derek’s touch mixed with the gentleness of his laving tongue.
Derek rolled them over and lay on top of the human once more. He scanned Stiles’ body as if taking in the sight before him, staring into the human's lust clouded eyes. Stiles’ face flushed, his lips reddened and swelled from extensive kissing, and his eyes positively oozing want. Stiles was there, lying before Derek and willingly allowing him to do as he wished, and suddenly Derek felt his heart constricting with regret for all his wrongs.

Derek raised the human’s legs up and over his shoulders. A strained groan mixed with that of a grunt erupted through Stiles as Derek guided his adulthood at the human’s entrance and slowly pushed past the ring of tight muscles. Derek’s body shook and shuddered above the slighter.

They had been marked by their bond. Their souls tied to the other and now, Derek was laying claim to him and strengthening their tie. Stiles’ eyes shut, relishing the moment for what it was as Derek rocked himself tenderly against him.

"Derek." Stiles hissed, his nails dug into the floorboards below him and his hips squirmed by the fullness of Derek, filling him in ways that made him feel whole, complete.

Derek rocked his hips with less paused motions. Slow and methodical were his movements as Stiles’ walls closed and sunk him deeply into his tunnel. Derek felt himself overwhelmed by the tightness, by the accepting and compliant mate and picked up the pace. Leaning in close, Derek’s lips softly grazed Stiles’, his huffs of breath matching that of Stiles’ panting in strenuous need.

As his body stretched to contain Derek’s full fortitude, Stiles moaned at the soreness and pleasure that became one as Derek struck his core. Derek responded to Stiles’ reaction by pressing himself further and with more force, causing Stiles to writher away in euphoria.

Being able to feel the other’s gratification as if it were their own, while simultaneously being overcome by pleasure, was far too much for both Derek and Stiles. It didn't take long before the two men found their release. Thrusting without pause, Derek grasped Stiles’ secreting, swelled manhood with his free hand and stroked it to match each of his thrusts. Stiles cried out in elation at the feel of Derek’s callused large hand wrapping around his length and stroking him towards release. Derek answered Stiles’ need for climax by ruthlessly plowing his hard mass against his prostate.

"Stiles…Stiles…Stiles" The human’s name rolled out of Derek’s lips like a mantra on the verge of crashing. Derek shuddered against Stiles, his propelling of hips becoming uneven and swift.

“Stiles…” Derek gritted when his mass spouted hot and readily into Stiles’ undulating walls. Stiles thrashed violently and sporadically as his own release washed over him. A rush of hot liquid erupted and coated his stomach in pearly white release. Derek's knot swelled once more and painfully stretched Stiles' entrance to the brink and Stiles welcomed it.

Derek collapsed on the slighter and Stiles grunted, winded by the brute’s weight. Stiles mutely coiled his arms around the alpha and tucked his head under his chin. His entrance throbbed with a pleasant soreness, and Stiles knew it would be far more painful as time passed, but he didn’t care, because right now he was held closely in his husband’s warm embrace.

Derek’s arms were his home and he felt safe in the wolf’s embrace. For a moment, Stiles felt like himself. The confusion plaguing him was dulled, but he knew it wasn’t for long. Soon his wits would return and with it the chaos of disorder.
Stiles couldn’t understand what he’d done, nor could he understand how easy it had been for him to give in. Once he had, he never thought about the consequences, just lived in the moment. He lived in the feelings that Derek brought out of him and nothing else.

Derek loved him so many times it was hard to keep count. The way he made Stiles feel. It felt amazing to feel something, something other than pain and confusion. The alpha’s tender touches, soft lips and embraces rocking him in a lull of contentment, he’d thought unachievable.

They’d moved their unremitting mating up to Derek’s room sometime that night and continued for the next several days. It was already the later part of January and Derek’s heat was dwindling in constancy after day four. The alpha would leave Stiles to rest and prepare him large meals and would feed the exhausted human himself, noting Stiles was in no shape to do so himself.

They didn’t speak much after the first day of mating. Once Derek promised he would discontinue their divorce proceedings and would not leave his side, Stiles didn’t want to talk anymore. He just wanted Derek’s arms around him, wrapping him in a secure hold, doting on him and feeling his love.

Stiles was so deprived of care, having been beaten and broken by Gerard made Stiles feel desperate and in need of his mate, but he knew it was all wrong. As of right now, Stiles didn’t care. He didn’t care about what Gerard had ordered him to do, because he abandoned him.

Gerard left Stiles to take care of the alpha, to lead Derek into a trap, but Stiles hadn’t followed through with the hunter’s orders. The first week he was back he was supposed to light a candle in his bedroom window, alerting the deranged hunter he would lead Derek to Alder Lake where the hunter would wait for him. There they would have ended the alpha’s life.

Stiles never completed his task, because he never wanted to kill Derek, not really. He loved the alpha and it pained him now greatly to acknowledge the still prominent truth. He really loved Derek, though he knew he had more than several reasons not to. He had more reasons to want him dead, but…how could he.

Derek chose his father, yes, but Peter murdered him. Stiles’ father loved him enough to sacrifice his own life for him to live. Derek never wanted to hurt Stiles, Peter, the manipulative psychopath he was did it all knowing that Derek would never be able to have his mate this way. How could he, when Derek was a man who carried blame for everything that went wrong, a true martyr. Derek wouldn’t allow himself to have Stiles after his transgressions against him.

But there was the treaty that forced him to break all his promises and mate with Stiles. How could he not fall and break under such pressure, mated to his true mate and yet having to keep his distance, even when Stiles told Derek he loved him.

Everything was a mess, everything was fucked up, and still through it all, Stiles wanted Derek.

He didn’t want to leave Derek’s side. He’d taken his vows seriously, because he’d loved Derek. He loved Derek more than himself.

But God, Gerard, and the things he’d done to him. He was a complete mess; his mind was always battling a war. A part of him wanted to follow the hunter’s orders, his mind was screaming for him to obey, but his heart was pained by the cruel thoughts of doing such to a man he would always
“Stiles” Derek murmured softly, rising from slumber and bringing the human closer to him, the bed sheets around them tucking them tight in the warmth.

Stiles met the alpha’s half lidded gaze with uncertainly as the alpha rolled them over and laid himself on top of the human. Derek peered below at him with lethargic eyes, and Stiles watched them as they shifted to one of hunger, consuming hazel depths as they flickered scarlet. The alpha’s heat flaring, skin glowing ever flushed, the cool early morning light seeping through the windows open curtain and haloing the alpha’s body in brightness.

Derek nudged Stiles’ legs with his knees and Stiles answered the alpha’s plea, spreading them open for the wolf. The alpha’s knees spread wide, maintaining balance whilst he dipped low to tower over Stiles, his hands pressing into the mattress on either side of his hips.

Derek’s gaze never faltered, always staring with determination, with yearning—that when Stiles couldn’t take the intense gaze of the alpha, he shifted to look away. Derek did not waver and gently took hold of his chin, raising his gaze to meet his own.

Even in Derek’s drunken with heat state, he seemed lucid and comprehensive enough to sense Stiles’ anxiousness, and soothe him of his tension with tender chaste kisses. Lips scarcely met in a full kiss, just a sweep of lips, a drawn out of breaths, of yielding audible keen whines full of longing.

Derek’s touches were featherlike, never lingering on one particular place for long, more of a constant caress of his being. Seeming to know what Stiles needed before he could even comprehend what it was to need; the gentle slow loving of souls infusing as one.

Stiles felt insecure, his scarred flesh open to Derek’s touches and unlike all the other times they’d mated, this time the wolf took a moment to tend to each of them. Derek gave them his full attention, softly lapping at the welts, kissing scorched flesh, and whining softly as he nuzzled the many deep lacerations.

Derek touched and kissed every part of Stiles’ flesh, sending jolts of bliss to cord through him, knotting him up in a swell of emotions and needs. Words were not needed when their eyes spoke more truth than either would have believed achievable, more than any words could convey.

Stiles ran his hands over sculpted arms, muscular shoulders and back, twining nimble fingers through dark silk tresses, smelling of wilderness, still radiating its earthy fragrance. When Stiles became daring, he’d glided his hands over Derek’s smooth chest, feeling the muscularly built torso, the smooth heated flesh, and felt a heart seeming to hammer with nerves well hidden in strong definite features.

Derek loved on Stiles’ flesh, sometimes tickling sensitive and tender spots, a smile spreading across the wolf’s lips whenever he managed to elicit a soft gasp followed by a gentle titter, and the murky depths of Stiles’ gaze flashed with endearment, dancing with mirth.

Derek’s owlish stare intensified when his caresses lowered and he brought about gasps, groans, and moans of pleasure; stroking and caressing Stiles’ swelled need to release. Stiles tugged Derek close, holding onto him with strength and want unparallel to any before as he crashed in waves of rapture. Derek remained still, giving Stiles time to recover before lowering himself and devouring Stiles’ fluids.

Stiles writhed beneath Derek, feeling the starting of arousal take root in him once more. Derek’s
fingers and tongue worked his taut passage, seeking his core pleasure point, and when striking, continued to plague his sensitive region with zapping pulses of blissful satisfaction.

The moment Derek prepared to join their bodies as one, Stiles met Derek’s piercing gaze, never looking away, and whined as Derek filled him.

There had been pain and discomfort. Derek dipped his head at the crook of Stiles’ neck, gently shushing him of his whimpers and kissing a trail up his neck, jaw line, temple, before swirling about the shell of his ear, kissing the lobe and breathed unevenly against it. Derek’s movements were slow, deliberate, kind, and loving.

Oh so loving. The rocking of limbs, the breathless exhales, the brushing of lips, of skin, all harmonizing as one, all swelled in an orb of light, of peace, of serenity. This wasn’t sex, this wasn’t making love, because this moment they shared transcended all those labels and all those categories. This was singular. This was unique. This was something words could not express—could never begin to bring to lexis. This was spirits, souls, and destiny becoming one. Uniting and fitting so perfectly together as if it was always meant to be. As if this was truth; a truth remaining dormant until it could be set free. A truth willed into being by one unity, amalgamating. This was tranquility and euphoria of a utopia being discovered.

There was no roughness, no coarse heated build up, just deliberate languid rolls of hips, bodies bending into the other, molding as one. Hands caressed warm flesh, bringing about flushes, perspiration, and trembling that rocked their very essence. Their lips swept and melted in place with the other, ghosting over cheeks, necks, shoulders, before meeting once more, in a seemingly never ending cycle.

When they reached their peak, their breathing staggered, harsh panting ensued, yet even so, their pace remained ever constant, their touches all the more affectionate, lips and touches still featherlike. Stiles grasped the nape of Derek’s neck while his other intertwined with Derek’s own. His legs bent back, hooked at the ankles above Derek’s tailbone as they neared culmination.

Derek’s grasp of Stiles’ hand tightened as the slighter was overcome by spasms. His inactive hand enclosed about Stiles’ length. Derek stroked slowly, sliding up the head and rubbing against the seam of the slit with a callused thumb, eliciting a sharp whine from pale lips.

Derek felt himself fall over the edge soon after, Stiles’ walls closing in on him, encasing him in sweltering heat. His essence seeped out, filling Stiles with his seed, some managing to escape through jutting propelling of hips and slithered along inner thighs and cleft. The alpha’s knot swelled and grew; it protruded and stretched Stiles’ entrance, claiming him.

The two remained in the other’s embrace, holding each other in the stillness of their orgasms, their harsh breathing filling the stillness of early morning. When the high of bliss calmed and Derek’s knot retreated, the alpha gently slipped himself out of Stiles and shifted to lie beside him. He brought Stiles close to him, holding tight and stroked the human’s back.

Stiles remained alert, sober, and aware of the magnitude of what transpired between them. Stiles wasn’t thinking clearly, but the moment he’d seen those divorce papers and found himself needing the alpha, he’d given in. He should be leaving, separating himself from the alpha, but he didn’t.

Instead, when Derek raised a hand and tenderly caressed the side of his face, Stiles leaned into the touch, wrapping his arms around the alpha’s waist and held him fast.

“I love you.” Derek murmured and if Stiles had the energy, he’d have cried then. But as it were, he’d shed so many tears and had nothing left in him; only the constant throbbing soreness, the
sharp aching pain of love.

Loving Derek was by far the most painful thing to do, but Stiles continued, regardless of the devastation it caused. He’d fallen in love with Derek so long ago and there was nothing he could do to destroy that love. Stiles tried. Using his hate for Derek’s lies and the pain he’d gone through because of the alpha, but it couldn’t break the ties that were so solidly welded together.

That was what confused Stiles the most. Where he should hate Derek and wish only the worst for him, he couldn’t. He couldn’t even bear the thought of divorcing. Although it was selfish of him to demand they remain together, even after all the hurtful things he’d said and all the lies the alpha told him, he’d still done it.

The moment he’d received those divorce papers everything became real, too real, painfully real. He knew Derek did it all for him. Derek believing it was what Stiles needed was prepared to give him a divorce, even when he knew they’d still be wolf-bound and wed; Derek was ready to break their ties. That very thought broke Stiles.

Something in Stiles broke, broke through the destruction of his mind and pierced at his heart. It was his love for Derek. Although he’d told himself he didn’t love Derek, hated him for all his lies, the love he had for Derek was his one constant. He’d struggled with the idea of killing Derek, because he loved him.

But it hurt. Everything hurt, and Stiles still felt guilt for not wanting to follow through with Gerard’s plan. Stiles felt like he was split in two. One part of him knew what Gerard wanted, and a part of him felt it was the right thing to do. However, Stiles loved Derek and that was stopping him from following through with those plans.

Stiles stirred from his thoughts at the feel of the alpha’s soft pliable lips brushing against his left brow.

“What’s wrong?” Derek voiced, worriedly, brows knitted close, scrounging for a reason why Stiles suddenly appeared fraught.

Stiles pulled away from the alpha’s hold and sat up in bed, a hand rising and clutched at his eyes, shielding them, face tight with a grimace. “I don’t understand anything.”

“Stiles.” Derek started, voice soft, consoling as he sat up and grasped at the human’s hand shielding his eyes and lowered it. Stiles raised his helpless gaze to stare up at Derek, searching for something unknown.

“I… love you.” Stiles shakily exhaled; his heart heavy by his admission. Stiles’ stomach tied in knots when pained disbelief filled Derek’s features.

“I love you. After everything you’ve done…I still love you.” Stiles laughed. The paradox of wanting to kill a man he loved with all of his heart was something so amusing, he couldn’t help but to laugh.

As Stiles’ laughter continued and broadened the alpha appeared all the more fretful and ill at ease.

“Stiles.” Derek whispered hoarsely, palming the human’s face with both hands, and meeting his gaze with remorse. “I’m so sorry. I know I was wrong—”

“I know. I know everything. I know why you did what you did. I even understand all the reasons for your lies and I still…love you. You’ve watched and waited for me. You’ve always protected me.” Stiles stilled his laughter and felt compassion in his heart for all the pain Derek had been
through. It wasn’t just him who’d suffered. Derek had his own set of pains and grief.

“What are you saying?”

“I don’t know. You…you’ve changed everything. You propositioned me and I didn’t want to love you. I couldn’t help it, because it was so easy. You were there…and you were wonderful. So kind…always caring and I loved you for it.”

“Stiles.” Derek strained, struggling to voice his feelings and falling short.

“I don’t want to love you. Loving you is unbearable. Loving you is…painful.”

“Then why did you…?” Derek whined, tormented hazel depths lowering, unable to meet Stiles’ sorrowful eyes.

“Because!” Stiles exclaimed, breathing harshly as he struggled to find the right words, “because…I can’t breathe…without you.” Stiles weakly answered and mewled faintly when the alpha wiped his tears away.

“Stiles…can we not just…start fresh?” Derek paused, meeting Stiles’ stare, searchingly.

Stiles sobbed, a sharp whimper breaking through. Starting over, starting fresh, Stiles wanted that. God, how he wanted to just start over and let go of the past, but it wasn’t that easy. Stiles loved Derek more than himself and given enough time, he knew he could forgive the alpha for all of his lies. He could even forgive Derek for the difficult decision he’d made that led to his father’s death, because he knew that it wasn’t his fault, not entirely.

But Gerard—Stiles couldn’t let go of the confusion and disorder of his mind, because of Gerard. The hunter had damaged Stiles in ways he wasn’t sure he could ever get over. Because of Gerard, he was struggling to draw a clear line of what was truth and what was enforced by the hunter. He hated himself for mating with Derek because he was a werewolf, an abomination, but yet he knew that he loved him. He wanted Derek dead, because it would in turn destroy the sovereign alpha’s pack, but he loved Derek still. Gerard wanted so much from him, but it was his love for Derek that was giving him hesitation.

“Stiles.” Derek pleaded, desperately awaiting his answer and Stiles wanted to say ‘yes’. He wanted to give in. To tell Derek they could start over again. That he would give up his revulsion and animosity, that he could forgive Derek and they could go back to the way things had been several months earlier; where they spent their days together, playing with Dasher, spending time with his friends, going out around town and talking about a future family.

Stiles wanted that life; a happy life with Derek, full of contentment. He wanted to start a family. He wanted it all, but was it really that easy?

Could Stiles really just let go of the past?

“Stiles” Derek murmured, lips brushing his brow once more, barely classifying as a kiss.

“I’m sorry. I’m sorry for all the pain I’ve caused you.” Derek shuddered out a haggard breath. “For all the times I’ve lied and kept you away. I’m sorry I couldn’t tell you those three words you knew I felt, but never said and allowed you to suffer because of it. I felt that it was too cruel to say them, because I never had the right, because I’ve done so much wrong, because I knew I wasn’t the man you thought I was, because I’m not a good man.”

Derek wrapped him in a tight embrace then and dipped his head to the crook of Stiles’ neck, where
he continued to speak, his voice rough with emotion and self-hate.

“I kept away from you, because I didn’t want to torture you. I didn’t feel I had the right to be close to you and love you, because of my mistakes. I’m no good for you. So I kept my distance, I told myself to not love you, and it only made things harder for you. Even though I knew this, I thought keeping my feelings from you was for the best. But then you learned the truth and you were leaving me and I—I couldn’t handle it, so I told myself to be selfish. I wanted to be selfish. Just once in my life, I wanted to do something for myself. Can you understand that Stiles? Hmm?” Derek’s voice was raw with emotion, weakened from the pain of truth.

“My family died because of me. Laura was murdered because of me. My uncle became mad because of me. I was pressured to mate, because I became the sovereign of alphas and I know it was selfish of me to choose you, but I couldn’t choose anyone else—I wouldn’t. I promised myself I wouldn’t be selfish in the union, that it would be just that, a union. I wouldn’t manipulate you anymore than I had, but when you were leaving me—I—I—I just...all I ever did was try to make things right, that’s all I did, but...please, Stiles. I’ve loved you for eighteen years, can you not see how devoted I am, how remorseful I feel?”

Stiles whined. Derek’s embrace was so tight now it was verging on painful, but Stiles needed it. He needed to feel the pain to know this was real. That Derek was finally telling him how he felt, was finally opening up to him.

“Give me a chance to make things right. I know you’re broken and it’s because of me, but we can work this out together. We can get you help and take things as slow as you want.”

Stiles felt more tears cloud his vision, Derek’s lips brushing kind, tender kisses across the tendon of his neck. Stiles wanted to do everything Derek asked of him, but was it all that simple?

“Say something.” Derek implored insistently.

Stiles let out a distraught noise deep in his chest, resonating through him as his arms wound themselves across the alpha’s back and clutched to him frantically.

“I…” Stiles wept.

“Just say yes.” Derek urged. “Say yes and I’ll take care of you and everything else.”

Stiles wanted that. To just give and let Derek take care of him, to sort out his tattered mind and clear all his confusion. Stiles wanted to let go of Gerard and the confusion of his torturous methods. He wanted to give in to the alpha and allow Derek to right every wrong and clear all the uncertainty within him.

“I—I’m so confused, all the time. I—I don’t know anything anymore. Derek.” Stiles beseeched. “Yes...please, help me.” Stiles throatily bawled, believing it to be impossible to shed anymore tears, but it would seem there were tears deep within needing to be released. Stiles buried his head against the wolf’s neck and sobbed in his arms.

Derek held him all the tighter, and planted countless kisses of comfort all over his trembling form. Stiles knew, just as he’d always known, in Derek’s arms he felt the safest and surest of himself. In the alpha’s arms now, he felt hope. He felt Derek was his answer to salvation, to sanity, and would lay himself bare to the alpha and his strength.
It had been six weeks to the day since Derek's heat cycle ended and they'd worked through many of their issues. Stiles opened himself up to Derek, needing his comfort and love. Derek gave Stiles everything he needed, and then some, reassuring and loving him to a consoled state.

The instant Derek's heat cycle ended, the alpha had contacted Allison and sought her help in providing Stiles with the best therapist for his situation. She'd recommended a doctor that she thought would best suit Stiles' needs and the next day, Stiles had met with his therapist.

Therapy was the last thing Stiles ever wanted, but after all that had happened to him, he couldn't deny the necessity.

Stiles' sessions were tiring and he felt exposed most days. He felt uncomfortable and wanted to quit, but he couldn't. He felt trapped in his disordered mind and knew that the best way to heal was to receive counseling from a therapist.

