Allies & Enemies
by calikocat

Summary

It was supposed to be like summer camp...too bad no one told the bad guys. Still, nearly getting killed was better than being bored, though Stiles didn't think his dad would agree with that.
Prologue

Allies and Enemies

calikocat

Word count: 1779

Disclaimer: I own nothing. None of the fandoms involved are mine. And the original Dragon idea was TiffanyF's and she let me run with it.

XXX

“So I was thinking about this summer,” Stiles stated to the screen where an image of his dad sat waiting.

“And?”

“With everything that's happened...Can I stay home this summer?”

His dad blinked on the laptop screen. “Won't you be missing out on your...magic school? And seeing Ray Jr.?”

Stiles bit his lip and nodded. “Yeah...I was thinking about that too. Can RJ and Maddie come to Beacon Hills for the summer? So we can have our magic school there?”

“Instead of Sunnydale... where an entire coven can watch over you?”

“Oh come on, Dad!”

“Stiles you're learning fire magic. I don't need you burning down the house...or the neighborhood.”

“Not...healing flames don't burn...I just.” Stiles paused and gave his dad the best puppy eyes he could over the vidcall. “I just wanted help healing Peter Hale.”

He watched as his dad's eyes grew softer, a little sad, and then he sighed. “I'll need to talk to their parents...but just who do you think is going to watch three kids all summer?”

“Dad, RJ is thirteen. He can totally handle me and Maddie; and he doesn't get to see his little sister that often. We're talking a whole summer of sibling bonding. And ya know...just in case the Mala Noche come after them again they'll be nowhere near Miami or Sunnydale.”

“Alright, you had me at sibling bonding; heck, you had me before that. Let me call Suzie and Yelina. Then we'll hammer out the details.”

“Thanks Dad.”

“Now, how are things in D.C.?”

“Well no one is maimed...Agent Hotchner bonded with his mate...and somehow they're bringing Haley into the bond with them.”

“That's possible?”

“Apparently. Also Abby is planning a baby shower for Gibbs and McGee in July not long after
Gibbs is supposed to lay his egg.”

“And you'll want to go?”

“Well maybe…but we're invited. Right now I just want to come home.”

“Too much excitement?”

Stiles nodded. “Apocalypse season was crazy this year.”

xxx

Jethro frowned as he listened to the distressed tone of Tim's voice upstairs. Another voice, a woman's, was talking to him from further away...over the phone then. He put down his sandpaper and made his way up the stairs.

Tim was pacing on the cordless; his heartbeat was elevated, his free hand twitching in nervousness. “I'll see what I can do...I just have a lot happening right now.” His other hand tightened on the phone. “Yes it’s more important than my book. I'm going to be a father.” He huffed. “Call me back when you learn how to be a little more human.” He jerked the phone from his ear, punched the talk button, and tossed the receiver on the armchair.

Jethro moved forward, slipping his arms around Tim, nuzzling into his neck. “Problems?”

“Just my agent.”

“The book deal going through?”

“Yeah, for a while now. Thom E. Gemcity's first novel, Deep Six, will be on the shelves in less than a month.”

“What's the problem?”

“My agent wants me to make a whole bunch of appearances for promotion, but we have enough going on.”

Jethro nuzzled at him a bit more and nibbled at Tim's pale skin. “I may not be able to do anything risky, but for now I can still go out in the field...and when I can't do that anymore we can still do those promotions. Or we can go on vacation for the next four months. I have all kinds of vacation time to use up.”

“I don't...but if you're really okay with it...maybe a few day trips on weekends. A day off here and there.”

“I'm okay with that.”

Tim turned in his arms to kiss him, tongue sliding past Jethro's lips to glide against his own. Jethro could never resist this, Tim soft and warm in his arms, tempting mouth and pouty lower lip devouring him. He sunk into the feeling, bond open between them...and sensed that Tim was holding something back.

He pulled away and looked into those green eyes that were suddenly nervous, even bashful. “Tim?”

“How do you feel about Nebraska?”
“What's in Nebraska?”