Slowly, Stiles began to feel surer of whom he was, confident and more lucid. He no longer found that he was losing himself in laughter at the oddest times. He didn't have the desire to laugh away the pain and distress of emotions anymore, because he was confronting them head-on with the help of his therapist.

Stiles' and Derek's bond grew ever stronger, and Stiles found the power to forgive Derek for all his lies and betrayals. Stiles sought Derek's strength and love, his comfort and kindness, his support and compassion. Stiles felt secure.

Stiles' mind was no longer battling a war, no longer torn or conflicted. He knew right from wrong, and no longer believed all those lies Gerard had fed him through countless hours of torture.

Derek supported him. He encouraged him and was always there to give him his comforting arms, lend him his shoulder. He listened to anything Stiles wanted to say. All the horrible things that Gerard had wanted him to do, Stiles kept hidden. He never told Derek about what Gerard had done to him either. Stiles didn't think he should tell Derek, it wouldn't do much good. It would hurt them both. Derek for not being able to stop Stiles from enduring all that pain, and Stiles, because he would have to see the pain Derek carried and the enormous amount of regret he would have once learning the full truth.

Derek moved back home and the two began to live their lives as they once had. The first few weeks were unsettling as Stiles was still struggling to work through the chaos of his mind and summoning the will to forgive Derek completely, but after the fourth week, they'd become close--in some ways, even closer- than they had been.

Stiles was at peace and steadily becoming more like himself. Derek was once again the man that he wanted to open himself up to and let into his heart.

At odd moments in the day when they were together, as clingy as it might seem, Stiles sought Derek's affectionate embrace and tender words of love.

Like now, Derek stood in front of their stove, preparing beef stew. Stiles felt that inner need to seek Derek's reassuring embrace, powerful enough to soothe all his worries away.

In a matter of moments, Stiles stood from his seat at the kitchen island and wound his arms around Derek from behind the alpha. Fastening his hold, Stiles inhaled the alluring scent of his husband,
burying his nose against the back of the alpha’s shirt.

Derek’s movements stilled as he leaned back against Stiles, silently ready to offer up anything Stiles needed as comfort.

"Derek..." Stiles exhaled breathlessly.

"Hmm?"

"I love you." Stiles hummed, nuzzling a solid shoulder blade.

Derek’s wolf purred softly with contentment.

Stiles wanted more. He wanted Derek’s full attention, swiftly reaching around to shut off the stove and spun the wolf to face him. Stiles met Derek's questioning gaze with endearment, raised his hands up to cup his face and leaned in to meet the alpha in a chaste kiss.

"I really love you." Stiles smiled and kissed the alpha once more, this time longer, far less chaste and filled with much more need.

Breaking their kiss in a breathless gasp, Stiles pleaded, "Love me," before capturing the alpha's lips.

Derek’s growl strummed through his chest, lips parting to allow Stiles’ inquisitive tongue full access to claim his mouth in a heated kiss. Then Stiles lost himself in the wolf’s powerful arms, tender lips and loving affections.

After that night, Stiles began to notice with discomfort; Derek was pulling away from him. That night of passion had been one full of tenderness and love, but the morning after… Derek was gone. Derek left Stiles alone in bed, something he hadn’t done since they’d worked through all the conflicts keeping them from being close, mainly Derek’s guilt for Stiles’ father.

Stiles tried to reach out to Derek, both figuratively as well as emotionally, but whenever Stiles attempted to bring Derek in his arms, the alpha would become rigid and shy away from his touch. When Stiles sought to understand the wolf’s behavior and converse with him, Derek shut him out.

What started off as subtle respites from affection, became full-on, blatant avoidance. Derek came home late after Stiles had fallen asleep, and left early before Stiles woke. It became rare that Stiles would even be able to see his husband. In the last week, Stiles had spotted him once, when he’d gone grocery shopping and Derek’s slick midnight Camaro drove past downtown. Stiles had met the alpha’s gaze briefly through the widow of the car before Derek had averted his gaze back on the road and sped off.

Stiles felt wary, unnerved and sick to his stomach. Derek was avoiding him, but for the life of him, he couldn’t understand why. He began to replay the events of their last night together on a nearly constant loop, trying to work out why it had all fallen to pieces.

Derek came home early that night and took Stiles out shopping, then for a long walk at the park with Dasher. Stiles was still not in the mental shape to go back to work, and spent most of his time at home, so Derek always sought to give them reasons to go out.

When they arrived home Derek offered to make dinner and began putting together a beef stew. Stiles then sought to have Derek’s affections and love and they’d put dinner off and headed for
their room. There Derek loved Stiles to peace and comfort, filling Stiles with his love and adoration, and they’d fallen asleep in each other’s arms.

They hadn’t argued, and Stiles couldn’t recall saying anything that night that would have upset Derek, but somehow he must have. He must have done something that would explain Derek’s sudden need for space.

Stiles sat heavily on the living room couch and ran his hands through his hair, struggling to understand why it was that Derek seemed to not want to be near him anymore.

The chiming of his cell started Stiles from his thoughts. Retrieving it from his pocket, Stiles read the name responsible for the text message alert, Derek. Hurriedly, he opened the message. It was the first form of contact from the alpha in almost a week.

Derek
10:46PM

Still out of town for a meeting with a neighboring pack. I won’t be back till late. Don’t wait up for me.

Stiles was unsettled by this. Derek had gone out of town without telling him beforehand, but then again, Derek hadn’t been around to let him know in the first place.

Stiles didn’t like this. He didn’t like this one bit. He hated feeling insecure and overlooked. He wanted things to be the way they were months earlier, as newlyweds, even a week earlier was better than this.

Stiles couldn’t take this anymore. This was going to kill him.

Stiles anxiously fiddled with his phone and pressed it to his ear, hearing the dull drilling as he called Derek. When the alpha didn’t answer, Stiles wasn’t surprised and waited for the beep of the recording message.

“Derek.” Stiles began with a sigh. “We need to talk…please call me when you get this.” Stiles mutely hung up and glared at his phone with annoyance. Why was Derek acting like this suddenly? It didn’t make sense.

Stiles didn’t want to wait up for Derek, not when he felt such exasperation at Derek’s behavior and dejected for being unable to understand what it all meant. Stiles fell asleep, haggard and disheartened.

Stiles felt the deepness of his sleep lift away by an unsettling sensation. Something pressing against his mouth, stirred him to awareness, and soon the strong scent suddenly plaguing his senses brought with it a fog of dizziness.

Stiles’ eyes snapped open and met with familiar depths, ones that sent his blood running cold and his heart pulsing with dread.

Gerard. Gerard stood over him in his bed, pressing a white damp cloth to his mouth and nose,
suffocating him with its disarmingly soothing scent: chloroform.

‘No!’ Stiles muffled out a cry past the cloth and thrashed about, struggling to remove the cloth and fight back against the hunter.

But it was all futile; his movements were sluggish and uncoordinated as the effects of the drug overwhelmed him. Struggling to remain awake was growing ever difficult as his eyelids became heavy.

Stiles’ arms fell back against the bed as he sank further in the lull of tranquility. The last thing Stiles’ foggy senses made out was the eerily ominous laughter as the hunter cackled.

Stiles knew…staring into the murderous gaze of his tormentor as everything began to dull out, that Gerard had returned to follow through with his threat—a threat that was made just in case Stiles backed out of their plan.

Stiles knew Gerard had returned to kill him.
The moment Derek returned home, he knew something was wrong. Derek arrived home late the next morning to a still home, completely soundless. Dasher was the only one to greet him and as she did so, she let out a strained whimper, eyes seeming to express something that words could not.

“Stiles!” Derek called out vociferously and was met by deadening silence. Taking a deep breath, Derek attempted to pinpoint the human’s location, but Stiles’ scent was faint, he wasn’t home. This worried the alpha, Stiles was nearly always home, the only times he went out around town was when he went grocery shopping or when the two went out together.

Derek couldn’t imagine why Stiles would go grocery shopping now, since he’d done so just a couple of days earlier. Something was off.

Derek scented the home further, attempting to gather a reason for his dilemma. Maybe Derek was overreacting; he knew he wasn’t always the most logical, not when it concerned Stiles, but he was trying.

Derek’s body stiffened when he scented death, rotting flesh. Derek’s stomach twisted sickeningly, the scent was near, close. As the alpha used his senses and followed the scent outside, he felt his body tremble with nerves. Crossing the street, and walking a quarter of a block and towards a heavily wooded park, Derek distinguished the familiar scent.

Before Derek reached his destination, the muffled sound of whimpering pierced his ears and he broke into a run, somehow knowing what he’d find.

There, bound and gagged, was Isaac, struggling against his restraints. Beside him lay Erica, unbound and laying still, head snapped back. To the untrained eye, she appeared dead, but Derek could hear the faint beating of her heart. She was barely just hanging on. Boyd lay further away from the other two, just as still as Erica. Unlike the others, there were several dozen bullets of wolfsbane scattered about his abdomen and chest, clearly showing the truth of his demise.

Boyd was dead; Derek knew it was him soon after registering his scent. Hazel eyes shifted then, rage and grief battling for dominance, but he couldn’t allow himself to give in to those emotions now. The scent of charred wolfsbane bullets pelted through Boyd was evidence that hunters were in Beacon Hills.

Kneeling before the furiously thrashing Isaac, Derek untied the gag, before working hurriedly to unbind the beta’s limbs.

“What’s happened?” Derek gruffly demanded, searching the beta’s features for an explanation.

“Hunters ambushed us. They got Erica and I tried to help her. Boyd rushed after one of them who entered the home, but they…Boyd…” Isaac waveringly explained in a trembling breath, eyes gleaming, “They took him Derek. They took Stiles and let me live to deliver a message.”

Derek’s mind was rushing with a thousand thoughts, his heart hammering all at once, and his face turned into a grimace as his eyes dampened. They’d taken Stiles, the bastards…they’d tortured him and now after he was healing, Derek left him open and vulnerable and they’d—it was his fault.

Again, he’d failed his mate. He’d been weak and fearful, and because he’d shut Stiles out and pushed him away, he’d left him open for the taking.
“What was the message?” Derek waveringly questioned, dreading the answer that would be given.

Isaac’s eyes softened with pain and regret, not wanting to be the one to deliver this message.

“We have until noon to find Stiles, or he’s…” Isaac didn’t need to finish his sentence for the alpha to understand.

Derek glanced over to his trembling arm and at his wristwatch before choking out a sob.

“We only have an hour.”

Derek shook his head, blinking back emotions and whined softly in the back of his throat.

“What do we do?” Isaac pleaded helplessly.

Clasping a hand over his face, Derek attempted to calm his breathing and deliberate his choices.

“Take Erica to Deaton, he might be able to save her.”

“What about Stiles?”

“I’ll find him. Do as I say.”

Derek rose to his feet as Isaac scrambled to action and hurriedly lifted Erica into his arms and rushed to get her to help.

Derek whimpered wretchedly and raked his quaking hands through his hair, letting out a thunderous howl of grief, all at once beckoning the werewolves of Beacon Hills to him. A moment of silence followed his howl, before a softer echo of his howl answered back, followed by another, then several more.

Derek knew his pack was coming, but it still wasn’t fast enough. He needed to debrief them and send every last one of them out to search for his mate. He needed to find Stiles, and although Beacon Hills was a small town, the seemingly endless forest that surrounded it was not.

When Stiles woke, he was being dragged deep within a forest and the sun was steadily rising above them. Stiles struggled to free himself of the two bulky hunters holding on to him and was roughly shook and cursed at.

They were surrounded by other hunters, more than a dozen, and in front of them guiding them was their leader, the deranged Gerard.

When they finally came to a stop, Stiles surveyed his surroundings, but didn’t know where he was. He’d never been to this part of the forest.

Gerard halted his steps and turned to face the group of hunters and his gaze met Stiles’, the hunter’s holding him and forcing him down onto his knees.

Stiles remained still and silent, knowing there was nothing he could possibly do. He was weaponless, the men holding him were more than two times stronger than himself and he was in the presence of by far the most evil creature known to man; Gerard.

“It’s so nice to see you again Stiles, I really did miss you,” Gerard simpered.
“I didn’t,” Stiles muttered, without realizing he’d said it aloud.

Gerard broke into laughter once more.

“Oh, my dear boy, it seems you still haven’t learned your lesson, but it would seem you’re in luck since I have one last lesson for you,” Gerard sneered, glaring murderously, and wordlessly retrieved a syringe and vial of pale gray liquid.

Stiles paled and swallowed dryly.

“I bet you’re wondering what this is, hmm?”

“You got me.” Stiles dully answered.

Gerard brushed off Stiles’ apathetic show of bravado and began explaining. “This is diluted mountain ash. You see, human’s can tolerate the substance, but werewolves on the other hand.”

“I’m not a werewolf.”

“No, no you’re not.” Gerard smirked knowingly. “But your mate is. Your alpha mate.”

“I don’t understand the importance?”

“No, I assume you wouldn’t, what with me being the one holding all the cards,” Gerard considered, fiddling with the vial and syringe and filling the syringe with a heavy dosage of the mountain ash.

“Hold him still,” Gerard ordered the hunters restraining Stiles. Each of the hunters tightened their hold on his arms, while one pinched the back of his neck, holding his head still, as another rolled up one of his sleeves exposing his arm.

Stiles winced with discomfort when Gerard callously shoved the needle in and injected the fluid. Kneeling before Stiles, Gerard smiled amusedly as if he’d just shat gold.

“You know, I gave you the rare opportunity. To help purge this world of werewolves, all you had to do was kill your mate.”

“I couldn’t.” Stiles admitted honestly.

“Oh, oh I know, because you love him.” Gerard laughed, and several other hunters joined in.

“All those hunters were sacrificed, and died in vain, because you backed out. A lot of my trusted comrades died and you backed out because of love.”

“For a hunter, it’s pretty amusing that you need the sovereign alpha’s mate to do your job.” Stiles snubbed, knowing it was already too late for him, Derek was most likely still out of town and Stiles was left alone with the very man who’d come back to kill him.

“Oh, I did. You see, some alphas are too powerful, even for hunters, but you know how we’re still able to kill them?”

“How?”

Gerard smiled and tapped his right temple with his index finger, “Using our brains rather than brute force.”
Stiles brows furrowed and watched apprehensively as Gerard handed over the vial and syringe to a silent hunter standing nearby, and motioned for the two restraining Stiles to lift him up again.

“It’s a shame you chose them over your own kind.” Gerard mused, retrieving a saber hunter’s knife.

“Your mate is no doubt searching for you and he’ll find you, but on the brink of death and you know what alphas do when they fear losing their human counter parts, don’t you?”

Stiles’ blood ran cold as he truly came to understand Gerard’s mind.


“And the sovereign alpha’s downfall. After he’s gone, the last of the alpha leaders will be gone, and the werewolves will be a mess of disorder, and simple to destroy.”

Stiles was bitten before, but he hadn’t turned. Still, Gerard didn’t know that. What worried him was Derek, would he try regardless, in an attempt to save his life.

Gerard glanced over to his watch and raised his stare to Stiles once more. “Times up.”

Stiles began struggling once more in his captors arms, thrashing and kicking about and Gerard laughed all the harder.

Gerard gripped tight to the hilt of the hunter’s knife and thrust the blade with a powerful drive into Stiles’ stomach, gutting him deep. Stiles hunched over by the deadly blow, with his head unintentionally resting on the hunter’s shoulder. The older man's mouth turned to breathe heavily against his ear as he spoke once more.

“This is your fault; things could have been so very different,” Gerard hissed before twisting the blade and Stiles jerked in the hunter's hold, wheezing out a gasp.

Yanking the blade out brought with it another strident gasp as overwhelming pain consumed Stiles, and all at once he fell to the floor as the two hunters released him.

“The alpha should be here soon, let’s begin the purge.”

Stiles stiffly rolled onto his side and gasped for air. Eyes dampened and Stiles could barely make out the hunters as they departed and left him to bleed out.

Stiles choked on the warm liquid filling his mouth and let out short soft noises of agony. Trembling hands blindly went to press against his abdomen, feeling the heated liquid of blood and pressing as hard as he could, though knowing in his state it couldn’t have been all that hard as the blood continued to overflow and soak his hands in red.

At this rate he was going to bleed out before Derek found him, if he even cared enough to look for him. As of late, Derek wasn’t exactly acting like himself and Stiles wasn’t even sure Derek would bother to search for him. Would he even notice that he was missing?

Stiles stared up at the blue sky, the bright sun shining overhead was blinding, yet Stiles struggled to focus on it, needing to keep alert. He couldn’t let his consciousness waver, he had to remain alert for if Derek found him, he had to warn him—knowing that the alpha he knew before this recent change loved him and would do anything to keep him alive.

Stiles wasn’t sure how long it’d been, but his hands trembled less and no matter how he strived to
press hard against his wound no matter the pain, he couldn’t keep up the pressure. His eyes were half-lidded now, protesting his desire to widen and strengthen his awareness.

Stiles gradually came to realize that the pain had dulled, until he couldn’t feel anything and he knew that this couldn’t be a good sign.

A howl in the distance sounded, so far off and faint that Stiles wasn’t even sure he’d really heard it, and maybe it was wishful thinking. The last time he’d heard a howl like that, he’d been lying on the asphalt bleeding to death.

Shutting his eyes, Stiles promised himself it would only be for a moment, and then he heard something. Faint once more as the wind around him blew heavily, drowning out the words. Stiles could still hear it. It almost sounded like voices, but they were so soft that he couldn’t make out what they were saying.

Stiles turned in the direction of the whispered voices, and found nothing, trees and wilderness. But Stiles felt drawn towards something that was there, and he struggled to concentrate on where it was the whispers seemed to be calling out from. The wind became that much harsher and seemed to be grabbing hold of his body, willing him to follow its flow.

Stiles’ quaking form rolled onto his other side and stared out further away, there rooted deep within the earth laid the remains of a tree stump. So large, Stiles had never seen anything like it before. As strange as it was, Stiles felt as if the remains of the tree were calling out to him. Maybe he was becoming delirious, but regardless Stiles began to crawl the distance to the tree stump.

Stiles gasped and panted with exertion, beginning to worry he would use up all his strength to get to the tree, but couldn’t stop himself now, the call to be near it was far too powerful to ignore. It was as if it were a siren, calling him to his resting place. He wanted to lie upon the center of the stump and feel the coarseness of the old tree.

As Stiles reached the tree, he felt himself become full with an overwhelming sense of calmness, and grasped a hold of a thick root of the tree; his other grazed the smoothness of the base of the tree and used it as leverage to haul his trembling form up and onto the base of the tree.

Shakily, Stiles lay against the slab of wood and stared up at the sky once more, struggling to catch his breath. The whispers had grown almost deafening, so many voices, one over the other causing their words to become a jumbled mess, but Stiles smiled regardless. He felt calmed and at peace, his eyes shut as he lay there and, with his bloody hands splayed out on the smooth bark, he felt himself give way to darkness.
Bloodlust

Derek didn’t have much time left. The sun had almost fully risen and he couldn’t distinguish Stiles’ long since faint scent with the recent scent of gunfire and an overwhelming amount of blood. There were screams and feral roaring from far off, orders by hunters and wild snarls of werewolves, and Derek was torn.

His alpha hungered for the hunters and their blood, but his human side was overwrought with worry for Stiles’ wellbeing.

Derek tracked Stiles’ scent to the forest, only he lost it soon after. Hunters lurked in the forest and the moment werewolves unintentionally came into contact with hunters a battle began. At which point, Derek lost Stiles’ scent and could now only smell the effects of the battle in the distance.

Derek belted out a howl of distress, reverberating against the trees and mountains it shook the forest. He hardly heard the answering cry of his pack as he was now loosing himself to grief, thoughts of being too late, of so much time having passed with no sign of Stiles was eating away at the wolf.

A sudden burst of energy pulsed through Derek as heavy wind gushed through the forest, dragging away the sulfur scent of gunfire.

A brief moment of clarity, the air fresh and crisp, before another draft of wind came and brought with it the scent of blood. This scent registered far more deeply with Derek. Derek knew the scent of this person and their blood as well as he knew his own and with it, he could scent they were on the brink of death.

A mournful whimper slipped past Derek’s lips as he rushed the distance separating him from Stiles.

Derek couldn’t formulate a coherent thought as he sped through the forest, and into a clearing.

There, he stilled his movements as a body lay motionless on a large stump of a once mighty tree. Derek panted heavily, breaking the distance separating him from the frail form of Stiles.

Derek wanted his senses to be wrong, to deny what lay before him, but as he neared, Derek felt the cold recognition of grief staring at the pale face of Stiles, gutted and bleeding out the last of his blood.

“Stiles.” Derek hoarsely spoke, no response was given and if not for the reassurance of his heightened sense of hearing Stiles’ human heart beat, he might have thought he was too late.

“Stiles.” Derek whined, leaning down and palmed at the human’s face, feeling at the chilled skin and knowing he needed to act fast.

There was so much blood. Stiles had lost so much already and Derek knew he wouldn’t survive a trip to the hospital. Stiles’ heart was slowing down, each pulse growing ever faint. There was only one way Derek could save Stiles.

Derek would have to turn Stiles.

Derek knew Stiles never wanted the bite and he could only assume after what his uncle and he had done, Stiles would completely reject Derek. He’d betrayed Stiles so much already, and yet Derek
couldn’t stop himself from wanting to save his mate.

Derek hurriedly grasped a hold of Stiles’ arm, fangs growing prominent, venom overflowing his mouth at will. Planting his sharp fangs against the pliable soft flesh of the human’s arm, Derek inhaled sharply, preparing to damn himself further.

Just as Derek prepared to sink his fangs in, a croak of protest escaped, “Don’t.”

Stiles felt at peace, enveloped within warmth, whispers still indistinct, yet somehow Stiles could still hear voices singing, their words were lost to him as they sang, but the melody wasn’t. The sweetest of melodies, so familiar as if he’d heard it from long ago. Then there was a voice, a strong hauntingly sweet voice within the choir, a female. When she sang, Stiles felt delighted.

Her voice seemed to pierce through all the jumbled whispers and singing, but her words—Stiles finally realized they weren’t speaking English. Something unrecognizable was their language, a language Stiles had never heard before nor could he categorize it.

The darkness Stiles was consumed in dulled as shades of gray and green brightened in his sights and a figure from the distance, silhouetted, reached out for him. Stiles wanted to reach out for the figure; every fiber of his being was telling him this was right, that he didn’t have to be afraid of this being.

“Stiles.” Someone called for him, but Stiles knew this voice didn’t belong to the shadowed figure, this voice Stiles knew like his own. Derek.

All at once Stiles remembered the hunters, mountain ash, the stump…

“Stiles.”

Stiles turned away from the figure, shut his eyes and willed himself to wake from this dream. When he opened them once more, he found himself lying on the stump, Derek above him, preparing to give him the alpha’s bite.

“Don’t.” Stiles strangled out, weakly.

“Stiles!” A choked breath of relief broke from the alpha before Stiles felt himself engulfed in the wolf’s tight embrace.

"Derek.” Stiles sighed, blinking his eyes several more times, the brightness of day almost blinding.

“Stiles. My Stiles.” Derek murmured against Stiles’ hand and laid a deep kiss against his inner wrist.

Derek knew he could let Stiles bleed out, attempting to get him to the hospital, but knowing that death would soon take hold. Or...he could give Stiles the alpha's bite. There was the possibility that Stiles could reject the bite, but Derek also knew it was the better choice of the two. Still, the likelihood that Stiles would survive the alpha's bite was far greater than the rest. It was the only way that Derek could ensure Stiles survived and prepared once more to give the alpha's bite.

“No.” Stiles heaved, eyes blinking back the pain of his wounds and concentrated on remaining aware of his surroundings.

“Stiles, I know you don’t want this, but…it’s the only option we have.” Derek insisted hurriedly,
hearing the faintness of Stiles’ breathing was urging him to act swiftly.

Stiles furrowed his brows and inhaled sharply, “They injected me with mountain ash.”

Derek stilled then. A cold rush of deadening fear swept through him. He was willing to sacrifice his own life for Stiles, but the mountain ash in Stiles’ system as well as the alpha’s bite would be a lethal combination.

“I—I—we need to go to the hospital.” It was the only thing left for them to do; even so, Derek knew there was no way they would make it in time.

Stiles stared up at Derek forlornly and felt the sting of tears as he watched the alpha’s features darken with fear and worry.

“It’s too late for that.” Stiles simply answered truth, but Derek let out a growl of anger, refusing to give to this truth.

“We can make it.” Derek lied and though he knew Stiles knew it to be such, he couldn’t accept it.

Stiles let out a cry of pain as Derek scooped him up in his arms and rose from the ground. Stiles wrapped his arms around Derek’s shoulders and buried his head under the alpha’s chin, hissing with pain as Derek broke into a run.

Derek ran the fastest he’d ever ran in his entire life, the harsh breeze of the wind pelted his face, and though he knew he was fast, the slowing beats of Stiles’ heart and the softening and shorting of Stiles’ breathing told Derek the truth that it all amounted to nothing. Stiles would die and there is nothing he can do to change the outcome.

Denial was his friend at the moment, and Derek refused to believe that this was how things would end. He couldn’t imagine it. He wouldn’t, because if he accepted this, than life was too cruel. His life had been too cruel. He lost his parents, his family, and his sister. He had to carry the guilt of his mate’s father’s death. He had to kill his uncle. He was responsible for Stiles’ torture and now his death…no, life could not be this cruel and to top it all off he was—

“Stiles, don’t fall asleep!” Derek barked edgily, fear tearing about his heart as the human’s body slumped against him in the starting of rest.

Stiles’ eyes opened to thin slits as he attempted to remain awake.

“I—I’m sorry.” Stiles apologized knowing that all his body wanted now was to rest, though knowing that rest was the one thing Derek was so fearful of.

Stiles felt its presence linger, though struggled all the more to remain alert.

“Derek, about my father.” Stiles started, struggling to reign in his emotions.

“Don’t.” Derek cut in, fearful of what Stiles would say and it being the last thing he ever did say.

“No, I need to say this. I need to tell you so much.”

“Don’t talk like that.” Derek didn’t like the finality of it all.

“I forgive you. I understand and I don’t blame you for my father’s death.” Stiles choked out sorrowfully, it felt good to let go of his anger.

“Stiles.” Derek waveringly spoke.
“I’m grateful to have had you in my life and I—”

“Don’t talk like that!” Derek growled harshly and Stiles only smiled.

“Such a sour-wolf.” Stiles hummed with affection and nuzzled the alpha’s neck, tears breaking free at the realization that this would be the last time he would be able to show his affection towards his brute of a wolf.

“I love the way you smell. I—I really want to bottle up that smell and take it with me.” Stiles laughed.

“Stiles.” Derek whimpered, overwrought, eyes blurring.

It was then that Stiles heard it again, the voice, that beautiful voice singing in a language unknown to him, so beautiful and calming. Stiles closed his eyes then and laid his head close to Derek’s neck, breathing in the wolf and listening to music as it became louder and louder. Stiles couldn’t help the joy that filled him at the realization of the familiarity of that voice.

“Derek…I love you.” Stiles breathed out with all the affection he carried for the wolf and held tightly to Derek in one final embrace.

Stiles at last felt the peace of rest overcome him, completely overtake his body as he slackened in Derek’s hold.

“I can hear my mother singing.” Stiles exhaled in his last of breaths and fell frailly in Derek’s arms.

“Stiles…there’s something I need to tell you.” Derek rushed, but it was too late, Stiles lay still and unmoving.

Derek broke into a sudden halt before the Camaro parked in front and at the edge of the woods. Stiles wasn’t moving, nor was he speaking anymore. His breathing was still and his heart was no longer beating. Derek could no longer hear the rhythmic thumping of the human’s heart and he knew what it meant. He understood that Stiles was no longer breathing, but still Derek could not accept truth. He didn’t want to acknowledge this cruel truth. He wanted to reject it all, but couldn’t, not now.

His own heart was pounding like a jackhammer. His legs were tense and weak. But the overwhelming pain that suddenly encased him in agony, so great and tore him apart from the inside out was wrecking him. Destroying him.

The tears were blinding, but so was the anger building. There was anger for life’s cruelty, for the prejudice of hunters. All he ever wanted was peace and unity of species, but hunters destroyed that, they put the world back to chaos. They killed countless lives, werewolves and humans. They kidnapped and tortured his mate. They wanted to destroy Stiles and turn him and when he would not submit to their beliefs and will, when Stiles refused to kill Derek, they killed him.

Hunters destroyed his mate, they broke him and then when he was finally getting better they so cruelly stole him from Derek.

A graveling snarl broke forth as Derek kneeled and laid Stiles’ motionless body to the ground. The stench of blood was overpowering as the wind blew and carried the scent of the dead towards him and Derek’s rage grew.

These hunters wanted death, they wanted Derek’s death, knowing the best way to kill him was through the use of his once mate and they failed. Derek wasn’t dead. Stiles saved him, but Stiles
was no more. Stiles couldn’t reign in the wrath burning through Derek veins now, no one could.
There was nothing to ground Derek, nothing to quench his fury.

Derek wanted blood; he wanted to bathe in blood, until it ran like a harsh current, overflowing. He
wanted to taste it. He wanted to smell fear, dead cold petrifying fear. He wanted to hear screams,
desperate cries, voicing, begging for mercy. Beg for the same mercy that had not been given to his
mate, and he wanted to tear at their necks, bite deep and rip them to pieces, feast on their insides.

Derek’s breath became harsh panting, jowls slackened, and his growls earsplitting. The alpha’s
body shook with ferocity, limbs tensing and stretching as he morphed, changed into the beast that
always dwelled within.

Derek wanted blood. He would annihilate every last hunter there was, he would swallow them
whole and revel in the wake of spilled blood.

The alpha’s head reared back and belted a thunderous roar, the trees shook by its force as did the
ground, quaking and echoing the ravenous call of an alpha driven by bloodlust, seeking vengeance.
Tranquility threaded through all of Stiles’ worries and regrets, soothed and calmed his guilt for falling prey to the darkness of peaceful rest.

Stiles was young and there was much he wanted to do. Alas good fortune ran dry and fate finished the last of its intentions with the end of his mortal life. Life was stolen from Stiles and with it he’d lost the love of his life. Though the worries that once held Stiles drifted away and he felt warmth unimaginable claim him.

“Stiles.” The call of his name echoed within his mind. There was something about that tone in which beckoned him; it brought tears to burst forth.

Stiles knew, somehow he knew, even through all the time that passed; he knew that voice belonged to his mother.

Stiles opened his eyes, never realizing he’d closed them and was overwhelmed by a brilliant light.

Stiles first thought it to be the sun, with the power and intensity of its brightness. Though as Stiles blinked his eyes several more times, his vision cleared and there, kneeling before him was his mother as beautiful as he remembered her. She was different now, though he knew her to be his mother, her body was glowing ever bright. Her skin shimmered, shades of all kinds; a rainbow of wavering colors, iridescent.

“Stiles.” Claudia choked and brought her child into her arms and held tight.

Stiles felt confusion overtake him. Still, it had been so very long since he’d felt the comforting hold of his mother’s embrace and swiftly wrapped his own arms to encircle her. Only then did he see his bare arms and realize, just like his mother’s, his skin shone of a fusion of colors.

The snapping of twigs drew Stiles’ attention to others nearby, more figures glowing brightly of the most vibrant of colors. The woods surrounding them were inhabited with the most lushes of green earth and wild flowers. It was all so beautiful, but Stiles felt a sense of worry reenter him as he started to suspect this might not be heaven, but something entirely different.

Scott, Allison, Lydia, Jackson and the rest of Derek’s pack began a search for Stiles, and in their search they’d stumbled upon a legion of hunters. Their search had come to a halt and a battle began.

Allison, being the savvy and always prepared hunter informed her father of Stiles’ disappearance, and not long after the battle began Chris Argent arrived with weapons and a handful of his own hunters.

The battle was chaos; gun smoke clouded the air and blinded their surroundings. Both hunters and werewolves were forced to rely on their senses. Human cries and wolves yowls broke through the cracking of gunfire and even through it all; the pained and frantic howls of their alpha could be heard.

But the pack could do nothing to assist their alpha as they were caught in a battle with crazed hunters, the leader of their group being Allison’s grandfather, Gerard. This came as a shock to the rest of the pack.
Chris and Allison focused their sights on Gerard, working as a team. One going in for well executed strikes while the other went and took on the defense, the two would switch intermediately. Gerard could hold his own. For an older man, he was surprisingly skilled as a fighter.

When two hunters joined Gerard, Allison found herself being drawn away from Gerard and Chris’ battle and began fighting the two other hunters.

Chris’ battle with Gerard became fierce as Gerard became drained. Chris used this to his advantage, placing more force into his attacks until he slammed Gerard down and against the hard ground. Hurriedly he moved and straddled the older hunter and pressed a blade to his neck.

Scott was in his own battle with three hunters and was struggling to counter each of their attacks when the rage consumed roar of their alpha broke through the woods. For a moment the battle had stilled, all listening in. Hunters unaware what this cry meant, but for werewolves, they knew this cry was not of grief, but of wrath and fury. It was the cry of an alpha driven by bloodlust.

“No.” Lydia heaved, distraught, her eyes blurring with tears. She knew that there was only one thing that would drive their alpha to bloodlust.

Derek had lost his mate. The one person able to ground the alpha’s ferocity was gone and with it, the werewolf had lost his humanity.

“Looks like the alpha was too late.” Gerard broke into laughter. “Won’t be long before the mountain ash takes effect.”

“What have you done?” Chris hissed, pressing the blade harshly against the hunter’s neck.

Gerard glared and promptly snapped Chris’ wrist holding the blade. The next moment he kicked the younger hunter off of him and the two hunters stumbled to their feet. They eyed the other, calculating their next move.

“I laced the blood of the alpha’s mate with mountain ash and left him for dead, leaving the alpha with only one option.”

Silence fell as the pack took in this new knowledge and Scott growled with pained grief.

“I’m going to kill you!” Scott bellowed, and bolted for Gerard, far too quickly for the hunters around him to react.

Scott was only meters away when a force unknown slammed into him and knocked him against the cold hard ground. Quickly, Scott rose from the ground and hardly caught a glimpse of the alpha before him, piercing his hand through Gerard’s chest. Seconds later, the alpha wrenched out the very heart of the wide-eyed hunter.

The life in Gerard’s eyes were quickly fading, but it was evident the hunter held some recognition the moment the snarling alpha raised the drenched in blood heart to his slackened jowls and bit into it, blood bursting forth and splattering across Gerard’s horrified face. In the next moment Gerard collapsed to the ground, dead.

“Der—Derek.” Erica stuttered, completely at a loss, much like the other pack members.

The alpha snapped its head toward the crowd and bellowed out an alpha’s roar and pounced on the nearest hunter, slashing the hunter’s neck clean off its body. The hunters broke into action, turning their full attention on the alpha before them. They shot their weapons, but the alpha was running
off on pure animal instincts. Moving inhumanly fast, the alpha struck harsh deadly blows to every single hunter in sight.

Betas and Omegas whined fearfully, and cowered before their alpha when he neared them. Scott, Lydia and Jackson went immediately to Allison and Chris and to his handful of men, circling around them protectively as their alpha tore through the hunters, until not one stood living.

Scott thought it was over, but the alpha only growled and whined at the sight before him. His desperate whines turned to frustrated growls, then back to pained choking and piercing whines.

This continued as the alpha wandered their dead bodies, sniffing. Then his attentions lingered on the long since departed Gerard and there, he snapped his jowls onto the hunter’s neck and tore off bite size pieces of flesh.

The pack watched in revulsion and terror as the alpha ate Gerard, piece by piece.

“What…why…Scott, why is Derek…” Allison stammered, falling over on her words in utter disbelief.

“I—I don’t know.” Scott honestly didn't understand the alpha’s behavior.

“He’s grieving.” Chris solemnly voiced, attracting the others attention.

“But like this?” Lydia noted. “I've never heard of alphas doing this.”

“Alphas have their own way of grieving. Some destroy everything in their path and lose their humanity, where as some seek to become solitary wolves. Then there are those who seek vengeance. The only cases of alphas gorging are when they...”

“What?” Jackson asked as Chris stilled to stare over at the alpha that began whining once more.

“Once an alpha’s anger has turned to grief they become aware of themselves and their humanity is only then able to reach their consciousness. They will seek out their mate’s body. The only case that they would hold off is if they must give their body nourishment. In Derek’s case, he’s giving his body nourishment with the body of the ones responsible for his mate’s death.”

All knew the truth, their beloved friend was gone, but none wanted to accept this truth. They wanted it to remain far from their comprehension. Hoping they were wrong, but Derek’s behavior told them truth and whether they wanted to accept it or not, the truth was before them.

“What would spur the need for nourishment?” Lydia contemplated what the others had not begun to consider.

“An alpha’s need to nourish their bodies is a way to preserve their mate.”

“How does eating preserve their mate?” Scott couldn't follow Chris’ logic.

Chris stared back at the alpha that stumbled towards the next dead body and began devouring its frail form.

“To preserve its mate, the alpha must preserve what their mate gave them.”

Scott was even more befuddled.

“Stop talking like Yoda and say it straight, man.” Jackson snapped.
“Oh… my… God!” Lydia exclaimed, tears overflowing as she came to recognize what the others could not.

“What? What is it?” Allison rushed, pain and grief so evidently overpowering Lydia.

“Stiles. Stiles would have—” Lydia broke into a sob and whined her own grief.

“Lydia, what? What is it?” Scott urged the distressed werewolf, but Lydia only sobbed harder.

“Dad.” Allison pleaded.

Chris lowered his gaze from the others, knowing the truth wasn’t always desired. They’d lost someone dear to them and he knew this truth would only make losing that person all the harder to accept. Still, they deserved to know.

“Derek is pregnant.”
Deadened

Derek lost himself to grief. He’d been overcome by agonizing heartache and lost his sanity. Everything became so overwhelming. Breathing was so painful with the motionless body before him. His mate…his mate was gone and Derek—it hurt. It hurt to still be breathing, to still be living when a part of him, a great part of his very soul, had been ripped from him. Forever to be left alone, with a gaping hole in his heart, filled with pain, sorrow and regret.

It was too excruciating to bear and his wolf had been overcome with rage and anger. The desire to bring about a massacre and demolish everything in his sight took over and he sought those who’d dared to rip away the sanity that Stiles had given him.

Derek whimpered at that thought and burrowed himself deeper in the sheets of their bed. The scent of Stiles still lingered on the fabric, but it was fading, being overpowered by Derek’s own scent. He’d spent the whole week drenching himself in his late mate’s scent and no matter how it pained him to take in his mate’s scent and to be reminded he was gone, he couldn’t stop himself from doing so.

Derek wanted to cry, but he’d cried so much and now, he felt as if he’d faint, overwrought, if he wept anymore.

“Stiles!” Derek barked, grief-stricken, trembling clawed hands raised to shield agitated crimson eyes as the alpha belted out a distressed hoarse howl, his heart torn to pieces.

Derek never even had the chance to tell Stiles in his last moments of life. He never told him. His wish had come true. They would be having a child.

Soon after Derek realized he was pregnant he’d become so full of worry. Stiles was seeking help from a therapist and still had so much to work through. He wasn’t sure how Stiles would handle this new information. Would it be a positive motivation to help him further heal from all the damage the hunters had done? Or would it be a hindrance to his progression, another stressor?

Derek had drawn away from Stiles, unsure as to what he should do. He’d contemplated his options and had come to his answer, that regardless of any drawbacks it might bring, Stiles should know. He’d come home full of hope and optimism, but then…those hunters…and he’d retaliated in his anger, driven by bloodlust, but it all amounted to nothing. He’d lost so much, no matter the fact he’d taken his revenge, it all felt useless in the end.

Derek scented the pack before they’d reached the house and refused to leave the bed. The gang noisily made their way up the stairs and to his room.

Derek heard the door creak open and shuffling of feet as the group circled the bed. Releasing a growl of frustration, the alpha dragged the sheets away from his head and met their stares and immediately felt his eyes burn as a pained moan fell from his pale lips.

“No…noooo, please, no.” Derek’s stinging eyes regretfully bled more tears, denial taking hold of him.

“Derek.” Lydia choked, puffy red eyes sorrowfully staring at her alpha. “We can’t hold it off anymore.”

Derek shook his head defiantly. He wasn’t ready for this. He never would be ready to bury his
mate, but it had been more than a week now.

“The rest of the pack is waiting.” Scott added.

“Stiles was handled with the best of care.” Allison’s voice broke on pained emotions.

Derek felt a pang of guilt stab through his bruised heart at Allison’s words. He was such a horrible mate, he hadn’t gone back to where he’d left Stiles’ body after his consciousness had taken hold of him. He’d been too distraught and collapsed into a heap, drench in blood and overcome by regret. Derek had left the group to seek out Stiles’ body and care for it.

Derek didn’t think he would be able to look at the lifeless form of his mate and not lose himself and give into the pain and rage of the alpha within.

“We’ll give you a moment.” Jackson gave way to understanding and stared at the rest of the pack, one by one they left the alpha’s room, the only one lingering was Lydia.

Derek directed his sights on the strong-minded beta and silently waited for the woman to speak. Knowing she’d been close to Stiles made Derek carry more respect for her.

Lydia exhaled a shuddering breath before speaking, “Stiles’ gone. No matter how you fight it, nothing will change this.”

“Lydia.” Derek breathed weakly.

“I know you think it’s not my place to say this, but Stiles was my best friend. I knew him so well I could practically read his mind and I know he loved you.”

“I don’t doubt it.” Derek murmured softly, shutting his eyes willing his emotions to not overcome him.

“He would have been so happy to know that you’re having his child…” Lydia stared up at the ceiling and blinked her eyes rapidly to force the tears back enough to speak. “You need to live and be strong, bring this child safely into this world for Stiles.”

Derek gave a nod and swallowed back a broken whine.

“Come see Stiles off, Derek. Show him just how much you loved him and gather your strength to care for the gift he left you.”

Derek wanted to kick Lydia out of his room for pushing him to see his mate in this way, but he knew what she said was correct. As hard as the truth was, he knew the right thing was to say his final goodbye, but he hated the idea. He never wanted to be parted from his mate and to stand there in that church and see that coffin, knowing that the reason for his happiness was gone. It just seemed too cruel.