“Ash. I want to give him an advanced copy.”

Jethro nodded. “Okay.”

Tim blinked and pulled away a bit more. “Okay?”

“I've been wanting to meet him. I have a lot to thank him for.”

He snorted and moved back in, hiding his face and laughter against Jethro's skin. “I'll warn you now; Ash is a bit...eccentric. On a whole new level that you might not be ready for.”

“I think I can handle it.”

“Don't say I didn't warn you Jethro.”

xxx

She was still young, younger than him anyway, and she would have been pretty...if she wasn't broken and bruised and cuffed to a hospital bed. Or her cold killer eyes weren't measuring him up and finding him wanting.

Kate Argent had been put through the ringer and had a long road of recovery ahead of her. When she'd pulled a gun on Adam Ross she'd sealed her fate, because Mac Taylor, Alpha Dragon of New York, shifted for the first time to save his mate.

The result was her current state, immobile with a severely damaged pelvis and several other broken bones. Tobias wondered just how much the morphine was helping...and then wondered if he cared. The woman before him was one of the worst monsters he'd ever heard of. Her slaughter of the Hale Pack...her second attack on the Hales in New York...and to top it all off she was a sexual predator.

“So who are you?” Her words were clear, not clouded by the drugs...but her face was tense, probably with pain. Good.

“Tobias Fornell, Director of the DSO.”

“What's that?”

“That's classified...I'm just here to let you know where you stand.”

“Right...and? When do I see a lawyer or get a trial?”

“After what you did to the Hale Pack? There won't be a trial Ms. Argent. You murdered innocents.”

“So you know about werewolves?” She smirked at him. “I don't know what you've heard, but I hunted monsters.”

“The Hale Pack were not monsters.”

Kate lifted a brow at him in disbelief. “So? What? You're just going to lock me up somewhere and forget about me? Do you know who you're dealing with?”

“Actually... yes. You're too dangerous to be left in a regular prison. The rest of your family is under observation, the Watcher's Council will let us know if they make a move to retaliate.”
“You can't do that.”

“We can. You're never going to see the light of day again Kate. Your crimes are simply too horrific.” He stepped away, and left her glaring daggers at his back. The madness in her eyes had shaken him.

xxx

Stiles grumbled when unfamiliar arms lifted him from his seat and carried him off the private plane. It sounded like Wash and Zoe were laughing in the background. He opened his eyes just a bit to see Jim Ellison smiling down at him. Huh. They weren't supposed to be in Cascade.

He must have spoken aloud because Jim responded. “You're not kid. You're in California, we just came to pick you up and drive the two of you to Beacon Hills.”

Stiles woke up a bit more, sensing a familiar dragon, Tommy Dawkins, who was carrying Maddie. “Kay.” And then he was gone again, Wash and Zoe were definitely laughing at him.

When he woke again it was to Maddie shaking him and he flailed about a bit, already calling fire into his hands in-case they were under attack. Tommy's voice, and the amusement in his tone, calmed him down. “Easy Stiles, no bad guys here.”

He yawned, drew his magic back in, and rubbed the last of sleep from his eyes. “Why did I fall asleep on the plane? I didn't last year.”

“Don't know kid...maybe because last time you weren't exhausted from so much magic use?” Jim asked from the driver’s seat.

“Maybe.” He shifted and looked toward the other dragon. “I bet flying on my own wings would be way cooler anyway. Right Tommy?”

“It is.”

Stiles looked at Maddie beside him in the back seat. “What's up?”

“We're almost to your house.”

He nodded and managed to stay awake long enough for Jim to actually drive to his house and park the rental. Everything else was sort of a blur; he tried to take his own bag inside...but somehow ended up in Jim's arms again while the man carried him inside to his room. The second he was laid on his bed he was completely gone.

“Any trouble?”

Jim shook his head at John's question. “No, kid really was just tired.” They left Stiles' bedroom door open just a bit and watched Ray Jr., who had arrived earlier, help Maddie get her things in the guestroom. The little redhead smiled largely at her older brother before chatting away about the magic the fledgling coven in Miami had been doing.