“Give me some time.” Derek finally spoke.

Lydia gave a weak smile, “You’re doing the right thing.”

Derek was deadened to sensations, ears falling mute as the pastor spoke. The church was decorated with a variety of pale flowers. The cherry wood closed casket before them was surrounded with white lilies.
The church was full of his pack and towns people. Several deputies went up to the podium and spoke of the late Sheriff. Scott McCall followed soon after; Allison joined him as the beta became emotional through his eulogy and embraced him as the wolf mournfully whined. Allison ushered the distressed beta back to the pews and took their respected seats.

Lydia rose next, though she’d stopped several times to sob and blow into her tissue, she’d finished and staggered down the steps of the podium, Mathew being there to help her down the rest of the way and to their seats.

Chris and Melissa then went up to speak and Melissa broke down part way. Chris wrapped an arm around her, pressing her against his chest and raised his head up to the ceiling blinking away his tears much like Lydia had done earlier and Derek continued to watch all in a daze. Derek was unable to form a clear thought, only feeling numb, his body needing to numb out the pain as a way of survival.

Jackson who sat beside him laid a hand on the alpha’s shoulder, drawing him out of the disorder of his mind and to the present. Chris and Melissa had long since left the podium.

“The pastor asked if you’d like to say a few words.” Jackson explained when he saw the lost expression that crossed his alpha’s features.

Derek’s eyes shut slightly as he exhaled and wished the heaviness pressing against his heart would lighten.

“I have nothing to say.” Derek spoke, feeling more than words could ever express.

Jackson nodded and met the pastor’s gaze and shook his head to the older man.

Derek watched as the pastor bowed his head and could only surmise it was the last of his prayers. Soon after, the congregation rose and made their way to the coffin to bow their heads and pray, saying their last farewells. The last to visit Stiles’ coffin were his closest of friends the small group clung to each other in their grief. Scott was so overcome he’d fallen to his knees and bowed his head against his legs, shaking his head as Allison kneeled beside him and comforted the beta.

Derek had spent so many years resenting Scott. Scott had spent the longest time with Stiles where Derek had only spent less than a handful of years with. Scott had known Stiles since the two were in diapers and in a way their bond was stronger than Derek’s.

Stiles was Derek’s soul mate. They should have had so much time left together, but they didn’t. Derek hated himself for always holding back, from stopping himself from ever approaching the human. Because of his stubbornness, he’d wasted so much time they could have spent together.

“Lydia!” Mathew exclaimed when the redhead swayed into his ready arms. Clutching to her head, Lydia appeared faint and weak. It was noticeable she hadn’t been caring for herself well enough in her grief. Dark bags under her eyes gave evidence to the truth; Lydia hadn’t slept well if at all since Stiles’ death.

“Lydia, you should be taking care of yourself.” Melissa scolded.

Lydia smiled sheepishly and nodded with understanding. Melissa then retrieved a protein bar from her purse and gave it to Lydia to eat. Danny handed her his bottle of juice as Jackson retrieved a white handkerchief from his coat pocket and handed it to Lydia who suddenly broke down in tears and the group comforted one another once more.

Derek didn’t want to be here. He didn’t want to see the pain and sorrow of the group; he didn’t
want to think about their pain. He didn’t want to scent all the tears and grief in this room and he certainly didn’t want to scent the rotting flesh of…

He needed air; his body was shaking without warning, legs barely strong enough to hold him up as he rose from his seat. He never spared to glance back at the gang and hurriedly fled the church and the too painful truth.

Three weeks had passed since Stiles’ passing and no matter how Derek had rejected life and wished to stay in the comfort of his and Stiles’ bed, spend his days rolling about the sheets searching out Stiles’ fading scent. He couldn’t live the rest of his life in bed, so slowly he began to perform his alpha duties. He had a pack that needed his guidance and he was their alpha. His purpose was to protect his pack and he couldn’t let his grief stop him from doing that.

Derek spent the third week solidifying his packs battling techniques as he was now leaving Beacon Hills to visit the rest of his pack in every major city of the every continent of the world.

Like he’d done so long ago, he would need to seek the best alpha to become that respected districts leader. Of course now that he was expecting, he could not battle the alpha’s competing in dominance. Instead, he would supervise the alphas of a district battle to claim the district, Derek having the final word on who would take the crown.

When he readied himself to leave that Sunday, a suitcase in hand and shut the door of the hauntingly silent home, he’d been surprised to find Scott there, standing beside his camaro with a sad smile.

“Leaving?”

Derek nodded silently and made his way over to the beta. Scott didn’t look so good, pasty skin, sunken cheekbones and dark bags under his eyes; he looked so much like the alpha himself.

“When do you think you’ll be back?”

Derek shrugged, “In a few months I suppose.”

Scott nodded and glanced towards the alpha’s abdomen, the dark blue shirt hugging his six-pack.

“An alpha’s pregnancy lasts the same amount as a humans. I won’t show for at least another two months.” Derek explained dully.

Scott blushed and scratched at the back of his head. “Yeah, I knew that, I just…you know, it’s still a bit strange to think about it.”

“I agree.” Derek never wanted this, but Stiles had and it’d happened sadly before Stiles ever had the chance to know.

“You’re not going to do anything fishy are you?” Scott raised a brow of suspicion.

Derek felt a spike of anger take hold, eyes burning crimson as a threatening growl graved out of him. “I would never.”

“Right, Stiles was your true mate; you couldn’t do that.” Scott amended, appearing apologetic.

“Don’t stay gone too long, Lydia would hunt you down for taking the baby from her.” Scott joked
and Derek grimaced at this.

Since Stiles’ funeral Lydia had seemed to think it was fine for her to use her key to the home to stop by, bringing food and checking on Derek and the baby. Derek only tolerated it because he knew that Stiles loved Lydia and saw her like a mother figure.

“Note taken.”

Silence fell over the two; Scott appeared as if he were deliberating something within.

“About Stiles…”

Derek glanced to the ground, wishing this conversation wouldn’t destroy him more than he was already.

“What.”

“That child…I’d like it if…since Stiles was my best friend and like a brother.”

“What is it Scott?” Derek snapped, losing his patience.

“I’d appreciate it if you allowed me to be a part of the child’s life.” Scott blurted and Derek couldn’t help the smirk that tugged at the ends of his lips.

“That’s what you came here to ask?”

“Well…yeah.”

“Scott…”

The beta shut his eyes preparing to hear the alpha flat out refuse him.

“We’re pack.”

Derek had said so little, but Scott seemed overjoyed, his eyes shimmering with gratefulness.

“Thank you.”

“So, can I leave now? Dasher doesn’t like waiting in the car.” Derek gestured to the yapping borzoi fidgeting within the back seat of the camaro.

“Right.” Scott laughed and stepped back allowing Derek to open the back door, set his suit case on the floor of the back seat, and as Derek shut it and opened the driver’s door, Scott reached out and grasped ahold of Derek’s arm, stilling the alpha.

“What is it now Scott?”

Scott shifted from one foot to the other and bit onto his bottom lip.

“I—I’m sorry I misjudged you. Stiles was right when he said you were kind. I’m glad you were his true mate.”

Derek felt a lump in his throat and swallowed dryly. Derek nodded his appreciation and the moment Scott released him of his hold Derek slid into his seat, started his car and pulled out of the drive way.
Derek never looked back to see if Scott was still there. He didn’t want to see the grieving beta, to see into his eyes and tie himself to the pain in them. He needed to leave Beacon Hills for some time, to focus on being an alpha, fix the chaos the crazed hunters had caused. He hoped that when he finally did return to Beacon Hills, it wouldn’t hurt so much to think about Stiles.
Awakened

Eighteen Months Later

Blinding brightness consumed him. The light seemed to radiate from within and was emitted from out of his skin. He could remember feeling warmth so soothing and calming envelope him in love and he was content to stay. Stay in this enchanted place, a forest, where nature was lush and the fruit tasted of sweet nectar. He had all he could ever want, ever dream of, and then like the sudden flash of lightning, it all disappeared and he was left in darkness.

Opening his eyes, there was only darkness. Breathing deeply, his senses were overwhelmed with the bitterness of dirt. Hands shot out in front of him and met a smooth hardness covered in silk cloth. Immovable. Wood? Feeling at his sides, plush silk pillows connected with wood was what he lay under.

He felt trapped; his breathing became tattered and deafening.

Dry lips parted and let out a soft whine of fear and frustration. A cry of desperation broke and with it a sharp inhale, throat dry and soar as if he hadn’t drank in years. Trembling hands fist ed at the fabric above him, tearing it from its seams and felt at the smooth wood under. A terrified shout dispelled from his lips as a cold harsh realization struck. He was in a coffin, buried alive.

“He—Help! Help!” His voice surprised him; he felt no ties with it. It didn’t feel like his own voice, but that didn’t matter when there were more pressing matters before him, like being buried alive and having little oxygen within a coffin.

Furiously frantic nails dug at the wood, shoving and pounding. Pressing all his might against it he managed to lift it a fraction and with it dirt slid in through the cracks. Shutting his eyes and focusing all his strength in breaking free. He slammed both hands against the wood and a flash of red burst forth from pale hands sending a bolt of heat from out of him. All at once, a powerful wind swarmed the coffin and drove out and forward, destroying everything in its path. The coffin doors swinging off its hinges as the mountain of dirt above him shot out and afar. A smoke of dirt and splinters of wood floated in the air before crashing to the ground.

Opening his eyes, he was stunned to lay there on the other half of the coffin and stare up at a vacant hole and to the pale sky, the sun hardly lighting the sky in the early morning. Where that power had come from, he was unsure, all he knew was somehow he’d caused it. He’d felt a spark within himself and he’d struck fire. Now the steady warmth hummed through him, coiling through his being and gave him strength unknown.

He wanted out of the pit, out of this coffin and hurriedly rose to his feet. Only as he did so, his knees felt unsteady and his grounding wasn’t secure. He stumbled to one end of the grave and dug his nails into the wall of dirt, kicking it with his polished black shoes to lift himself up. He slid and was dragged back to the base of the pit and into the coffin. He wasn’t going to give up and climbed, little by little rising higher than before.

The moment he reached the top, he hauled himself up the rest of the way and rolled out of the grave and onto lush green grass. There he lay once more on his back, panting harshly, struggling to regain his breath and wiped the sweat from off of his brow. The cool breeze of morning blew passed and cooled his heated and flushed face.
Glancing around him he felt a morbid sense of dread and fear take hold of him, someone had buried him in the middle of a cemetery. Gravestones lined the whole expanse of land. Two gravestones where placed beside the one he’d been buried under, seeming to be a family plot, the names of the gravestones were unknown to him though.

Turning back towards the grave he’d been buried under, he searched for a tombstone, but found none. He could only surmise in the explosion the tombstone was destroyed.

Rising from off the ground he surveyed the destruction he’d caused in releasing himself from the tomb, and although a sense of guilt made its way in him at the realization he’d destroyed a sacred place, he was left with many unanswered questions.

Why had he been buried? Who had done it? Who were John and Claudia Stilinski and why was he placed beside them?

He stilled then with a sudden and terrifying realization that he didn’t know who he was. As he struggled to bring back past memories he found none, just blackness. The last thing he could recall was feeling at peace somewhere—but even…those memories…they were fading. Soon all he could remember was awakening in the coffin.

Something was wrong. He needed to find help and stared helplessly around him. He didn’t know where he was. How could he find help when he couldn’t even name the city he was in? Helplessly he stumbled towards one direction and stopped to turn to the other. Stopping once more, he felt a haze of confusion, feeling all the more bewildered.

Patting at his chest and shifting his hands through the black suit he wore, he struggled to find something to give him some desired information. He couldn’t even remember his own name. Something was seriously wrong here.

A year and a half had passed since the day Derek had lost his mate and was left to grieve. Not one day had passed since then that Derek never thought about Stiles. Those nine months of pregnancy were the worst, his hormones and being a werewolf causing his pregnancy to be all the more emotional, and Derek had struggled to control his anger. His anger would suddenly breakthrough in his grieving and caused the wolf in him to seek and destroy everything in his path, but he had his pack. His pack was always there, they’d drag him back from the edge and he’d always be thankful for that, because if not for them, he’d have never been able to properly raise his sweet children.

Derek wasn’t too pleased by being pregnant, but had given in to Stiles’ need for a family. He didn’t care to go for doctor visits. He relied on Deaton and his herbal tonics to keep him and his child healthy. But as soon as labor began, Derek wished he would have at least had an ultrasound. It would have been nice to know he was pregnant with twins.

Though Derek should have known that the possibility was more than likely; pregnant werewolves were known to have more than one child. Usually a werewolf would have twins during their first birthing, the number tended to grow with the more pregnancies a werewolf had.

Deaton had been there to assist in the birthing. With male werewolves, their bodies were designed to give birth on its own; the only assistance Derek had needed was for Deaton to surgically cut his abdomen and the sack cocooning the cubs. Since it was Derek’s first birthing, he’d been weak and unsure of what he should do, but Deaton had researched male werewolf birthing enough to know what needed to be done.
Both children had been born in full wolf form, true alpha born wolves, just like Derek’s mother and sister had been. One cub was born pure black, the other a sandy chestnut brown with a silver chest and underbelly. The first and oldest Derek named Micah. The youngest he’d named Landon. He could recall just how much Stiles yearned to have children and he felt it was only right he give them the names Stiles had chosen.

He only wished they could have had more children. Stiles could have named them all and know that he truly had a family. Derek always felt that the two of them, although happy, weren’t a complete family without children. That had been the main reason why Derek had given to having children. He wanted to make Stiles happy.

When Micah and Landon were two months old they’d finally shifted from cubs to their human forms. Micah’s and Landon’s eyes were the warmest of brown. They were so much like Stiles’, that it brought a soreness to claim Derek’s heart every time he met their gaze. Every time he met their gaze he remembered Stiles, remembered Stiles was gone and no more and his grief would grasp tightly to his soul. Their noses were much like Stiles’, narrow and perked at the end. Their mouth and jaws were still soft and pudgy, giving no clear distinction as to who they would take after. Their hair was dark as night and Derek remembered how Stiles had wished for them to take after Derek, and it seemed that they were.

Soon after Derek finished assigning new alphas to their respected districts he’d returned to Beacon Hills and spent most of his time in the home he and Stiles shared. Then he’d given birth and he’d been forced to stop wallowing in his grief and care for his children. He had more money than he knew what to do with. He was paid a great amount by each district to ensure that peace remained between werewolves and humans and to punish those who went against the establishment that had been built after Peter’s horrendously horrible decisions.

After Micah and Landon were born, Derek was called to handle supernatural disasters and battles that’d occurred in several districts. When this happened, Derek had been forced to leave his children in Beacon Hills with his pack, because it was much safer for them than where he was heading. He’d leave them with Scott and Allison, Lydia, Jackson and Danny, or Isaac whoever had the time.

Since Stiles was gone, Derek thought it was right that his children bond especially with Stiles’ closest friends. When they grew older, they would want to know about their late father and the best people to tell them about Stiles were his lifelong friends.

Scott and Derek had not started off well, but now that Stiles was gone they leaned on each other and Derek was grateful to have his pack on his side to lend their support when he needed it.

When Derek wasn’t being called to visit other districts, he spent his time with his children, bonding and teaching them, learning their personalities in the process. Micah hated sleeping and fought it with a tenacious will while Landon loved sleeping. Micah was possessive of his toys where as Landon was a sharer. Micah tended to bully Landon into giving him his toys, but Landon would just grin toothily and turn his sights on something else Micah didn’t care for. Micah liked mess and ate quickly and messily. Landon always did things slowly and correctly, and hardly ever made a mess when eating. Micah hated baths, and would wiggle, wail and bite while bathing. In the end Derek was the one who ended up wet rather than Micah. Landon loved bath time and would always lie quietly as Derek bathed him. Micah was a crier and wanted everything his way. Landon hardly ever cried and was far more submissive, never truly desiring much. This tended to worry Derek as Micah showed more signs of being a dominating possessive alpha wolf in the future and Landon showed far more signs of being a complacent submissive alpha.
Werewolves knew that the first six months were the most precious time for alpha born wolves. It was the time in which their true wolf would demonstrate itself and as the children were now nine months old, Derek had come to the realization Micah was a dominant alpha and Landon was a submissive alpha. Dominant alphas were far more powerful and feared. Submissive alphas were less feared. The tendencies with submissive alphas were that they were not born leaders and never seemed to be interested in leading their own pack. They rather liked following another’s lead. Derek’s great uncle had been a submissive alpha and he was never one to fully invest himself into the pack. He found himself far more interested in living a normal human life and hardly ever felt the need to shift into his alpha form.

Derek thought about all the submissive alphas he’d ever met and none of them embraced the animal side as strongly as the dominate alphas did. He worried about Landon, worried he’d detach himself from the pack and seek to live a more human life. Derek didn’t like that idea. He wanted his children to embrace their wolf, to run through the forest and let their animal side run free. He knew that whatever Landon chose to do in the future was Landon’s choice and not his own, that he would need to accept the fact that one of his children might very well grow up to reject their wolf.

As the children neared nine months of age Derek began to notice more features they’d taken from Stiles. Their skin was a pale peaches and cream. Landon held beauty marks across the expanse of his neck and chest. Micah had no beauty marks, but his facial expressions of frustration and confusion resembled Stiles’ own. Both managed to inherit Stiles’ smile and each time they’d grin at him, Derek felt a sickening pull and churning deep in the pit of his stomach.

Derek thought his grief would dull, that it’d somehow become easier, but it didn’t and Derek had been a fool to think it would. Stiles had been Derek’s soul mate, his true mate. A werewolf never fully recovered after the loss of their true mate, not fully. All werewolves who’d lost their true mates he’d ever known had never been able to move on. Werewolves mated for life and when their mate was gone they had no desire to find someone else.

Derek had Micah and Landon though, a part of Stiles he’d always keep. He’d never let anything happen to them, he’d protect them with his life and preserve Stiles and his family line. Derek put all his energy and thoughts towards his children, not wanting to think about what he had lost, and most times it worked, but then the children would do something to remind him of Stiles, or he’d slip into their once shared bed and close his eyes and when he did, all he saw was Stiles. All he dreamt about was Stiles and every wrong decision he’d made in his life to have pained his mate.

Regret would tear at him. He’d hurt Stiles so much in the past and he found himself wishing he’d never proposed to Stiles. If he hadn’t then Stiles would never have known about the secret of his father’s death, he’d have never been kidnapped, he would have never lost himself and the hunter’s would have never sought to end his life. Only, Derek had been greedy and in choosing to mate with Stiles, he’d ended the young man’s life.

Thinking of Stiles now, Derek could only see the destruction he’d caused for the human and he’d spend the rest of his life hating himself for having brought so much pain and grief to his mate. He’d never be able to accept the fact Stiles had forgiven him, because Derek couldn’t forgive himself.

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His mind was a swirl of confusion and he became all the more distraught as he couldn’t bring about any memories of his past. As he stumbled down the silent forest surrounding the cemetery and tried to make sense of all the disorder, he felt as if his prayers were being answered when he caught sight of a road and felt a sense of relief, knowing that by following the road he’d find
civilization and with it try to find the answers to all his questions.

The sky was still pale gray with hints and shades of orange from the rising sun, a thick cloud of fog still hung in the air and it was difficult to see clearly, but the road was something that was so clear as he rushed toward it.

The moment he’d stepped foot on the road he stilled, struggling to figure out which way to go. Take the right or left, each he knew would lead him to civilians, but he also knew one could very well take him a longer way than the other.

He’d been so caught within his thoughts he never saw the glowing of head lights from his right as he stared across to his left. When he heard the blaring of horns and snapped his gaze back to his right, it’d been too late to avoid the head on collision with the Ford.

Chris and Melissa were heading back to Beacon Hills after spending the weekend in a reclusive cabin Chris recently purchased. Melissa had been touched by Chris’ spontaneous weekend trip and was currently curled up against his shoulder, content by their closeness and pondering what they should do for their wedding anniversary that was steadily getting closer.

The roads were covered in heavy fog and Chris drove carefully down the winding roads, even so, he’d managed to not gain sight of the clouded figure of a person standing in the road before it was too late. The body slammed hard against the car, rolling speedily over the car and made a sickening thud as it fell off the back of the truck.

“Oh my God. Chris!” Melissa shouted, hurriedly removing her seat belt as Chris’ truck came to a sudden halt.

“Call the ambulance.” Melissa ordered, jumping out of the car and rushing to the motionless form.

Chris immediately shut the engine off, retrieved his cell from out of his pocket. His hands shaking slightly as he dialed 911 and hurriedly spoke with the dispatcher. Relaying their information and ended the call once the dispatcher assured him someone was on their way.

“Chris! Chris, come here!” Melissa strangled out a cry.

Chris felt a sense of dread take hold, fearful that there was nothing Melissa could do, that maybe the stranger on the road was dead. The hunter swiftly slid from out of the car and rushed towards his wife’s side. Staring at her back, he watched as she sobbed and lifted the man into her arms, his head being cradled, and causing Chris to round Melissa’s side to further to catch sight of the bloodied man moaning in her arms.