“I worry about them,” John admitted.

“The magic? Or just in general?” Jim asked; smiling when Tommy invaded his space, crowding up
behind him to embrace him.

“All of it.” John sighed. “You two staying for dinner? There will be plenty since Stiles is sleeping.”

“Thanks, but we left Wash and Zoe at the airport,” Tommy told him.

“They’re taking us back to Cascade tonight.”

“That’s a lot of flying they’ve been doing lately.”

“It is.” Jim agreed. “Let’s hope they get a break after everything that’s happened.”

The next morning John was just putting breakfast on the table for the kids, who he could hear stirring upstairs, when the phone rang. He grabbed it from the wall. “Hello?”

“John Stilinski?”

“Speaking.”

“This is Director Fornell.”

“What can I do for you Director?”

“Are you aware that your son put in a request for a safe house in northern California?”

John groaned and closed his eyes. “No, I was not aware.”

“Ah...well...let him know that his request is pending. It’s a good idea John.”

“I can't argue that. I'll still have a word about it with him. Thank you.” He hung up and shook his head. “Kid is definitely an Alpha.”

XXX
Chapter 1

Allies and Enemies
calikocat

Word count: 3171

XXX

He'd checked to be sure he wasn't calling too early, hoping that Laura Hale wasn't taking any summer courses. The last thing he wanted to do was interrupt something important just before putting through a request on the kids' behalf. John would feel just as bad if he was interrupting a late morning sleep in, but the Alpha might be more lenient if that's all it was.

The ringing stopped as the call went through and Laura's voice came over the airwaves sounding wide awake. “Deputy Stilinski?”

“It’s John, Laura. Everything okay?”

“You mean since Kate showed up?”

“I heard it got busy over there.”

“It did. I'm just glad the DSO had the right kind of wolfsbane on hand for the antidote.”

“And the rest?” He asked.

“Derek is still working through things,” She admitted. “Having a new wolf to settle in helps him I think. Cora especially likes having another woman around. We all like having Aiden in the pack.”

“And how are you, since saving her?”

“I-” Her voice shifted, as if she were unsure of her own emotions. “I'd never killed before John. It still scares me.”

“Taking a life is never easy Laura. No matter the circumstances.”

“Have you ever had to?”

“In the army mostly. I've only had to kill once as deputy.”

“Thanks.” She took a breath. “So why are you really calling?”

John chuckled. “I really wanted to check on you kids, but I did have a request.”

“Go ahead.”

“Do you mind if the kids here, Stiles and his friends, work on healing Peter?”

“I don't think it can be done John.” Laura's voice was sad as she spoke. “But if Stiles wants to try I have no objections. Not after he saved Cora.”

“Good, because they're already here and I doubt I could stop them.”

Laura laughed, and it was the lightest he'd heard her since the fire.
He rolled over, or tried to, trapped between two warm bodies and a feeling of safety that felt a bit unusual to him. With a yawn Stiles opened his eyes and sat up, surprised to find himself sandwiched between RJ and Maddie. He frowned, because the last time he checked Maddie was supposed to be in the guestroom. However, since it was her first time away from home and her mom, he decided to cut the younger kid some slack.

Still, he was awake now and he had to pee so he extracted himself from brother and sister as quickly and carefully as he could. He crawled off the bed and watched them gravitate toward one another with a smile before heading to the bathroom.

The house was quiet and he couldn't sense his dad anywhere in it as he made his way downstairs. John's lack of presence was confirmed by the note he'd left for Stiles on the fridge. Stiles rolled his eyes at the warnings, the main one being to not burn down the house, as he tossed the note and began to rummage in the freezer.

He got out some breakfast burritos which boasted scrambled eggs, sausage, and cheesy goodness and some waffles not knowing which his guests would prefer. Well, RJ would definitely like the burritos, Maddie maybe not. Either way he figured he had his bases covered with both breakfast options.

By the time he had them thawed and heated up both guests had made their way downstairs. RJ poured them all juice and milk while Stiles got the syrup out for Maddie; he'd been right about her choosing the waffles.

“What are we doing today?” Maddie asked as she took her first bite.

“Maybe we could start off easy the first day?” RJ asked, looking for Stiles for confirmation. “We are on vacation.”

“Meditation and Mario Cart?” Stiles asked.

“You sure? I've heard Maddie is really good at that and no one in Miami can beat her.”

Stiles looked at the girl who only grinned back in-between bites of her waffles. “Definitely Meditation and Mario Cart.”

The next day they got a bit more serious, especially after they'd crowned Maddie as the new Mario Cart Champion.

Breakfast was a repeat of the first morning; however, when they were done and the dishes cleaned they trooped down to the basement where Claudia had done a lot of her magic. Stiles gave them the tour, pointing out the permanent circles in the concrete floor that she'd left behind.

“What are they made of?” Maddie asked, kneeling down to touch the metal rings embedded in the floor.

“The smallest one is copper; it’s still big enough for a small group of people to sit in though. The
next one is silver and the last is gold.”

“What about the fourth one?” RJ asked.

Stiles looked at the final outer circle that was an empty trench surrounding the three rings of metal. “It’s for salt, mountain ash...or anything else that can be powdered and used for spell work.”

“What’s mountain ash?”

“It’s actually a type of ash made from a Rowan tree.” Stiles told her. “It’s supposed to make a barrier that can stop anything supernatural. Mom never used it much, she said it was more of a Druid thing, but she kept some on hand just in case.”

“Why?” The question again came from Maddie.

“There were...and are still werewolves in Beacon County.”

“I thought your mom was friends with the Hale Pack.” RJ said.

“She knew Talia...but there’s another Pack in the area...but I don't know them.” Stiles sighed and looked around the basement unsure where to start.

“We could clean?” RJ suggested.

“Yeah, that sounds good actually.” Stiles grinned. “How do you feel about brooms Maddie?”

She made a face, but nodded and headed for the broom hanging on the wall and they got to work.

It took them nearly an hour to get the floor swept and things rearranged so they'd have space to work. Maddie got the rings cleared of any debris and wiped down the metal until all three shined. RJ moved boxes and helped Stiles move old furniture until they had a place to lounge as well. They cleared off the things that had collected on the table and workbench his mom had used and tossed them. All that was left was the supply cabinet.

Carefully they removed each object before deciding what could still be used and what needed to be thrown away. Some things, like the crystals and stones, were still good; as were the sticks and cones of incense. The sage wands were brittle but would probably hold up for a cleansing ritual if they were careful. A lot of the stored herbs hadn't fared as well. Therefore many of the jars were emptied out and the contents thrown away.

Then they did their first cleansing, starting with the basement. Stiles and RJ lit their sage with their own fire; and RJ lit Maddie's as she hadn't learned any fire magic yet. They cleansed the entire basement, not just their work area. When they were done they moved upstairs to cleanse the first floor, then the second, and finally the attic.

The yard and woods behind the house could wait for another day.

xxx

John unlocked the front door, glad to find it still locked since the kids were on their own and let himself in the house, careful not to drop the bags of food. The smell of the burgers and curly fries mixed oddly with the sage in the house and he wrinkled his nose at the combination. However, since the kids were supposed to be dealing with magic and herbs he didn't make any comments that
they could hear. If they had the sage out then they were doing what they promised and staying out of trouble.

“Lunch time!” He called out and before he could even close the door behind him RJ and Stiles appeared to liberate the food from his grasp and disappeared into the kitchen with it. John stared at his empty hands for a second before laughing. “I take it you're hungry.” He closed the door and followed them.

“Starving...none of these burgers are for you right?” Stiles asked as he separated out the food at the table.

John rolled his eyes. “The sub sandwich is mine.”

“Well, at least it’s healthier than burgers and fries.”