Chris felt the blood run from out of him. The stranger was no stranger. Laying there bleeding from a large blow to the head was Stiles Stilinski, still wearing the same suit Melissa had chosen for the man at his funeral.

“St—Stiles.” Melissa stuttered at a loss, tears springing from her eyes as she whined and pressed her hand over the gash to his head.

Glancing helplessly up at Chris seeking some type of answer as to what was happening she found none.

“How?” Melissa gasped, and Chris held no explanation.
In all his years, Chris had never heard of a human rising from the dead; werewolves, witches and other supernatural creatures, sure, but never a human. Something wasn’t right, either the man before them wasn’t who they thought him to be or Stiles had never been what they thought him to be, human.

Just as Chris began to bring about every creature he knew to possess the ability to rise from the dead, Melissa let out a sharp inhale and Chris turned his sights back on the two. It didn’t take him more than a second to realize what had startled his wife, the Stiles before them skin began to glow a vibrant emerald as the small cuts and scrapes marring his face closed in on themselves, healing the open wounds.

Melissa removed her hand from over the profusely bleeding wound of his head and in place of a wound was a gash that was steadily healing, sealing up and left in its place the blood of what was once a wound.

“Ch—Chris, what is this?” Melissa’s brows furrowed in disbelief as her gaze never left the Stiles’ half lidded eyes that slowly shut as his body fell heavily against her lap. The Stiles before them lost consciousness and left them questioning just what it was that was before them. Was this really their Stiles or something else?

Chris couldn’t say for sure what was happening. What he knew was that he needed to get to the house, and start researching through his books. He needed to contact someone just as well versed if not more so than himself to further search out the truth, he didn’t think he would have all the answers. His books were more educational, listing various ways on how to kill supernatural creatures. They weren’t as informative on creatures and didn’t detail every part of a creature’s ability, only that which could harm an alpha.

“I need to call Deaton. Can you cancel the ambulance; tell them it’s something supernatural?” Melissa nodded her head in a slight daze, and wiped the blood from her hands on her jeans.

Chris dialed Deaton as Melissa made her own call.

Whatever was going on, Chris would find the answers.

As he ended his call with Deaton, Chris lifted the unconscious man into his arms and laid him in the back seat of their truck before turning to Melissa as she finished her call.

“It’s done.” Melissa confirmed and Chris nodded.

“We’ll be heading back to the cabin, Deaton will meet us there.” Melissa nodded with understanding. The cabin was closer than their home.

Melissa glanced over to the truck where the unconscious body lay.

“Don’t you think we should tell the others?”

Chris pursed his lips and shook his head.

“No. Deaton and I agreed that we should first understand what’s going on. This might not even be the Stiles we know, it might be something else.”

Melissa paled, fear and understanding dawning on her.

“You—you’re not going to kill him.”
Chris stilled for a moment and lowered his gaze, unable to meet the pain in his wife’s stare.

“We don’t know what it is. It could be evil and I don’t think the others could make the right decision if it were.”

“No! You can’t. It’s Stiles. You saw him, it’s Stiles.” Melissa wept and Chris brought her into his arms as she wept. “You can’t kill him.”

“We don’t know anything yet, but I promise you we won’t act before we are sure.” Chris attempted to comfort Melissa, but knew it only caused her more distress.
The sound of hushed whispers stirred him from sleep and as soon as he woke, tension took hold of him. He’d been hit by a truck and as he laid there dying he’d felt terrified. There’d been a lady who raised his frail body into her arms and tears overwhelmed her as she caught sight of him. Her kind brown eyes scanned his body with astonishment and a sense of distress. She’d cried out a name, as if recognizing him, Stiles.

This surprised him. Who was he, this Stiles, she called to? He wasn’t sure. There were no memories of his past, so there was no way he could confirm such. That spark within him he felt, a constant warmth running through his veins, sent a tingling sensation through every sore bruising flesh, broken rib and laceration. Soon the agony that overwhelmed him drifted and left him free of pain, but soon after his body felt worn, bone tired and he’d soon drifted to darkness.

Now, he found himself lying on a queen size bed. Standing at the foot of his bed were two people that’d been at his side as he’d lain bleeding in pain on that deserted road. He struggled to hear what they whispered so softly to one another, but it proved useless. Apparently, the handful of powers he seemed to possess did not include super hearing.

Clearing his throat he rose from the bed and stared curiously at the two people before him. His body felt good; better than it should after being run over by a massive Ford.

The two stilled their whispers and turned their gaze to him. The woman let out a choked sob, seeming of relief before rushing toward him and embracing him tightly.

“Thank God, Stiles. I was so worried.” She wept into his shoulder and his brows furrowed with further confusion.

There it was again, that name. Who was Stiles? Was he this supposed Stiles? He felt no ties with that name, no recognition to it.

He felt uneasy in the woman’s embrace and awkwardly patted her back, hoping she’d detach herself from him. His hopes came as she pulled back and titled her head with deliberation.

“Stiles?”

He tilted his head as well and took in this woman’s features, struggling to make a connection with her, straining to find some memory through the darkness of his past and failed.

“Who...is Stiles?” He spoke slowly, yet again feeling as if someone else was speaking and not himself. He couldn’t even recognize his own voice.

The women’s eyes fogged in disbelief and sadness as she turned to stare helplessly towards the silent man standing at the foot of the bed and observing with a calculating measure. He didn’t like the way the man was staring at him, watching him like some type of animal, measuring him up.

“Chris.” The woman pleaded as if the man before them would carry all the answers.

The man known as Chris turned briefly to meet the emotional woman’s gaze with a sense of sympathy before that harsh measuring stare focused on him once more.

“Tell us why you were standing in the middle of the road.” Chris demanded.
“I—am I this Stiles?” He wanted to know. He didn’t know anything about himself. If he knew his name, maybe he could find out more about himself.

“That’s what we’re trying to figure out.”

“Chris!” The woman snipped, eyes hardening as the man seemed to eye him with more suspicion.

The woman beside him grasped at his hand, currently fisting the sheets of the bed with nerves and smiled warmly.

“You’re Stiles. I should know; I raised you.” She comforted and raised her other hand to touch the wild mess of his medium length hair.

“Mother?” He contemplated and the woman smiled softly at this.

“Not your biologically mother, but I did adopt you when you were a teenager and I’ve known you all your life. It’s me, Melissa McCall. Don’t you recognize me?”

He shook his head and struggled to take in the information given to him. He had a name, Stiles, so strange of a name, but it was a name. He finally knew something about himself. This woman before him, she knew him. She was family, or as close to family as he knew he had; a kind woman who’d adopted him and raised him as her own.

“So I don’t have biological parents?” Stiles deliberated, though feeling a sense of relief as he was slowly starting to gain valuable information about himself.

Melissa’s features saddened as she shook her head. “Your mother and father both passed when you were still young, but I was a close friend to your parents and my son Scott was your best friend. There were no living relatives to take you in, so I adopted you.”

Stiles nodded his head and tensed once more as he suddenly recalled having woken in a coffin only to escape.

“What is it?” Melissa asked sensing something was off.

“This morning….I woke to find myself in a coffin. Why was that?” Stiles voiced warily.

Melissa paled and Chris seemed all the more interested.

“How did you escape?” Chris questioned before Melissa could explain.

Stiles felt apprehension whenever he looked across and towards the man before him.

“I—I…” Stiles stopped and raised his free hand to stare at it with question, and Melissa grasped tightly to his other.

“I blew it up.”

“You blew it up?” Chris parroted, “How?”

“I—I’m not sure. I just…did.” Stiles wasn’t sure how he’d brought that power out, how he’d even made himself heal, each time he hadn’t been thinking to do something like it, but it just happened on its own.

“What other powers do you possess? Can you change form? What do you remember?—Can you see—”
“Chris!” Melissa snapped eyes hardening. “This isn’t the time.”

Chris’ eyes narrowed then, “This is the best time.”

“You’re frightening him.” Melissa hissed, glancing back towards Stiles who was trembling and gazing harshly, focusing on his knees, losing himself in thought.

“Stiles.” Melissa cooed, her thumb brushing against the back of his hand, attempting to draw the man’s sights to her.

“I don’t know what powers I have. I can’t control them, they just happen. I don’t know if I can change form and I can’t remember anything, but waking up inside a coffin. I feel like there is something I should remember, but I’ve forgotten what it was.”

Stiles didn’t like this Chris. He frightened him. The way he looked as him was how a predator looked at its prey. Still, he knew that this man was trying to figure out everything that Stiles was already trying to grasp.

“Can you see lights, auras surrounding people?”

“No.”

“Can you hear voices?”

“No.”

“Can you see spirit creatures?”

“No.”

“Can you read minds?”

“I…don’t know.”

“Try to read my mind.” Chris offered and Stiles concentrated all his power in linking his mind with the man before him, silence was his answer.”

“I can’t.”

Chris nodded in understanding and stepped closer to the man before him. Retrieving a dagger from under his coat, Melissa and Stiles tensed. In one swift motion the man before them sliced at his right hand, leaving a deep cut in its place.

“Try and heal it.”

Chris raised his bleeding hand towards the stunned man before him and Stiles shakily released Melissa’s hand to grasp at the back of the older man’s hand with both of his own. Shutting his eyes, he focused on sealing the open wound, and will the spark within him to transfer it’s warmth through the other man. Soon he felt that familiar tingling sensation run through his entire being and passed his hands and into Chris’, he felt the man’s pain he hid so well as if it were his own.

Opening his eyes, Stiles winced when the stranger’s pain entered him and Chris’ gash healed just as a deep laceration slit Stiles’ right palm. Stiles released the man of his hold and cradled his wounded hand.

“Oh, Stiles!” Melissa gasped, retrieving several napkins from the tissue box on the dresser beside
the table and moved to stop the bleeding, but when she returned his wound was shimmering emerald and already healing, until all that was left was blood for no wound. Regardless, Melissa wiped at the blood.

Chris touched his healed smooth hand and stared calculating at the young man before him.

“What does this mean?” Melissa met her husband’s gaze.

“What am I?” Stiles whispered hoarsely, staring at his hands as if they were not his own.

“There are many supernatural creatures that can heal themselves, but a dozen or so that have the ability to heal themselves as well as others. All come from the same species, but are classified as different families of the species because of their abilities.”

“So what am I?” Stiles pleaded for answers in the swarm of more questions.

“I will need to do further testing to be sure. I’m waiting for a friend who will be arriving shortly, he will help assist in figuring out what is happening with you. Through what I’ve gathered so far you are of the Fae species.”

“Fae?” Melissa and Stiles spoke in unison.

“Fae was one of their original names, but today they are known as Fairy.”

It was a clear Monday morning, the sun was shining brightly and it seemed there was always a constant breeze of warmth. Derek decided it was a nice enough day to take the boys out to the city park.

Derek sat himself down in an empty bench and watched over his children as they played in the toddler sandbox. Dasher would run and rub against the children affectionately before running off and exploring the park. Every once in a while she’d stop what she was doing and come back to lap lovingly at Micah and Landon and then would run off again.

Micah, though having his own shovel and bucket, growled towards Landon and yanked the younger cub’s shovel. Landon stared at Micah with mild surprise. Micah smiled with triumph and proceeded to use both shovels to pick up sand and put it in his bucket. Derek opened his mouth ready to snap at Micah, order the aggressive little cub to give his brother back his shovel, but then Landon giggled softly. The youngest then focused on marking the pliable sand with his fingers, making all types of shapes. Landon obviously didn’t care about the shovel all that much.

Derek groaned in frustration and palmed at his face, scrubbing harshly, frustrated Landon didn’t fight back just a little. Even crying would be better than rolling over and giving in so easily. This was why Derek worried about Landon being submissive. He worried someone would take advantage of him in the future.

“Derek.” Came the call of his name and the alpha raised his gaze to meet the kind smile of Lydia Martin.

“Hey…” Derek replied awkwardly, he knew that Stiles’ friends now saw him as their friend, but it always seemed difficult for Derek to make that tie with them. Still, he tried for his children.

Lydia kneeled toward the Yorkshire she’d been walking, unclasped her leash and as soon as she did, Prada sprang off toward Dasher and the two began to play tag.
Lydia wordlessly sat herself beside Derek and smiled at the two children playing contentedly in the sand.

“Landon really reminds me of Stiles, especially when he smiles.” Lydia breathed softly.

Derek swallowed dryly and nodded his head, and as if Landon understood them, he raised his head and smiled at the two.

Derek felt a pang of sorrow dig deep within him and left the remains of heartache.

“I shouldn’t have said anything.” Lydia voiced scenting the sadness overwhelming the alpha.

“It’s fine.” Derek said, though he felt the opposite.

Silence followed as the two lost themselves in the remembrance of Stiles.

Derek no longer being able to take the silence spoke, “So how’s married life?”

Lydia smiled, “Matt’s amazing.”

Derek smiled, “Honeymoon phase then?”

“Most certainly.”

“Well, I’d assume so. It’s only been four months.”

“It’s still wonderful.”

Derek nodded and stared a Landon as he crawled over to Micah and began fisting sand in his hand and helped fill his brother’s bucket.

“The gangs planning on having a movie night this Friday, you should come.” Lydia offered.

Derek thought the offer was thoughtful, but he really rather not. Whenever he was with the group of friends they were kind, but they brought up the past too much. They spoke of Stiles so freely and each time it was another stab to his heart.

“I’ll think about it.” Derek politely answered, having no desire to go.

Lydia nodded happily and turned her sights at the two children.

“Micah, Landon, Aunty Lydia is here!” She cooed, standing from the bench and hurriedly made her way to their side and began hugging and kissing them, baby talking how much she missed them, how she loved them ‘oh, so much’. Micah whined in Lydia’s Elmira-like hug, while Landon giggled happily and laid sloppy kisses on the woman’s cheek. Lydia then began to help the boys fill both buckets of sand.

Micah growled at Landon when he picked up the shovel Micah had previously stolen from him. Lydia not liking that Micah was bullying Landon growled viciously, until Micah gave in and let Landon use the shovel. Derek chuckled; Lydia always had a soft spot for Landon.

“Micah’s still bullying Landon?”

Derek turned and met Scott’s and Allison’s welcoming smile as they strolled toward him. Allison pushed along a single stroller. The couple’s four month old daughter, Amanda seated contentedly playing with her stuffed giraffe as her mother pushed her in the stroller. It still amazed Derek how
much Amanda had taken after Allison; her eyes, hair, nose, smile all resembled her mother.

Derek tipped his head in greeting and smiled weakly. “Not much can be done. He’s suffering from stubborn-itis.”

Scott and Allison broke into uproarious laughter and eagerly nodded their heads in agreement.

“He reminds me of someone else I know.” Allison jokingly nudged Scott’s shoulder.

“Hey!” Scott shot back, and pouted teasingly to which Allison rolled her eyes.

Scott went to sit beside Derek, while Allison unfastened Amanda from the stroller and lifted her into her arms. As soon as she did so, the young cub caught sight of Micah and Landon playing with Lydia and the young child’s eyes flashed scarlet. All at once the complacent Amanda began to whine and growl in frustration, attempting to free herself of her mother’s tight embrace and make her way to Landon who was currently being nuzzled by Lydia.

Amanda was a born alpha werewolf and quite dominant. Everyone scented it as soon as all the children first met. Landon and Amanda were true mates. Landon didn’t seem so much aware of it as Amanda did. The young cub was possessive of Landon and didn’t like it when anyone laid affection on what she’d already staked her claim on. That meant the defiant and brave Amanda even bullied the always dominate Micah whenever he’d try and bully Landon.

“Amanda, wait.” Allison scolded when Amanda pulled her hair, stubbornly wishing her mother to take her to where Landon was currently being showered in affection by Lydia. Allison gave in and began their way to the sandbox, but it wasn’t as quick as Amanda wanted; she wailed and began to cry as Landon nuzzled Lydia back.

“Amanda, that’s my girl. Claim your prize!” Scott cheered as Amanda grabbed Landon, tugging him towards her and growled at Lydia. Landon didn’t seem all that pleased and whined, raising his hands toward Lydia.

Lydia laughed and smiled fondly at the two as Amanda’s flaring red gaze glared towards her with murderous intent.

“Come on Amanda, don’t be like that.” Lydia gently spoke, though Amanda’s gaze and frustrated growl said she wasn’t giving in.

Lydia shrugged and began talking with Allison, the two sitting comfortably in the sand and giggling like they were school girls again. Micah grumbled annoyed as Allison and Lydia chattered on while he continued playing. Landon whined and wiggled in Amanda’s tight embrace, while Amanda refused to let him go near Lydia or her own mother.

“Gosh, Amanda is possessive. I swear if Landon wasn’t her true mate I’d worry she’d suffocate
him to death in that hug.” Scott laughed and nudged Derek’s shoulder, “Guess we know who’ll be in charge.”

Derek glared at Scott and growled. “Landon is an alpha.”

“A submissive alpha.” Scott reminded and Derek snarled. “Sorry, sorry, you’re right, he’s an alpha too.”

Derek grumbled low, frustrated to know Scott was right and hating the fact Landon was always being bullied. He hoped it would change, but knew the chances were slim.

“You heard about Jackson and Danny?”

“No?”

“They decided to adopt.”

“Really?” Derek was surprised; he hadn’t known the two were thinking about having children.

“Yeah, they said they just finished all the paperwork and interviews and they’re waiting on the call now. Who knows, maybe their kid will be Micah’s true mate.” Scott said the last bit jokingly.

“Not funny.” Derek glared.

“It was to me.”

Derek pursed his lips and heaved a sigh.

“Okay, okay, my bad.”

“Oh did Lydia invite you for movie night?”

“She did.”

“You should really come. It’ll be fun. Danny and Jackson will be hosting it at their place this time round. They said they’ll make BBQ.”

“I’ll think about it.” Derek answered much like he’d done with Lydia. He knew it would be nice for the boys to associate with the others, and although he had his own reservations, he would try to go for his children’s sake.

“So how are the other districts doing? There haven’t been much supernatural disasters in the news.”

“Everything’s been calming down since the rebel hunters were taken care of. There were a few supernatural issues, but their settling down now.”

“Really, like what?” Scott asked intrigued.

“Well, in Chicago a witch clan had some bad blood with the districts intermediate pack and a battle began.”

“Really, what happened?”

“The witch’s clan leader started killing werewolves and humans who had ties with the werewolves. It got pretty bad, until the clan members believing their leader had gone too far teamed up with the
werewolves and in the end killed the leader of the witches. They decided enough blood had been spilled and a peace treaty was enacted between the clans. Apparently the Alpha district leader’s son fell in love with one of the witches. That seemed to smooth over any lingering disputes.”

“That’s crazy. Was that where you went recently?”

“Yes. I went to check on their progress and it seems both sides are doing well now.”

“Well, if you ever need to leave for business again you know you can always call us.”

Derek nodded grateful, “I know. I’ll keep doing so.”

Rising from the bench Derek glanced towards Scott, “I better head off; the kids will be hungry soon.”

“Why don’t we all have lunch together?” Scott suggested.

“Oh I like that idea!” Lydia shouted over to them, apparently having used her super hearing to listen in on their conversation.

Allison nodded her head in agreement when Lydia relayed the men’s conversation. “How about we have Italian? I’ll call Matt, Jackson and Danny to come and join us.” Lydia said, already making the call.

Derek was left with no choice but to agree, although he sometimes felt out of place with the pack of friends, he knew this was a great experience for Micah and Landon. If it weren’t for Stiles’ friends always pushing their way into his life, Derek and the boys would have lived a more solitary life and he knew Stiles would never have wanted that for them.

Derek dipped his head in approval and the group shifted to ready themselves. Allison and Scott attempted to remove Landon from Amanda’s steadfast grasp and calm the wailing child as they’d freed the giggling happily Landon. Lydia picked Micah up and walked over to his stroller and fastened him in. Derek did the same for Landon and Lydia hurriedly retrieved the children’s toys. Dasher came when Derek called as did Prada when Lydia did so. Clipping Prada to her leash and Dasher following the group leash free they made their way towards their cars having agreed on the restaurant of choice.

Dasher happily stuck her head out the front seat window and smelled the fresh air as Derek drove. Glancing back to his children the back seat, Micah and Landon began dozing off and Derek felt a sense of happiness and warmth. He felt contented to have his children and Dasher at his side. They were his family and reminded him of his lost love. Although it pained him greatly to live without his mate and he felt guilt from all that Stiles had gone through, he still had a part of his mate with him. That was the one thing he would always be grateful for.

Stiles had given him two children he’d spend the rest of his life raising. He would nurture them and give them all they could ever want. He’d place their happiness above all else. In a way, it was his atonement for having taken so much from Stiles.
Stiles initially thought Chris was off his rocker when he said he was a fairy. It sounded so ridiculous; like some fanciful children’s story. When Stiles imagined a fairy, he thought of small little pixies. He never thought of them as full grown beings that looked exactly like a human. However, after everything that’d happened to him, it seemed like the most logical of reasons and Chris did seem sane. Still, Melissa carried uncertainty about Chris’ proclamation, reasoning how that could be when Stiles had never shown signs of having any powers in the past.