They settled at the table and tucked into their food and they told John what they'd done that morning while he was at work. About halfway through their meal Stiles dropped the bomb that he’d been holding back and truth be told John had expected some sort of request at this point.

“We were wondering if we could go shopping to replace some of the supplies.”

“On your own?” He raised a brow at his son, noticing RJ and Maddie politely didn't interfere.

“I have a list...and I found the addresses of all the occult shops in the area.”

“You want to go shopping at occult shops without an adult.” John emphasized the last part pointedly.

“Yes? Not all of them are occult actually...one is like a health food place.”

“And these things are essential?”

“Yes?”

“Stiles-”

“We'll be fine! RJ has a cell phone. Maddie has protection charms from her coven...and I have fire.”

“The fire isn't as comforting as you want it to be; besides how are you paying for all this?”

RJ cleared his throat. “Maddie and I have money from our parents and covens.”

John looked at Stiles who was trying to appear innocent. “And?”

“I might have gotten Xander and Director Fornell to give us some money so we could get the supplies we needed to put wards on the house?”

“Like you requested a safe house be set up in Northern California?”

“Um...”

John sighed. “I'll drop you off in town, and when you're ready to come home you call me and I'll pick you up or see if another deputy can.”

“Thanks Dad!”
“Don't make me regret this Stiles.”

“Do my best.”

xxx

Their first stop was to the health food store on Main Street to buy a few teas to help with meditation and concentration. The cashier gave them a few odd looks but didn't comment as she rung them up and they got out without any trouble.

The next stop was to a street further out with less traffic and a shop that boasted home herbal remedies. The man behind the counter recognized Stiles when they walked in, his eyes practically lighting up. He'd been an acquaintance of Claudia's.

“Good afternoon Lucjan. I haven't seen you in here since-” He trailed off not wanting to bring up Claudia. “Are you looking for something specific today?”

Stiles handed him the list, the part specifically for that shop. “Just this.”

The man nodded. “This is a good choice for beginners, and I have everything in stock.”

They followed him through the store as he filled up the basket RJ had grabbed upon entering and made idle conversation. By the time they made it to the register their basket was half full. He rang them up with a smile and a discount.

“There you go, almost everything a beginning coven needs.”

RJ and Maddie shared an uneasy look and Stiles frowned. “You're fishing. We have more experience than that.”

The man smiled and held his hands up in surrender. “Good luck Lucjan.”

Stiles led them even further from the center of town to a house that looked like any other, except for the sign in the front yard with the word 'Harbor' carved into it. He went straight to the side door and knocked while RJ and Maddie waited quietly behind him. A moment later a woman with white hair opened the door; she stared at them for a long time. Each of them fidgeted just a bit, feeling as if she were gazing beyond their physical forms, then she smiled and stepped aside so they could enter.

They did and Stiles handed her his list, neither of them saying a word. She looked at the list, nodded, and motioned them to follow her. She picked out new sage wands and the other true magical paraphernalia that they needed. There was no discount at this shop, but as she saw them out she handed each of them a small moonstone.

Stiles snorted at her humor but accepted the gift. When the door closed behind them Maddie held up the moonstone. “What was that about?”

“Delilah is the Emissary for a pack. The one I don't know. I just thought it was funny that a pack member gave us moonstones.”

“Where to next?” RJ asked. “We have everything on the lists.”

“The library.”
“Why?” Maddie asked.

“Research.”

They spent the rest of their afternoon reading up on comas and catatonic states, though Maddie got bored and made a detour to the children's section before long. She was eight after all and so Stiles didn't hold it against her...if he were a normal kid he'd probably prefer to be in the children's section too.

xxx

Day three they got to go to the hospital, intending on staying in Peter Hale's room all day. Stiles led the way, familiar with the hospital from past visits, some less than pleasant, to their destination. When they got to the room, however, he paused in the open doorway; nearly causing RJ and Maddie to bump into him.

RJ, being taller, peered into the room. “What is it?”

“Peter has a roommate...”

“And?” Maddie asked.