Chris elucidated that long ago the fae, although carrying the appearance of a human and living much like the humans did, possessed great powers. However, during the later part of 18th century, many of the fae clan began copulating with humans and the fae bloodline thus became diluted. As the fae bloodline decreased, the less power fae descendants carried.

“How can Stiles have powers if he’s a descendant of the fae?” Melissa argued.

“I’m not sure.” Chris admitted.

A knock came from the distance catching their attention.

“That must be Deaton.” Chris enlightened and without further explaining himself, he exited the room to answer the front door.

Stiles glanced over to Melissa with hesitation, unsure what all this meant. Seeming to sense the young man’s nerves, Melissa clasped a hold of his hands and smiled encouragingly.

“Deaton’s a good friend. Chris and Deaton will figure all this out, please be patient. They might even be able to help you regain your memories.”

Stiles smiled, feeling slightly appeased by Melissa’s reassurance. Still, he hated not knowing anything. Stiles couldn’t recognize the woman who raised him, his voice sounded foreign to his ears, he had no memories of a past, and he didn’t even know what he looked like. There were so many unanswered questions he wished to know and he wished somehow he could just will himself to remember, but as it were, he was at a loss.

Melissa released Stiles of her hold and stood.

“We should go. I’m sure they’ll have some questions for you.” Melissa suggested and flashed a kind smile.

Stiles stared toward the open door of the room and down a long hallway. From off in the distance Stiles could hear Chris and another man, Deaton, converse. Much of what they said was muffled, but he was still able to catch a few words, fae being the most overused of them all.

Stiles stood unnervingly to his feet and fiddled with his fingers, fidgeting with worry. What if he learned something he couldn’t handle? What if he was dangerous? The explosion he’d caused in the cemetery had been damaging and he hadn’t even been trying to do it. What if he couldn’t control his powers? He could seriously hurt someone.

A part of Stiles didn’t want to learn anymore about what he was. A part of him wanted to hide in a dark corner. However, there was a larger part of himself willing him to learn more, to discover the many answers to his questions. There was a possibility that once he received all the answers to the darkness of his memory loss, everything would make sense. But there was a fear in him that
discovering all these truths would only leave him questioning more.

“Stiles.” Melissa called when she made to leave the room and found Stiles still standing there, unmoving. Raising a brow in question, Melissa waited for some explanation.

Stiles took a step towards her, but came to a sudden halt when his writhing fingers caught on something. Glancing down and to his hands, Stiles tilted his head in confusion. His right index fingernail had snagged itself on a ring he hadn’t realized he’d been wearing.

Raising his left closer to gain a better view, he felt a sickening twisting claim his lower abdomen. There, placed on his left ring finger was a platinum ring. Stiles couldn’t deny the simplicity and beauty of this ring. The ring was edged in small diamonds and in the center of the ring were the engravings of Celtic knots, made of gold and lining the circumference of the ring.

Stiles held no memories of how this ring came to be, but the very idea of what it stood for chilled him. Somehow he knew the meaning of the Celtic knots. Celtic knots stood for a never ending cycle, a never broken chain, always continuous. This symbol was used by many in the old days to symbolize a love that was never ending, a love that outreached the grasp of time. How Stiles knew this was beyond him.

“Stiles?” Melissa vocied.

Stiles snapped his gaze up and met Melissa’s stare with bewilderment.

“Am I…married?”

Melissa paled and glanced down to Stiles’ left hand before she bit her lip, stilling her words, seeming unsure how to respond.

“I am, aren’t I?” Stiles gasped, when Melissa’s face spoke more than words.

“Where are they? Can I see them? Maybe they could help with some answers on what’s happening with me?”

Melissa let out a sharp noise and shook her head disapprovingly.

“What? I can’t?” Stiles asked slightly perturbed, having felt a sudden excitement at being able to meet someone else who might give him answers to the questions that were piling over.

“It’s complicated.”

“How?” Stiles asked. He felt that Chris and Melissa gained more answers than he had and now was his turn to figure things out for himself.

“Because you…” Melissa’s words fell away as she stared after him torn, as if deliberating something.

“What aren’t you telling me?” Stiles needed to know, he deserved to know everything and he sensed Melissa was holding something back.

“The reason we haven’t contacted your husband…or Scott, and your other friends…is because, for the past year and a half…you were dead.” Melissa answered, voice rasped, pained and overwhelmed.

Stiles shook his head unable to accept that for an answer.
“No. I—I couldn’t have…no.”

“You were. I was at your funeral. I put on those clothes you’re wearing now.” Melissa wept softly.

“No, how can that be when I’m here. I’m breathing.” Stiles demanded.

Footsteps could be heard nearing them, and in the next second Chris and Deaton entered the room. Deaton who stood before Stiles stared on with amazement.

“Chris, you weren’t kidding.”

Stiles’ directed his sights on the two men before him. Deaton scanned him from head to toe with fascination. Stiles understood then why Chris stared at him much in the same way. No one could understand how he’d been resurrected.

“Stiles, I’m to understand you have no memories of the past?”

Stiles didn’t want to be questioned again. He was so overwhelmed, he’d just realized he’d been dead for the past year and a half, which explained why he’d woken in a coffin buried six feet under. He had a husband and friends, but each and every one of them thought he was dead.

For the duration of a week Deaton and Chris experimented with Stiles and his abilities. First they had Melissa leave the room to examine his body, to be certain he was who they thought him to be. Stiles had refused at first, but he soon learned that this wasn’t so much a request but a command and he’d reluctantly followed their order. They’d instructed him to remove his clothing to better examine his body, to compare his body with the Stiles of the past. When Stiles stood before them in his briefs, the two circled him and pinpointed every scar they knew the Stiles of the past to have once possessed. To their utter fascination, each bullet wound scar was where it had once been. There was even a welted scar across his shoulder and neck, the first seeming to be from an animal’s bite, whereas the one on the left side of his neck looked far more human.

Stiles had been both alarmed and fearful when he found these scars. One in particular scar was a nasty uneven welt across his abdomen that appeared to have come from a knife wound. No matter his abilities to heal, apparently the wounds of his past were permanent.

As soon as they finished examining him, Chris offered Stiles some of his spare clothes. Stiles gratefully took them to the bathroom where they’d allowed him time to wash up before continuing their research.

When he finished showering and preparing himself, he’d stepped into the living room where Deaton and Chris were currently reading through a stack of old books. He was then immediately accosted by Melissa who ushered him to the kitchen for a late breakfast.

Stiles gratefully ate the hearty meal Melissa had prepared for him; scrambled eggs, pancakes, sausages and freshly squeezed orange juice. As Stiles ate his meal on the kitchen table, Melissa sat beside him grinning joyfully. He could see just how happy she was to be in his presence and Stiles knew this woman truly loved him like a mother.

Stiles finished his meal and curiously glanced across the room and towards the men who were adamantly conversing with one another on all things fae. Everything was happening so fast, but Stiles needed this, it was helpful, because every test and question led him closer to the truth.

“They’ll find the answers. Don’t worry too much about that.” Melissa spoke when a mere glance at
Stiles told her his worries.

“I just hate not knowing anything.”

“Give it some time.” Melissa consoled.

Stiles nodded, knowing she was right and met her kind gaze with trust.

“Can you tell me about myself? What kind of person was I? What did I do for a living? Who were my friends? Was I close to your son, Scott? Anything, please, I want to know.” Stiles asked at last, wishing to gain some knowledge about himself rather than what he was.

Melissa hesitated for a moment, eyes shimmering with emotions as it pained her to see no recognition in Stiles’ eyes and knowing the boy she’d raised had forgotten everything. Clearing her throat, Melissa spoke.

Stiles listened with great interest as Melissa told him about his past and who he was. She told him about werewolves, about the world having been in chaos, about his friendships and about destroying a crazed dictator werewolf, Peter. How he’d married that very man’s nephew Derek Hale, how he’d been in love and so much more Stiles couldn’t even fathom. She told him of his kidnapping, of how he’d been improving once they’d found him and even about his death.

She explained all that happened with everyone he knew. How his husband gave birth to twins. How his best friend/ foster brother, Scott, and his wife Allison (who was Chris’ daughter) had a daughter. She explained that Lydia, a very close friend, was now married to a high school friend Matt. She also happily announced that his friends Jackson and Danny were now married. She told him so much more than he’d thought there could be, and still she had more to say.

As Stiles learned all of this, he became ever apprehensive, but mainly about the man he’d married. How could he have married a man that was responsible for the death of his father? Although Melissa explained it was in the past and that Stiles had long since forgiven Derek, Stiles couldn’t understand why he would. True, he couldn’t remember his father, but from what Melissa told him, he’d loved his father very much. So Stiles found it difficult to comprehend what exactly caused him to forgive his husband.

Sure, maybe if he loved his husband, forgiving him would seem natural, but as it was now, Stiles couldn’t remember loving anyone. Forgiving his husband he didn’t even know for his father’s death seemed difficult now. He didn’t know his father either, but that was different, even if he didn’t know his father, it was still his father. If this Derek hadn’t allowed his father to die then maybe he would be here now—true that would have meant Stiles would have died then, but he’d have resurrected himself by now. He wasn’t sure how he’d done it, but maybe if his father had lived he’d have been resurrected and he would have the chance to know him. Oh, but it was all so confusing now.

The more Melissa told him the more he found himself mystified and befuddled, unsure how he should feel about everything and everyone.

Melissa even retrieved her cell phone and showed him pictures of his closest of friends and explained each of their relation and ties with him. She’d even logged into the internet and found photographs of Derek Hale, his husband, who also happened to be the sovereign of alphas. Each photo did nothing to jog his memory, and although they all looked like nice people, Stiles felt no link to them.

Seeming sooner than Stiles would have liked, Deaton and Chris began experimenting once more.
They asked countless questions and began prompting him to do things they believed he might posses the ability to do.

They made him jump and attempt to fly, which made Stiles feel ridiculous. He had no wings, so how could he fly. Still they urged him to try and he did, but nothing happened, but that Stiles was left panting with exhaustion.

They urged him to try and levitate objects, and Stiles did try, but yet again, nothing happened. They asked him to create an orb of light. Stiles focused all his might in doing so and... nothing. They even told him to try and change his form, Stiles wasn’t sure how to go about doing such, but nevertheless he attempted to do what they asked of him to further eliminate all the possible breeds of fae he might derive from. He was unsuccessful.

Then Deaton brought a bowl of water and he was asked to manipulate its contents. Surprisingly, when Stiles focused all his might in willing the water to move, it did. The water coiled out of the bowl and moved with Stiles’ guiding hands, wherever he willed it to go it went, until he grew tired and blinked, losing concentration and accidentally sending the water spilling across the ground. No one seemed to care about the mess. Melissa stared in awe while Chris and Deaton hurriedly went back to the stacks of books layering the living room coffee table to continue their research.

When they finished reading, Chris went outside with the same bowl that had been previously filled with water and returned with a bowl of dirt. Deaton retrieved a pitcher of water from the kitchen and poured some water into the dirt of the bowl. Chris then neared Stiles with the same dagger he’d previously used on himself and explained Stiles needed to cut himself and let his blood run over the dirt.

Stiles didn’t want to, but seeing as he’d now become their science project and the more he did as they told him the more he was learning about himself, he agreed and slit his inner palm. Raising his bleeding left hand, he allowed the blood to drain from the wound and watched as it flowed into the bowl of dirt. Sooner than expected, his wound glowed emerald and healed on itself.

Deaton took the bowl of dirt and placed it near the windowsill of the living room where the most sunlight shone through. The four of them stood there in silence and waited for what Stiles was unsure of. Then they watched with fascination as moss sprouted forth and steadily grew until all the dirt was covered in it.

“What the...” Stiles stammered at a loss.

“That explains a lot.” Deaton smiled, seeming relieved as Chris nodded his head in agreement.

“What is it? What does this mean, Chris?” Melissa urged, clasping a hold of the older man’s arm, drawing his attention.

“It means Stiles is most certainly a fairy and not a ghoul.”

“A ghoul? I thought you said he was from the fae line?” Melissa found herself drowning in all things supernatural.

“A ghoul is a part of the fae line, but they are evil creatures.”

“So...that means I’m not evil?” Stiles deliberated, a sense of reprieve swept through him and lightened the heavy load pressing on his shoulders.

“Yes. Deaton and I were worried that you possessed the ability to obliterate objects, as you used in the coffin. There are three types of fae that possess this ability; the ghoul, the nymph, and the
elemental. This last test proves that you are not a ghoul, for the ghoul’s blood would have done nothing when placed upon the dirt. However your blood not only produced life, but moss grew in its place.”

“So, what exactly are you saying?” Stiles hated being in the dark, he needed to understand so much and yet all he kept doing was asking questions.

“It means you are not just one type of fae, but a mixture of two. You are both elemental and nymph.”

It was Friday evening and though the gang invited Derek for BBQ and a movie, he couldn’t bear to go. The gang spoke so frequently about Stiles and Derek didn’t think he could stand the grief and pain that would take root within him. Lydia always made comments about how one of the twins looked like Stiles when they did something particularly Stiles-like. Allison and Lydia made jokes and occasionally mentioned how Stiles would have loved it. Scott, Jackson and Danny always seemed to bring up the past; fun stories that mostly included Stiles. By the end, Derek would feel near to tears and the pain in his heart would burst. Derek would then be left wondering how he could live with this much grief. So no, Derek did not go.

Instead, Derek prepared mashed potatoes, squashed steamed vegetables, sliced peaches and bananas, and seasoned grilled boneless fish. He fed Micah and Landon first before making himself a plate of fish salad. Later, he set the twins down in the living room, and switched on one of the many Barney dvd’s they had. Micah watched his favorite parts and during his least favorite parts he would pick up and play with one of the many toys scattered across the living room floor. Landon happily watched the shows, fidgeting slightly and palming at his feet. From time to time, Landon would giggle at something funny and clap his hands with amusement.

Derek sat on the couch and fiddled with his iPad. He shifted through his countless emails and read up on the monthly reports each district was required to send him. Checking on their progress and making notes whenever he found something he felt the need to discuss with certain leaders. Derek sighed heavily when he felt he’d done as much as he could for the night and tossed his iPad to his side. Glancing down at his children, Derek felt a tender smile spread across his face. Micah was currently watching Barney, his starfish toy in his hands hanging loosely on his lap while Landon lay sprawled on the floor, contentedly asleep.

Sliding from off the couch and to the ground, Derek laid down beside Landon and offered his arm as a pillow for the slumbering child. Landon mumbled some gibberish in his sleep and curled in on his father. Micah smiled over at his father, crawled over and pressed his back against Derek’s other side, and once again fiddled with his toy whilst watching the show.

Derek shut his eyes, exhaled heavily and listened to the program and Micah shifting about. He was exhausted. Having one child was more than enough, but he had two, and sometimes Derek didn’t know how he did it. Micah always refused to sleep until he’d exhausted himself to his limits and still managed to be the first to wake up in the morning. Derek would then have to wake himself up to watch over Micah. Derek liked his sleep, enjoyed it really, but his schedule had now changed to correlate with Micah’s more so than Landon’s.

Derek cell buzzed in his pocket, just as he felt the start of sleep begin to take over and he growled with annoyance as he retrieved it with his free hand.

“What?” Derek huffed, fatigued.
“Derek?” the voice sounded soft and unsure.

Derek’s eyes opened then. “Melissa?”

“Um…yes.” Melissa spoke hesitantly.

Derek sensed something was off and raised himself up. Landon rolled away, grumbling softly having been briefly disturbed from his sleep.

“What is it?” Derek asked, suddenly feeling a sense of worry take over.

“We…Chris and I, as we were heading back to town we… I’m not sure how to say this without just saying it…”

“Just say it then.” Derek urged expectantly.

“We…we hit someone with our car and they were hurt. It didn’t look like they would make it.”

“You hit someone? Why are you telling me? Did you call for help?” Derek mused, bewildered why Melissa would feel the need to tell him this.

“We did, but then this person healed themselves.”

“So you hit a werewolf. I might be an alpha, but whoever you hit with your car has nothing to do with me—”

“No, that’s not it…”

“Then what is it?” Derek stressed, regretting having answered his phone for this.

“Melissa, give me the phone.” Derek heard Chris’ voice from afar and the phone shuffled from one person to the other.

“Derek?” Chris called out with question.

“Yes. I’m here.”

“What Melissa was trying to say was that the person we hit wasn’t a werewolf. From what Deaton and I have gathered, he’s a fairy.”

Derek couldn’t suppress the snort that dispelled from his lips at this.

“That’s…interesting. I’d thought they’d gone extinct. Still, Chris, I don’t see how this has anything to do with me.”

“The fairy was someone that was known to be dead. I wanted to do further testing to be sure that they were really who we thought them to be and they are.”

Derek’s brows furrowed, “A fairy came back from the dead?”

“Yes.”

“Still, Chris, I don’t see how this—”

“It’s Stiles, Derek.”

Derek’s heart ceased to pound for several long seconds, before slamming back to life once more.
and sending with it a throbbing pain that ran deep with bittersweet agony.

“The fairy that resurrected… is Stiles.”
Letting Go

Stiles sat unnervingly in the living room watching Chris and Deaton continuously make phone calls, calling everyone he’d once known. He listened as they told each person of his resurrection, explained what he was and that he carried no memories of his past. As they relayed their location, Stiles felt fear and anticipation. He was fearful for how they’d react, yet hopeful that spending time with them might jog his memory.

After Melissa called Derek, the first of the many calls made, she’d allowed Chris and Deaton to continue. She then moved to sit beside Stiles, taking hold of his trembling hand she smiled with reassurance.

The two sat together and awaited the arrival of everyone else. When there was a knock at the front door Stiles stood from his seat as Melissa released her hold and moved to answer the door. Stiles left to stand alone, raised a hand to clasp a firm hold of his other arm, nerves uncontrollable.

“Scott. Allison.” Melissa greeted, ushering the couple.

Stiles could recall having seen many pictures of the couple and as their gazes locked with Stiles’, he watched recognition and grief fill their features.

Stiles swallowed dryly and dug his fingers harshly against his arm all whilst biting the inside of his cheek. He was unsure what he should do and spared a glance towards everyone in the room. Chris and Deaton stood not too far off watching on in silence as Melissa was leaning against the still open door and staring on with caution and worry, seeming to feel Stiles’ nerves.

“Stiles.” Scott choked and took several steps towards him and Stiles tensed.

Scott stilled his steps, appearing to sense Stiles’ fear which could perfectly well be the case as Melissa had revealed Scott was a werewolf.

Allison didn’t seem to notice and rushed towards him to engulf him in a tight embrace. Stiles stood awkwardly in her hold, one of his hands still grasping to his other arm. After several long moments passed and he realized Allison wasn’t letting go, Stiles released his hold on his arm and uneasily patted the woman’s back.

When Allison shook in his arms, Stiles realized she’d begun to cry and he helplessly stared over to the others for help. Scott seemed to read his voiceless plea and stepped to their side, pressing a hand to Allison’s shoulder he gently pulled her away and against his side.

Stiles took several steps back, forced a smile of gratitude and folded his arms over his chest.

“I’m sorry. I know you can’t remember, but...I’ve missed you.” Allison apologized.

“It’s fine.” Stiles reassured and smiled far more sincerely this time.

“I know you’ve been told who we are, but can you remember anything?” Scott said the last with optimism.

Stiles shook his head ‘no’ and glanced towards the front door when the sound of a several cars pulling up could be heard as Melissa had yet to shut the door. Melissa glanced out and back to Stiles.
“Lydia, Matt, Jackson and Danny have arrived.”

The group of them listened on in silence as the cars engines were shut off. Soon after several doors slammed shut and the shuffling and scuffing of footsteps were heard.

The first to enter were Lydia and Matt, soon after them Jackson and Danny entered.

“How is this possible?” Jackson spoke, staring on with wonder beside his equally stunned husband, Danny.

“That’s what we’re still trying to figure out.” Deaton answered.

“Why didn’t you tell us sooner?” Scott snapped, slightly miffed at having not known Stiles was alive for the last week.

“We wanted to be sure that it was really Stiles.” Chris answered and Scott turned to glare at the man before him.

“That was your reason?” Scott growled.

“Scott, stop. That doesn’t matter now. Stiles is alive.” Allison reasoned, grasping a hold of the growling beta as Stiles stared on with alarm.

“I’m not finished talking about this with you.” Scott snipped, glaring daggers at the hunter before him.

“Um, why don’t we all have a seat and talk about this.” Melissa suggested, sensing the mood was slowly shifting. Lydia suddenly glared in Chris’ direction, seeming just as displeased as Scott.
The group tensely moved about the room and seated themselves. Jackson, Danny, Lydia and Matt sat themselves on one of the two large couches in the living room. Chris, Melissa, Scott and Allison took the other couch. While Deaton sat himself in the chair between the two couches and Stiles sat himself in the love seat across from Deaton.

Stiles felt uncomfortable in his seat, having nine pairs of eyes staring him down, scanning him with both fascination and wonder.

“So you’re a fairy?” Jackson mused, “At least I had it right in high school.”

“Jackson!” Danny snipped, not pleased with Jackson’s attempt at humor.

Stiles couldn’t help the snort of amusement that slipped passed his lips and slapped a hand to his mouth guiltily.

Lydia broke the relative silence with an abrupt harsh snicker and Scott soon followed along with Jackson and Allison.