“He didn't have one before I left with Mark and Sara.” He stepped into the room, staring at the new occupant warily. Maddie, however, went straight to the young woman's bedside and stared at her intently. Her hair was brown and frizzy, but Stiles had no idea what color her eyes were as they were closed. He took a peek at the chart at the end of her bed. Coma. Similar enough to Peter's catatonic state that they'd ended up in a room together...and slightly less creepy than the werewolf's vacant stare.

RJ was still in the doorway, frowning and hesitant. “The room feels loud,” he stated, like he was afraid his words didn't make sense.

Stiles frowned back, he couldn't 'hear' or 'feel' anything like that. He looked to Maddie and she shrugged. Huh. “Maybe Maddie and I are too similar to feel what you feel.” Maddie's sudden and surprised squeak made them jump and RJ rushed to his sister's side.

“You okay?”

Maddie had put her hand on the woman's forehead; and whatever she felt had caused her to shake and turn even paler than her natural coloring. She wrenched her hand back and fumbled for one of the charms in her pockets and put one under the woman's pillow. Then she stepped back with a shudder and turned wide eyes up at her brother. “She can hear everything.”

“Everything like?” Stiles asked.

“Thoughts,” Maddie told him.

They shared a look before their gazes turned to Peter and RJ gulped. “He's probably really pissed huh.”

Stiles blinked at that and gave a shudder of his own, not wanting to think about what might be going through Peter's mind. “Well crap. Maddie you got any more charms?” She did; another small, flat wooden disk with a protection symbol carved into it, which they slipped into Peter's
right hand. Then they got down to business.

RJ closed the door while Maddie pulled out a small spritz bottle of salt water and started spraying it around the room. Stiles lit one their new sage wands and followed her path, helping to cleanse the room. Then he put the still smoking wand on a small tray they'd brought and got settled around Peter.

Maddie sat on the bed by Peter's shoulder as she was the smallest. RJ and Stiles stood on either side of the bed, reaching across so they could hold hands with one another and still reach Maddie. They cleared their minds, letting their own thoughts drift away on the scent of sage and felt a bit of peace enter them.

Several minutes later they started to feel Peter's thoughts creeping in. They were like a blip at first, similar to distant lighting in a darkened sky, growing brighter as the minutes ticked by. Then they were suddenly crashing down on the trio, leaving them shaken and gasping. Still they hung on to one another, and Stiles, started talking, somehow knowing that Peter would be able to hear him.

“Peter, you need to let go and think of something else. Laura, Derek, and Cora are safe. Laura and Derek weren't home when it happened. You got Cora passed the barrier in time. I used the blood you gave me and saved her from the Hunters.” Stiles took a breath and did his best to sweep away the rage, hate, and grief coming from the man. “It was Kate Argent.” Another spike of rage made him shake. “She's been captured. She's a bit broken and will be locked away for the rest of her life.”

“She tried to hurt someone else.” Maddie whispered. “She got what she deserved.”

“She's in a hospital, handcuffed to a bed.” RJ added. “Shattered pelvis...she may never walk again.”

“We'll keep her locked up Peter, I swear.” Stiles continued. “The Dragon Nation won't ever let that monster free.”

The rage faded, just a bit, taking a little hate with it. The grief remained and they broke apart, sagging but glad to be free from Peter's emotional storm. They waited a few minutes before trying to heal him, needing the break.

Maddie watched them as they put their hands just above Peter's skin and conjured their fire, specifically white flames that wouldn't burn him and gently pushed the flames into Peter's body. Then she was doing the same to the scars on Peter's face, though her flames were smaller and not as bright, but it was her first time using healing flames.

They did their best not to jump when the door opened and Stiles looked up wondering how he was going to explain this to whatever intern was busting in on them. Except it wasn't an intern standing there staring at them. It was Melissa McCall. Well...

Stiles looked at the white flames they were all still feeding into Peter's damaged body and then gave Melissa his best innocent look. “Hi Melissa. We're helping I swear.”

XXX
They were in the backyard away from everyone else...the backyard was actually where their night had started out. By the time Melissa and his dad had gotten off work it was dark and the pair from L.A. were almost to Beacon Hills. It had taken some doing to convince Melissa and Scott that they weren't crazy, and that was after Melissa had seen them use healing fire.

His dad had told Melissa and Scott everything, after he'd gotten approval from Xander over the phone. While the adults had talked on the back porch; Stiles and RJ had tossed a small ball of fire back and forth in the backyard as a demonstration before making it disappear. Then Maddie had created her own and tossed it to her brother with a grin. Fireball was going to be so much more fun with three of them.

The finishing touch had been when Ian Edgerton had landed where the backyard met the woods. It was just dark enough to hide him from a distance...and it helped that the sniper's scales were practically camouflage patterned. Melissa had stared at the dragon opened mouthed, though the sight of Charlie Eppes sitting on its back with tangled windswept hair was just as startling.

Ian stepped slowly into the yard and lowered himself so Charlie could slide from his back safely. “Hope you don't mind having company for the night John.” He motioned to the backpack he had on.

“Maddie tends to end up with the boys anyway.”

Ian started to shift then, growing smaller, his scales fading into skin and clothing until he stood by Charlie, human once more and just a bit taller than his mate. He nodded at them and shook hands with the adults. “It’s good to finally meet you John. Hope we haven't shaken your friend too much.”

Melissa was still staring at him and gave up a slightly hysterical giggle before announcing she needed a drink. The men followed her while RJ had led Maddie inside as well to get her things out of the guestroom so Ian and Charlie could use it.

So now Stiles and Scott were alone...and Scott punched Stiles in the shoulder.

“Ow!” Stiles rubbed at his shoulder and smacked the back of Scott's head. “What was that for?”

Scott was glaring at him and rubbing where Stiles had hit him. “For not telling me any of this. How long have you known about magic and dragons?”

“Always.” He dodged when Scott made to punch his arm again. “Dude!”

“Stiles, we're best friends.”

“Scott it was a secret okay. There are people out there that kill things like dragons and witches. My great-grandparents were killed by those people...by hunters.”
“I’m not a hunter.”

“It was still a secret, besides, now you know everything.”

Scott was still glaring at him. “Only because Mom caught you and your new friends doing magic.”

“Is this because of Maddie and RJ?”

“How do you even know them?”

Stiles rolled his eyes. “Maddie's Uncle is a Dragon...and when she was sick he asked for help.”

Scott frowned. “Sick?”

“She was dying, Scott, from a kind of blood cancer. I was one of her donors when she needed bone marrow.” Stiles twitched and ran a hand over his buzzed hair. “Actually we think that my marrow might have brought Maddie's magic online.” He shrugged. “And now you know almost everything.”

“Almost? What else is there?”

Stiles grinned at his best friend. “Congratulations Scotty, you're a Dragon.” Then he laughed, cackled really as Scott’s jaw dropped.

“No way.”

“Dude I wouldn't lie, not about this.”

“Dude!”

xxx

Melissa dropped Scott off the next morning on her way to work, unsure at first about leaving a bunch of kids on their own. Though RJ had done his best to appear mature and responsible the night before. It probably helped that Charlie and Ian were still there and planned to remain for the majority of the day. Apparently she didn't think they could get into much trouble with a mathematician and a federal agent looking after them.

Ian and Charlie had fixed breakfast, some sort of heart smart bran muffins which Stiles had made sure his dad had three of before leaving for work. Really the muffins weren't that bad with the raisins and walnuts and by the end of breakfast they were all gone, practically inhaled by the four of them. Except for the ones that Ian had claimed for himself and Charlie, eyes flashing when any of them dared to look at the muffins. Charlie had watched the entire scene with amusement over his cup of coffee.

Once they helped clean up the kitchen, leaving the adults to their coffee and remaining muffins, they dragged Scott down to the basement. There they showed him the work areas they’d cleaned up and explained what all the herbs were for and the circles in the concrete. They explained the importance of salt and Scott listened with fascination.