“My lovely fairy.” Lydia mused, having called Stiles as such more than once in the past and that seemed to rile up the group into full on laughter.

Stiles couldn’t help but to join them. It was rather funny. He was a fairy and even thinking it kind of made him want to laugh. It all seemed so ridiculous.

“A bunch of children in adult bodies, I swear.” Melissa sighed dramatically whilst pinching the bridge of her nose. This only caused the group of youthful adults to titter on.

“You have wings and fairy dust?” Jackson jeered playfully.

Stiles choked on spit and couldn’t stop the laughter from bubbling out of him. Scott whined helplessly, struggling to overcome his fits of laughter as well as the rest.

All the tension and nervousness seemed to dispel itself from out of him at Jackson’s friendly humor and Stiles was grateful.

“I can’t believe you’re a fairy.” Lydia voiced, once the group’s laughter had died down.

“I know. I can’t understand it either.” Scott concurred.

“I don’t know either, but Chris and Deaton are researching it all.” Stiles answered.

“What can you do?” Matt’s curiosity got the better of him.

“Not really sure.”

“Stiles is an elemental fairy and a nymph. He should have the ability to manipulate the elements and heal himself and others. He’s still working on willing his powers.” Deaton clarified.

“Why were you resurrected and why do you only have powers now?” Danny questioned.

“We’re still trying to figure all that out.” Chris answered for Stiles.

“So you really don’t remember anything?” Lydia asked disbelievingly.

“No. I don’t remember anything.” Stiles admitted perturbed, for all the abilities he had, he couldn’t seem to make himself remember his past.
“I brought a photo album. Maybe it might help jog your memory.” Lydia proposed, and stood to her feet. “I’ll go and get it.”

Without another word, Lydia left and soon returned from her car. Taking the empty seat beside Stiles, she set one of the many photo albums she’d brought with her on her lap. Stiles listened to Lydia as she showed him each picture and explaining everything in relation to it. The rest of the gang looked on with hope, wishing something would resonate with Stiles. Whenever a photograph was shown that they knew, one of the friends would pitch in and explain the background story of the event.

Hours passed as Stiles looked through all the photographs and the gang told him the stories of his past. Stiles enjoyed them; some were so amusing and caused the entire group to laugh at the antics they’d made in the past.

Melissa made them tea and the group drank and talked some more. Whenever Stiles asked a question they were always willing to answer and Stiles had a surprisingly wonderful time. They spent hours talking. What once started as a tense and awkward reunion became a great time.

As it got late there were several yawns from different members of the group, but Stiles didn’t feel the least bit tired. He was wide awake. Learning so much about himself and his past was his source of energy.

Still, reluctant as they were to leave, each one of Stiles’ friends noted it was time for them to leave. But each one of them promised to call and visit. Scott and Jackson even offered to bring their own photo albums and old videos they’d shot together in the past.

Stiles felt more aware of whom he was after their visit and for the first time since he’d woken in that coffin, he felt surer about his life. He finally felt complacent.

Stiles offered to help Melissa clean up the living room after the group of friends left. Chris then walked Deaton out of the cabin house and to his car, where Stiles had the suspicion they would continue to talk about him and his sudden reappearance. They still wanted to figure out how it was he’d come back to life, since resurrections of the fae breed were never mentioned in any of the books they carried.

Soon after Melissa and Stiles finished cleaning, Chris reappeared and smiled at them. Stiles was floored by how kind Chris was to him after they’d determined the clans of fae he derived from.

As Melissa had mentioned during one of their long chats, he knew Chris to be a hunter. Stiles could only surmise that once Chris knew Stiles didn’t derive from any supernaturally evil species, the hunter was open to treating him as he once had, like a son. This made sense as Chris was Melissa’s husband and Melissa was his adoptive mother. So, technically, Chris was his adoptive father, which Stiles still had a hard time comprehending.

“We should get some rest we have a lot to do in the morning.” Chris suggested.

“Oh?” Melissa asked, slightly perplexed.

Chris nodded his head, “Since everyone now knows Stiles is back, we should move back into our residential home.”

“Oh, you’re right. Plus the commuting from here to work was awful.” Melissa laughed lightheartedly.

Turning her sights to Stiles, Melissa placed her warm hands over Stiles cheeks and smiled brightly.
“Your room is just how you left it.” Melissa reassured and Stiles nodded.

Melissa was great to have by his side. She felt so motherly and since Stiles couldn’t remember his real mother, he was starting truly view Melissa as his mother. Stiles knew he’d once been a Sheriff as crazy as that had been to believe, but since he carried no memories of it, he couldn’t just start back over with the life he’d once had. So for the time being Melissa and Chris thought it best Stiles stay with them. This way Chris and Deaton could continue to do their research and Melissa would help him attempt to gather his memories.

Meanwhile, Chris mentioned that the possibility of Stiles gaining his memories back were slim, and that the best thing for him to do now was to try to start over with his life. The Argent family ran one of the largest weapons and artillery businesses, or so Chris had told Stiles. Since there was a strong likelihood that Stiles’ memories of his past would not return, he thought it best to train Stiles about the Argent weaponry business and how to run it. Chris wanted Stiles to have a new career in life if he couldn’t remember his past. Stiles wasn’t so sure about it, but he didn’t mind the offer. Who knew, maybe helping run the Argent business might be his true calling in life.

“Alright, sounds good.” Stiles confirmed his agreement with Chris’ choice and the older man tipped his head in understanding, flashed a tired smile and wordlessly went to his and Melissa’s room.

Melissa yawned audibly then; tired yet still warm brown eyes sparkled at Stiles.

“I’m so tired dear. I’ll see you in the morning, okay?” Melissa spoke in the middle of another yawn, and patted Stiles’ back. “Goodnight, dear.”

Stiles nodded with a fond grin and watched as Melissa went to her room where Chris was waiting and stared around the cabin. Checking once more and finding everything was neatly placed where it belonged; Stiles went to his room and prepared himself for bed.

After the second day of borrowing clothes from Chris, the hunter went to town and bought Stiles clothes. Stiles was ever grateful, as Chris’ clothes weren’t the best fit for his frame. After taking a quick shower, Stiles slipped into a pair of black sweats and a plain white t-shirt.

Stiles was so exhausted, yet found it ever so difficult to relax and give into the sleep he so desperately desired. The night had been a productive one. He’d been able to learn so much about himself and the people he’d once been so close to. All the questions he held were being answered one by one, and now he felt more aware of whom he was.

Still…there were some things he’d wanted to learn that night and yet did not have the chance to ask. His husband had not come. Stiles had been so grateful to have his friends come and visit him, but his husband had chosen not to show up.

Stiles was there when Melissa and Chris spoke with Derek. He’d heard how Chris further explained everything that had happened with Stiles. He even told Stiles’ husband that he suffered from memory loss, and that it might be helpful for Stiles if Derek came and tried to jog Stiles’ memory.

To everyone’s surprise Derek declined the invitation and without any further explanation ended the call. Chris and Melissa attempted to comfort Stiles and told him it might just be shock that was affecting Derek. Stiles only shrugged his shoulders.

Stiles thought he should be more upset with Derek for not wanting to see him, but he wasn’t. Stiles honestly could not remember the man and only felt slight disappointment for not being able to ask
him some questions about their past. Stiles knew he had children, but as horrible as it sounded, Stiles wasn’t sure he wanted to meet them right now.

Meeting his husband and friends was one thing, but meeting his children... that was something else entirely. Children needed support, care and love. Stiles could not offer his children these things. He didn’t know anyone and held no desire to give compassion and love for children he had no bond with.

Stiles let out a heavy sigh and threw an arm over his face and shielded his eyes.

“I’m a horrible father.” Stiles chuckled dryly.

How could he not want to see his children? Shaking his head, Stiles let out another harsh exhale of breath. He wasn’t ready to be a father, at least not now. Maybe in the future, after he learned more, became more comfortable about who he was and what he was. Maybe then he would be ready to meet his children.

For the time being though, Stiles would strive to learn more about his heritage while starting his life over again.

Derek felt like the worst husband of the century. The moment Chris told him Stiles was alive he went into a state of denial. How could he reject the man’s words when this was Chris talking? Chris was a hunter. He would have done his research and wouldn’t believe anything unless he was absolutely certain it was so. Stiles was alive, Derek believed Chris.

Even though his whole being was screaming for him to go and see Stiles, Derek couldn’t move from off of the ground. His body was immobilized. Derek wanted to see Stiles with his own eyes; he wanted to bring his mate into his arms and hold so tight, to scent him and know for himself that Stiles was back home where he belonged.

His possessive wolf wanted to drag Stiles back home, to scent him. He wanted Micah and Landon to scent Stiles as well, so that Stiles’ scent would smell like home.

Derek’s eyes stung, blinking the tears away was futile as he broke down and gave in to his grief. Derek wanted Stiles so deeply. His heart was coiling in on itself with pain and heartache, knowing he could not give in to this need. Stiles had lost his memories.

Stiles did not remember Derek. He could not remember their past. All the pain and heartache Derek had placed onto Stiles was gone. Stiles couldn’t remember the pain Derek had caused him and he knew that this was everything Stiles could have hoped for. To not remember the pain, the torment and the grief he’d endured all because of his love for Derek.

Maybe this was a higher beings gift to Stiles, bringing him back to life and wiping his memory slate clean. Derek could not go to Stiles now. It was better for Stiles this way. With no memory of his past, Derek meant nothing to Stiles. Stiles didn’t need Derek in his life. Stiles could live the rest of his days free from all the pain that came with loving Derek.

So as much as Derek’s whole being willed him to rise from the ground and find Stiles, he would not. He would not damn Stiles any further than he’d done in the past. Stiles’ father died because of him. Stiles was kidnapped and tortured because of him. Because of him, Stiles’ mind became so damaged towards the end; those hunters broke Stiles of his sanity. The worst of it all was that Stiles had been murdered because of him.
If Stiles had never met Derek, then Stiles could have had such a wonderful life. If Stiles hadn’t been fated to be Derek’s true mate, maybe Derek could have saved Stiles from such grief. His human side knew this all, and even more surprising, his wolf side also came to understand this. Stiles was Derek’s true mate, and the one thing his wolf wanted far more than anything else was to ensure Stiles’ safety.

Only now did Derek fully comprehend that the best way to ensure Stiles’ safety was to keep as far away from him as possible. The best thing for Stiles was to be separated from Derek. Although Derek knew this would be difficult and painful, he would have to endure it.

Derek bowed his head and released a sorrowful whimper and caught Micah’s attention. Micah glanced towards Derek, tilted his head with query and crawled closer to his father. When Derek’s scarlet depths met Micah’s honey brown eyes he whined. When Derek looked into Micah’s eyes he felt as if he were seeing Stiles and hurriedly brought Micah into his arms. Derek tucked his head in the crook of Micah’s neck and inhaled his scent and bayed softly.

Micah mumbled out gibberish as he pawed at his father’s beard and weaved his pudgy fingers in his disheveled hair.

Derek knew he was doing the right thing. As he held to Micah and let himself seek comfort from his child, he felt a sense of somber peace. Though he’d deny himself Stiles, he would always have their children. Derek knew this was all he deserved after he’d destroyed Stiles’ life once before.
Two months came and went since everyone learned of Stiles’ resurrection. Chris and Deaton were still trying to understand it all. Stiles didn’t care all that much about it anymore. He knew he was of the fae bloodline. His past friends were now his closest friends. Though he couldn’t remember his past, he seemed to like those of his past and they got along great.

Even so, Chris and Deaton wouldn’t let it be. They needed to understand it all. Stiles accepted their desire to find the truth, but he wasn’t going to waste his whole life trying to discover all these answers.

Stiles spent most of his time bonding with his friends. Chris also took to showing Stiles the ropes in managing the Argent business. Allison and Scott didn’t show much interest in taking over the company. Chris wanted to be sure it stayed in the family. Now that Stiles had taken an interest, Chris laid all his hopes on Stiles. Stiles at first thought he might not like it and would disappoint the hunter, but as surprising as it was, Stiles enjoyed the work and was rather good at it. Chris even gave him the chance to lead meetings, have the final say with investors, and approve or discontinue certain weaponry projects.

With Chris’ help Stiles learned everything about weaponry and the business, and even so, he was learning so much more. Chris seemed proud of his work and Stiles seriously could see himself continuing this work as a career. Chris and Stiles even traveled to a weaponry convention in Austen, Texas and Stiles gained all the more knowledge about weapons and the history of firearms.

When Stiles wasn’t working, he visited with his friends for movie nights, a night out about town, and even volunteered to babysit for Scott and Allison. Scott and Allison were great to be around. It was strange though, Allison was not only his adoptive sister, but she was also his sister-in-law. Allison and Scott didn’t seem to like it when Stiles mentioned this to them, but it didn’t really bother Stiles all that much. He loved them all the same.

Towards the end of the second month Stiles felt that it was time he looked for his own place. Chris and Melissa reassured him that there was no rush and didn’t mind him staying with them, but Stiles felt this was a great step towards beginning a new life for himself. Melissa was emotional the day Stiles moved into his newly leased flat. For the first week after he moved out, Melissa visited him every day and called him six or more times in a day. Stiles loved Melissa for being so nurturing and answered each of her calls to reassure her he was eating well and was fine.

Stiles invested his time in work and visited with his friends and family. Even with his busy lifestyle and having so many loved ones and friends, Stiles still felt a sense of emptiness. At first Stiles couldn’t understand why he felt like he was missing something, but then he realized it during one of the many movie nights he spent with his friends.

Stiles went over to Scott’s and Allison’s place for their Friday Movie Night. There, as the whole gang of them sat and watched a romantic comedy, Stiles found his attention stray from the movie and focused more on his friends.

Jackson and Danny sat in a love seat together. Jackson laid himself on the couch with his head in Danny’s lap. As the two watched the film, Danny ran one hand over Jackson’s arm while his other fiddled with Jackson’s short hair.
Matt and Lydia sat not too far from them, Matt was seated on a plush chair with Lydia seated on the ground, leaning between Matt’s open legs and resting her head on one of his knees while watching the film. When Lydia wound an arm around one of Matt’s legs, Matt absentmindedly twirled a finger in one of Lydia’s ringlets of hair.

Scott and Allison sat in a love seat across from Jackson and Danny, while Allison held a dozing off Amanda in her arms, Scott scooped the two into his own arms and held them close as they watched the film.

Stiles then understood what the emptiness he felt was. He was lonely. Although he had his friends and adoptive family, they weren’t everything he needed in his life. Stiles wanted someone to call his own, he wanted a partner…he wanted…kin?

Stiles was technically married, but for whatever reason, Derek Hale didn’t want to have anything to do with him. For the past two months Derek stayed away and Stiles couldn’t quite understand why. He believed Chris and Melissa when they said it must be from shock that his husband chose not to come when first learning of his resurrection, but then how long was this shock supposed to last?

Stiles had a husband and children he hadn’t even met yet. The idea was strange, but he really felt like he should at least meet them once. His life was starting to settle down and he felt more in control. Now felt like the right time to meet his family.

It hadn’t been difficult to find out Derek’s number as Melissa wrote everyone’s contact information long ago for Stiles to have. One night, after Stiles finished up with work and was lounging about the home, he gained the courage to make that phone call.

The phone drilled dully, ringing a handful of times before a man answered the phone with a gruff and husky, “Hello.”

Stiles felt his stomach tie itself in knots at the sound of that voice. A glance to his living room clock had him silently cursing at himself. It was 10:23PM, this wasn’t the right time to be calling a man who had two children. He obviously sounded tired and as if he’d been woken from his sleep.

“Hello?” Derek spoke once more, tensely and Stiles froze, unsure what to say.

“I’m going to count to three before I hang up.” Derek crankily advised.

“1……2….”

“Derek!” Stiles blurted, breathing tremulous, uncertain what to follow up with.

Silence was his answer. As Stiles struggled to catch his breath and force words from out of his mouth the silence became ongoing, seeming never-ending. Stiles waited for a response while simultaneously trying to come up with one, but he was given none from the other end of the line. Stiles began to believe Derek must have hung up on him, but a mere glance at his cell phone gave him his answer. Stiles felt all the more nerve-stricken as Derek was still on the phone, yet remained still.

Maybe this had all been a bad idea. Maybe he should have just kept their distance, but Stiles knew that was impossible. Derek and their children were his family. He needed—deserved to meet them.

“I—I…” Stiles stuttered and palmed his flushed face, breathing vacillating as he struggled to calm his quivering form.

“Stiles.” Derek called, his voice sounding so far off, weak and thin, almost a whisper, a broken
murmur tugging at his heart.

Stiles froze, his once quaking form deadly still now. The way Derek spoke his name…it was so gentle, faint, and filled with tenderness. Stiles couldn’t see the man, but somehow when he heard Derek call out his name like *that*…he felt as if the man was overwrought with emotion and some part of him wanted give him comfort. To bring together what he felt was a broken man.

The rasping hum of Derek clearing his throat could be heard before the sovereign alpha spoke once more, “Sorry, I just—why have you called?”

Stiles understood then, somehow he knew the wolf was trying to deflect, to regain his composer from Stiles’ surprise call, but he didn’t want that. He wanted Derek to be honest with him, though he couldn’t remember him; he felt some part of him needed Derek to be open and honest when speaking to him. He didn’t want Derek to hold back.

“I…I need to see you.” Stiles rushed in a quick breath, unexpectedly grasped with the strong urge to be in the man’s presence—to calm the abrupt pulsing need within him.

Stiles knew he was imposing himself on the alpha, but he didn’t feel like he could wait. Having now spoken to Derek and having heard the way he’d said his name—said his name in *that* way…Stiles needed to see him. He felt if he saw him, saw him with his own eyes and not just looking at pictures of Derek, maybe something might jar his memories. Because after just hearing Derek say his name, his entire being felt an unexplainable need to be near him.

“S—Stiles…” Derek breathily uttered, inhaling stridently, clearly not expecting Stiles’ sudden declaration.

“I—I’m coming.” Stiles affirmed, nodding his head as if to solidify his desire and his confirmation all at once and rose to his feet. “I’ll be at your place in twenty minutes.” Stiles ended awkwardly, nerves suddenly reappearing as he ended their call and began searching for his car keys.

Within the first month Stiles began working for the Argent businesses, Chris bought him a silver range rover. Apparently his classic jeep was demolished in the accident that followed his kidnapping. Stiles couldn’t remember, but from what Scott said, the Jeep was special to him as it once had been his mother’s car.

Stiles found the home easily enough and parked beside the home he knew to be his destination, though he found it difficult to remove himself from out of the car.

Glancing toward the home, Stiles took note of the closed blinds and the lights that peaked through the four corners of the windows. Stiles knew beyond it was Derek Hale, awaiting his arrival.

Stiles learned much about werewolves and knew Derek could most likely sense his presence, but it didn’t seem to urge him into action.

Gripping the steering wheel Stiles inhaled courage and exhaled his nerves as best he could. What was he doing? Why had he rushed over so late at night? Was it really rational for him to just impose himself on the alpha just because he felt a sudden unexplainable need to see him?

Stiles bit his bottom lip and considered restarting his car and driving back to his place, but he knew he couldn’t do that. Derek was waiting for him. Gaining what courage he had within him, he exited the vehicle and made his way to the home and rang the doorbell.

The distant chime of the bell rang and soon after he heard the dulled sound of movement beyond it. Stiles found it strange to be standing in front of his own home that he’d grown up in, yet held no
memories of it. Scott mentioned once that Derek had his own home, but they’d chosen to live in Stiles’ because that was what Stiles had wanted. After his death Derek had raised them in the same house, because it was a home Stiles loved greatly. Stiles wished he could remember, but no matter how many times he tried to familiarize himself with things of his past nothing sparked any memories. So Stiles had given up trying.

Far sooner than Stiles anticipated, the door swung open and Stiles felt the air within his lungs dispel from out of him in a heavy gust. Before him stood a large bulking man and Stiles immediately felt intimidated as he stared up at the man before him with wonder. Stiles remembered the photographs he’d seen so many times, but this man before him looked nothing like the man in the photographs.

The man within those photographs had lively olive skin, a broad muscular frame, short black hair and a slight five o’clock shadow. The man before him was the complete opposite. This man standing before him was a pasty pale complexion, his muscular frame although present seemed leaner than that of the previous photographs, he was thinner now. Stiles could hardly recognize the wolf with his scruffy beard and unkempt shaggy hair.

When Stiles mustered the courage to meet the man’s hazel eyes he found them full of pain, grief and something else—it took Stiles a moment to place the name to the emotion, but once he did, he felt his stomach churn with an unsettling feeling. Within Derek’s gaze, Stiles found dread.

Pain and grief, Stiles could understand those emotions. It matched those of his friends when they’d first met in the cabin. But dread? Dread? As in reluctance and apprehension; Stiles couldn’t comprehend Derek’s reasons for feeling such in his presence. Shouldn’t the alpha feel a sense of relief and surprise?

Regardless of the hesitance within Derek’s presence, he allowed it to slide and voiced a soft, “Hey.”

The somber alpha before him broke their gaze to stare down at the ground and at Stiles’ gray Vans.

“Come in.” The alpha requested, stepped to the side of the door, and silently he waited for Stiles to enter.

Stiles willed his legs to move as several moments passed without him doing anything but standing there before the mute wolf. Then all at once his body seemed to reboot itself and Stiles finally entered the home.

Stiles stepped out of the foyer and into the conjoining living room. There he stood and waited for Derek to shut the door and join him. When Derek emerged, he glanced briefly in Stiles’ direction before wandering past him and seated himself in a chair.

“Sit.” Derek spoke quietly and Stiles without protest abided the man and seated himself in the loveseat.

Silence followed. A silence that lasted painfully long as Derek hunched over on his knees, arms hanging loosely, eyes downcast, seeming far more interested in staring at the carpet rather than at the man before him.

Stiles knew he should speak. It had been him who demanded they see each other and imposed himself on the alpha, but Stiles couldn’t bring about any words.

Swallowing audibly, Stiles raised his stare to the alpha before him. Staring intently, Stiles analyzed
the man before him. Derek wore a loose-fitting white sweater, with sleeves shoved up to his elbows. The v-neck collar of his sweater hung low, and although Stiles tried not to—his eyes wandered lower and scanned the man’s prominent clavicle with interest. Stiles suddenly wondered what the man looked like without the sweater on. Was the alpha chiseled with rock-hard muscles?

Stiles cleared his throat and turned his sights to the coffee table before him.

“You never came.” Stiles finally managed to speak, though not what he’d intended to. It was as if his body and brain disconnected for that one moment, allowing for his heart to speak for him.

Even though everyone he knew told him he had been wholeheartedly in love with Derek, Stiles felt no true or overwhelming love for the alpha. Still, Stiles felt nervous and flustered around the man.

Stiles dared to stare up at the alpha and found the wolf inert to his words, realizing he might not understand; Stiles clarified, “—to visit me.”

The alpha’s lips pursed, seeming disturbed and unappreciative of Stiles’ reminder.

“I—” Derek began, pausing for a long while, unsure how to express his feelings in words. “I thought it was for the best.”

Stiles remained silent, deliberating the wolf’s words, struggling to make sense of it, but found only confusion as his constant.

“Why?” Stiles raised a brow, honestly perplexed.

Another long pause of silence followed and Stiles was surprised to find that Derek’s creased brows deepened even more with contemplation.

“I didn’t want you to feel inclined to—or forced to be in a relationship with me. You don’t remember who I am.”

Stiles had to agree with the wolf. He made a lot of sense. Even so, maybe some part of him instinctively knew the wolf well enough to sense that he wasn’t being completely honest. Regardless of what the alpha said now, something felt off. Not a lie necessarily—more like a lie by omission—a blend of misconstruing truth and lie by omission.

Stiles knew he was staring intently at the wolf, trying to detect a tell sign of dishonesty, but he couldn’t stop himself.

Derek stood then to cross the living room and stand before a roaring fire place. There, he proceeded to stare at the flames, simultaneously managing to survey Stiles through his peripheral vision.

“Why have you come?” Derek heaved, shoulders slouching with fatigue.

Stiles stared over at the man before him, who he couldn’t help but see as broken—dejected, and felt a sense of guilt within, steaming from where—he was unsure. Still, something in him was unsettled—self-loathing grounding itself within him. It was almost as if Stiles felt blameworthy for the man before him who seemed to be so…disconsolate.

“I want my children.” Stiles suddenly spoke, and immediately regretted it when the alpha’s once slouched shoulders became tense and a low growl erupted from the wolf.

“Your children?” Derek snarled, the fatigue that once consumed the werewolf vanished as an
aggressive and domineering alpha appeared before him.

When Derek turned to face him and flashed glowing crimson eyes, Stiles realized he’d made a
critical mistake. He hadn’t meant for it to sound like he wanted to take their children away from
Derek, he’d only meant to convey his wish to be with his children.

“They’re our children and I won’t let you take them from me.” Derek snarled deeply and Stiles felt
the hair at the back of his neck stand. Fear coursed through him, but when Stiles continued to stare
into those smoldering red orbs of anger, something unfurled within the pit of his stomach, a sense
of excitement and thrill.

What the hell was wrong with him? Stiles should be crawling with fear and dread, and a part of
him was, but an even greater part of himself found the intensity of the alpha’s gaze on him—
seeming to truly stare at him—so much more exhilarating.

The alpha’s tense features reverted into one of bewilderment and suddenly the wolf was stumbling
awkwardly back, and he pressed himself against the edge of the fire place. One of Derek’s hands
snapped up to clasp a tight hold over his nose as he let out a husky swear of, “Christ. Stiles.”

Stiles’ brows furrowed in confusion as he attempted to obtain understanding from the alpha’s
sudden behavior and found none. The alpha stared on, but what was once defensive intensity
shifted into unease and uncertainly. Stiles couldn’t help but find the alpha’s vulnerable and doe-
like eyes alluring and there was no doubt Stiles felt an attraction for the man.

“Don’t.” Derek hissed. He appeared pained when inhaling, and soon his breathing shifted into
sharp and labored huffs of air.

“What?”

“You need to leave.” Derek shuddered, his free hand digging into the side of his thigh. At this
point Stiles took notice of claws which had replaced human nails. The alpha’s claws dug deep into
the wolf’s flesh and Stiles grimaced at the sight.

“I—I’m sorry. I didn’t want to upset you. I just meant that I want to meet the children and be their
father.”

Derek’s soft gaze seemed to expose an overwhelming sense of affection and sadness as the wolf bit
his bottom lip and Stiles thought it a trick of his mind when he heard a soft whimper. It seemed a
ridiculous notion that Derek Hale would ever make that type of noise—not the sovereign alpha.

“Can I see them tomorrow?” Stiles knew he might come off pushy, but he really wanted to see his
children.

The alpha’s teeth flashed as they dug deeper into the flesh of his bottom lip, but his head tipped
low in silent acknowledgement and Stiles couldn’t retain the brilliant smile that spread across his
face.

Stiles took several steps towards Derek, and halted when the alpha raised a hand in the air,
wordlessly requesting he keep his distance. Stiles could only surmise the alpha must still be upset
about his previous statement. Werewolves must be sensitive to anything related with their packs.
As an alpha’s family was reasonably included within their packs, Stiles previous statement could
be the cause for the alpha’s behavior. Understanding this train of logic, Stiles couldn’t stop himself
from smiling. He felt a sense of relief almost. Derek was territorial with their children and this
comforted him because it only made it all the more apparent that Derek loved their children and
would most certainly protect them.

“Thank you.” Stiles spoke, continuing to smile kindly at the alpha with gratitude.

“Don’t thank me. They’re your children too. I was expecting this visit for some time.”

“So…you were waiting for me to come?”

Derek stared at Stiles’ neck and nodded distractedly and Stiles immediately knew it was the scarred mating mark that the alpha stared at. Melissa once showed him his wedding video and as mortified as he’d been by Derek and his behavior in front of all those people, seeing the way Derek once claimed him…it sent a sense of want and belonging within him. So strange he’d feel such for a man he didn’t even remember.

“You should leave now.” Derek rasped, eyes attentively scanning the expanse of the scarred claiming welts.

“Right…It’s late. I’ll show myself out.” Stiles began as he made his way to the door, but paused for a second to glance back at the alpha who began shivering with post-anger, or so Stiles could only assume.

“I’ll come by around four tomorrow.” Stiles noted and without another word he left the home, optimistic about his first meeting with his children.
The next day Stiles couldn’t stop checking his watch and agonizing over the fact that the time was passing by unbelievably slow. Slow, but still progressing, and when it reached 3:00PM, Stiles began to feel a sense of nerves awaken and claim him. He was overcome with the need for time to slow down once more, unable to accept when it came time to start his way to the home that was once his. The place his estranged husband and children were awaiting his arrival.

When Stiles stood before the suburban home of his forgotten past, his body strummed and vibrated with anxiety. Although he carried some fears about meeting Derek, he mostly worried about his meeting with the children. What if they hated him? He knew children could sense a person’s hesitation and anxiety. Maybe they would find his unease unsettling and reject him. They didn’t know him as their father. He’d never had the opportunity to bond with them.

Stiles rang the doorbell, inhaled a sharp, deep breath and mentally prepared him for whatever was about to come. He stilled when a child’s rowdy laughter echoed within the home and swallowed dryly just as the front door swung open.

The sovereign of alphas stood before him, a grimace marring his face and Stiles pulled back from where he stood by the intensity of the alpha’s gaze. Breaking their stare, Stiles lowered his gaze to the alpha’s indigo sweater and what looked like spaghetti staining it.

“Come in.” Derek invited and stepped to one side of the door and allowed Stiles to enter.

“Thanks.” Stiles answered awkwardly and wandered to the living room, silently waiting for the alpha to join him as he’d done the night before.

“I was just feeding the boys when Micah did this.” Derek explained gesturing to his sweater stain as he entered the living room and Stiles suddenly placed the reason for Derek’s agitation.

“Micah?”

“Yes.” Derek answered with a raised brow.

Stiles didn’t know his children’s names, though he knew almost everything else about his past from what others had told him.

“I—was never told their names.” Stiles explained with embarrassment, feeling like an ass of a father for never having asked anyone.

Derek’s lips pursed momentarily.

“Micah and Landon… Micah’s the eldest.” Derek explained before making his way past the living room and through another room. “I shouldn’t leave them alone in the kitchen.”

Stiles wordlessly followed after him. Within the kitchen two toddlers sat at a table in high chairs beside one another. One child’s face and hands were smeared in sauce. The other child’s face was clean and peachy in complexion, his full attention was focused on pinching pre-cut slices of spaghetti and taking careful bites.

Derek moved to stand beside the twins and grabbed a napkin near the child covered in sauce and began cleaning his face and hands.
“This messy monster is Micah.” Derek sighed with frustration when Micah fidgeted away from Derek as he attempted to clean him up.

Stiles knew that meant the cheerfully silent child who fed himself and remained for the most part clean was the youngest of twins, Landon.

“Would you like to help feed Landon?” Derek inquired once Micah was cleaned of sauce and he spooned the child bite size pieces.

“Uh…sure.” Stiles smiled softly and hesitatingly moved to Landon’s side.

Stiles met Landon’s gaze as the todder stared curiously up at him. Picking up the child size spoon, Stiles scooped a spoonful of spaghetti from the bowl and raised it up to the child in silent offering.

Landon and Micah’s eyes were similar to Stiles’ own and he was amazed at how much the twins resembled him.

Landon smiled goofily up at Stiles and opened his mouth wide. Stiles laughed softly and fed Landon, glancing from one child to the other. Micah wasn’t so compliant. He’d grumble and glare at Derek as the sovereign alpha attempted to feed him. Instead of opening his mouth, Micah would pinch the spaghetti from the spoon Derek held and feed himself. When Derek moved to wipe the sauce Micah smeared on his face, Micah would growl and paw at Derek’s chest rubbing more sauce onto his sweater.

Landon in contrast to Micah didn’t mind Stiles feeding him and happily took each spoonful offered to him.

Landon ate his meal slowly while Micah finished his meal within a matter of minutes. Derek glanced over to Stiles and Landon, and Stiles met his stare with query.

“You think you’ll be alright by yourself. I need to go change Micah’s shirt and my own.”

Stiles nodded and silently watched as Derek rose and lifted Micah out of his high chair and into his arms before wandering out of the room.

Stiles turned his sights once more to Landon.

“Hey.” Stiles spoke softly as he watched Landon chew his food and raised a hand out to palm the child’s cheek, wiping a small smudge of sauce from his face.

Landon met Stiles’ gaze as he spoke and held it.

“I’ve wanted to meet you for some time now.” Stiles explained, knowing that Landon wouldn’t understand, yet still feeling the need to explain his absence.

“I promise you that I’m here now and I’ll be a good father to you and Micah.” Stiles pledged with sincerity and Landon smiled in response.

“I’m your father.” Stiles repeated feeling his eyes mist over as he stared over at Landon’s sweet face and felt his stomach knot with pleasant nerves.

Landon glanced down to the spoonful of spaghetti Stiles raised to him and happily ate it. Stiles swallowed past the lump in his throat and leaned towards the toddler and planted a firm kiss across his forehead before pulling away and continued to feed the docile child.
When Derek returned, Micah wore a pale yellow shirt and Derek wore a plain white t-shirt. At this point Landon was finished with his lunch.

“If he’s finished we can take them to their playroom.” Derek suggested.

Stiles nodded in understanding and lifted Landon into his arms. Stiles followed Derek down a hall and up a staircase and to a bedroom that was designed into a playroom. At the far end of the room were two white wooden cribs. A bookshelf full of children’s books was placed in the far left corner. The floor was carpeted in a pale cream color and across it lay a colorful rug with the letters of the alphabet. On the walls to each side of the room were boxes full of toys, stuffed animals, and costumes.

The moment Derek set Micah down on the ground; he rushed to the lego blocks and began fiddling with the pieces, sticking parts together before dissembling them, then reassembling once more.

Stiles set Landon down to the ground and he made his way to where Micah sat and plopped himself near his brother. As Micah forced pieces of legos together Landon picked up one piece to fiddle with it. Landon lost interest in the legos and soon crawled further away to a small bucket of wooden blocks, numbers and letters written on the side of each. Landon fingered the carved engravings of the blocks before he began to stack them one on top of the other.

Stiles felt Derek’s stare on him from his side, observing him closely but in the presence of Micah and Landon, Stiles felt a need to socialize himself with his children. Thankfully, they were still young and that left him time to bond with them. Stiles took several steps in Micah’s direction and sat himself on the floor beside Micah.

“Can I play with you?” Stiles asked with a kind smile.

Micah met his gaze with curiosity and lifted a lego to Stiles for him to take. Stiles laughed utterly thrilled by Micah’s reaction and took the lego piece and began to help Micah assemble a clump of pieces together.

Landon seeing Stiles and Micah focused on building something unknown to man had him wanting to join and he soon crawled over to participate.

Stiles felt his heart flow with warmth so overcome with joy that his children weren’t skittish and seemed to welcome him. His eyes began to water once more, but this time he was unable to blink them away.

“Are you okay?” came a hoarse call from Derek who still remained and Stiles raised his gaze to meet Derek’s openly expressing a mixture of emotions, the most prominent being joy and regret.

“Yeah…I’m so happy, but I’ve missed a lot. You know?” Stiles laughed at his emotional self and hurriedly wiped at his eyes with the palms of his hands.

Stiles was so preoccupied with drying his eyes, he didn’t hear when Derek shuffled towards him. He only took notice when he felt large warm hands grasp his own and gently lowered them away from his face. Stiles then stared up at the alpha now kneeling beside him, their children contentedly playing with each other.

Stiles had never been this close to the man. Staring into those hazel depths, Stiles felt that if he continued to stare at them he’d lose himself.

When Derek’s hands slid up his neck and moved to cradle the sides of his face, Stiles breath hitched in his throat. Derek’s thumbs boldly caressed and stroked his cheeks and effectively wiping
away Stiles’ remaining tears.

Stiles wasn’t sure what he should do…he wasn’t sure how to take Derek’s actions as. Derek was technically his husband and this intimate touching would normally be acceptable. Except, Stiles didn’t remember Derek and Stiles wasn’t even sure what their current relationship status would even be classified as right now.

He didn’t remember loving the man, yet the way Derek was touching him—it didn’t feel foreign and it didn’t feel wrong. Stiles was even surprised to find that his body welcomed the alpha’s touch, almost as if his body could remember Derek’s touch though his mind had forgotten.

“I always hated it when you cried.” Derek huskily murmured, leaning in close and Stiles let out a soft noise, verging on a whine.

Stiles shut his eyes tightly together, breathing accelerating all as his heart burst to life, speedily pulsing at the realization Derek was preparing to kiss him. A part of him knew this wasn’t right—he didn’t love his husband, hell—he didn’t even know him, but...

Stiles didn’t care. He wanted this. As crazy as it was for him to want this he did and voicelessly parted his lips when he felt a nose brush against his in a familiar greeting of souls.

Stiles exhaled a shuddering breath of desire, his hands blindly rising to grasp at broad shoulders and he impatiently leaned up forward, trying to meet Derek halfway.

 Abruptly, the hands palming his face released him. Stiles’ eyes snapped open with surprise as the alpha before him rose to his feet, stumbling in his rush to create distance between them.

“I—” Derek panted palming his mouth, horror-stricken hazel eyes meeting Stiles’ stunned brown.

“ ‘I shouldn’t have done that.’ ”

Stiles felt a pang of rejection stab his heart and lowered his gaze to the ground. He couldn’t understand why his eyes began to water then, the rejection shouldn’t have left him feeling such agony, being he had no love for the alpha, but strangely enough it did.

“ ‘Stiles…’ ” Derek pleaded for something, but Stiles was unsure as for what. Though the tone of desperation that filled Derek’s call of his name caused Stiles to meet his gaze once more and there standing before him, vulnerable, Stiles noticed the emotion fogging the alpha’s eyes.

“ ‘You…still love me?’ ” Stiles questioned, knowing the likelihood was strong, being that Derek hadn’t dated anyone since his supposed death, or that was what everyone said.

Stiles couldn’t remember Derek, their life together, or their love for one another. He did however feel unbelievably drawn towards the alpha. There was a connection between them and Stiles felt that if he was given enough time to sort through these strange feelings, he would come to find that love once more. Even if he never gained his lost memories, being a father to his children and spending time with Derek—Stiles was sure that love would bloom.

Derek never responded, only took several more steps away from Stiles and raised a hand to press against the wall near him, seeming to need to ground himself.

Stiles glanced over to the children once more, attention focused on their toys and building their own little creations. They had children, children apparently Stiles had wanted desperately, but Derek had been resistant about—that was what Scott had told him. Derek loved him greatly and was even his…
“You’re my true mate.” Stiles spoke with calmness and smiled shyly at the disturbed alpha.

Derek paled at Stiles’ words which wasn’t the reaction Stiles hoped for. Cautiously, Stiles stepped towards the alpha and spoke softly as to not surprise the alpha anymore so.

“That’s what everyone keeps telling me. ‘Derek is your true mate’, ‘Derek has always only ever loved you’, ‘Derek sacrificed so much for your happiness’, ‘Derek never stopped grieving for you’, ‘The two of you were made for each other’ It was a bit intimidating to hear at first, but it was reassuring also, crazy right?” Stiles mused, taking the last step that separated the two and Derek seemed troubled by their closeness.

“That…was a long time ago.” Derek struggled to speak, eyes downcast, no longer able to keep Stiles’ gaze.

“I know…I’m sorry for what you had to go through, but…I’m here now.”

“You don’t remember anything. Not everything was good.” Derek’s voice thickened with pain as he spoke.

Stiles eyes softened then, knowing what Derek meant.

“I forgave you once…I don’t see why you need to bring it up again.”

Derek’s eyes snapped up then and stared heatedly at Stiles.

“Just because you don’t remember your father doesn’t mean you should forget the crimes I’ve done against you.”

“What about you? Why are you suffering alone? Why are you trying to push me away?” Stiles openly wondered.

“Because what we had was in the past.” Derek strained, eyes pooling with regret.

“It doesn’t have to stay in the past….we can…can’t we just try to start over?” Stiles wondered if it were even possible with his memory loss and Derek’s resistance.

Derek shut his eyes tight and shook his head in refusal.

“Why?” Stiles was utterly confused. “I thought you kept your distance because you didn’t want to pressure me into a relationship that I wasn’t ready for?”

“I did.” Derek protested. Hazel eyes never quite meeting his gaze.

“Then why are you…” Stiles stilled as a thought occurred.

“Do you…not love me anymore?” Stiles’ stomach churned sickeningly at the possibility that this could very well be the reason for Derek pulling away.

Silence followed, the soft noise of their children playing in the background being dulled as Derek finally spoke.

“It’s true what they said about us. We did love each other and we were happy, even when things got bad—we still loved each other.” Derek reminisced.

“I’m not asking about our past. How do you feel about me now?”
“You’re still the same, even without your memories.” Derek mused with a pained smile.

“Derek.” Stiles urged, needing to truly understand the wolf.

“I loved you greatly, but then you died and I…couldn’t cope. For a long time I grieved and longed for you, but then I…”

“You what?” Stiles insisted.

Derek stared at the ground for a long while before raising his gaze and met Stiles’ exposed honey brown.

“I moved on…with someone else.”

Derek’s voice was too loud, too harsh, too real, or maybe that was just how the meaning to Derek’s claim felt for Stiles.

“Oh…” Stiles waveringly whispered, blinking rapidly and yet he wasn’t quick enough to seal away the tears that trickled down in a steady progression of pained realization.

“Stiles.” Derek struggled to voice.

Stiles only now understood what that look had been earlier in the alpha’s eyes. It hadn’t been love, it had been sympathy—pity, because as Stiles was deliberating about starting a new life together, Derek was struggling to tell Stiles the truth. That almost kiss, wasn’t an almost kiss on Derek’s part, but of his own. Derek was comforting him, maybe in a way that he’d used to in the past, but Stiles had mistaken it for something else.

“I—I…” Stiles felt his face heat with embarrassment, voice choked up in a perplexity of feelings that only Derek could muster up.

“I should go.” Stiles said, not waiting to see what Derek would say and made it a point to not meeting his gaze as he left the home.

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