Then they dragged him back up the stairs and out the back door to the woods just behind the house. They hadn't done a cleansing back there yet, but Stiles wanted to show off the area. Specifically the clearing with large white stones set in a circle that his mom had used. The stones had served for more than one kind of spell because she’d used chalk to write runes or different symbols on them making them very versatile.
The rest of the day was spent catching Scott up so he wouldn't be so clueless when they started doing actual spell work.

xxx

The next day they were back at the hospital; Scott meeting them there by having gone to work with his mom. Ian and Charlie who had headed back to L.A. the night before were unable to 'keep an eye' on the kids. So Melissa would be checking on them periodically. They were fine with that, however, and had accordingly packed for the day, including lunch and snacks in a cooler RJ had carried in.

They settled in, stashing the cooler on the far side of the room by Peter's bed, and got what they needed out of their backpacks for a spell. Scott wasn't ready for that so he played lookout while they worked their magic. It wasn't for healing this time; they just wanted to keep away anyone with ill will toward Peter or his roommate. Also Stiles didn't want to set off Scott's asthma by being so close to the incense.

They performed the spell while Scott frowned, clearly expecting some sort of light show or something. Stiles had to explain that magic wasn't always flashy. Sometimes it was though and Scott watched in awe as they healed Peter a bit, using their white flames.

The rest of the day was spent tutoring Scott in magic and just talking to Peter. Just in case he could hear them they wanted to include him in their conversations. So maybe, just maybe, his thoughts wouldn't be so brutal.

xxx

Some days they spent all their time at the library, looking up anything and everything related to comas, catatonic states, magic, and anything else they thought of that might help them. One day, however, they awoke to find new guests having breakfast in Stiles' kitchen that derailed their usual routine.

Stiles was the first to wake, glad that Scott had stayed home the night before because the bed was crowded when all three boys camped out in it. Or he thought he was the first to wake until he met Maddie's eyes, she was standing in the doorway of his room looking worried.

"Someone's here."

Stiles closed his eyes and tried to open his senses, his ability to feel out other dragons and magic. Then he smiled and opened his eyes again. "Merton and Blair."

"The Dragon Mage and Shaman from Cascade? The ones with Mr. Jim and Mr. Tommy?"

"Yep. Come on, let's get RJ up and see what's going on."

Maddie huffed. "I'm going to end up in here again tonight aren't I?"

"Probably."

She sighed and went back to her room, returning with a few of her things. "Let's get my stuff in here first, and then we can go meet them."

Scott was downstairs eating breakfast with their guests by the time they had Maddie's things
moved and RJ awake. His dad had already left for work and Stiles peeked to make sure the appropriate number of muffins were gone from the fridge. Satisfied he greeted their guests and introduced Maddie and RJ to the visiting pair.

“So you two have the guestroom, we just put fresh sheets on the bed.”

“You kids didn't have to do that,” Blair told him.

“Too late. So, what's up?”

“We wanted to check on your progress, since you're not in Sunnydale this summer.” Merton grinned. “And a few people wanted a confirmation on Scott.”

“I told everyone he was a dragon.”

“And I agree.” Merton nodded. “But he won't be a powerhouse of magic, neither will RJ. Not like you and Maddie.”

“Figures.”

Blair and Merton's visit was filled with tutoring. Blair gave them an introduction of Shamanism, mostly how to go from meditating to being receptive of visions. He also gave them a few books on the subject. Merton tutored them in other magics, and inspected the work areas they had readied. They might not use what they learned, but they'd be able to recognize it if they came across such things. The big discovery, however, came when Merton and Blair took a look at Peter and his roommate.

Merton had done some research on the girl, Meredith Walker. The reason Meredith was in the hospital in a coma was an interesting one. She'd managed to break the windows of her classroom, though it was blamed on an explosion; an accident caused by the chemicals in the room mixing, as it had been her chemistry class. A few people had been hurt, though not anything life threatening. As a result she'd caught the attention of some people who wanted to test her. Specifically a woman named Lorraine Martin.

Stiles knew the name and made the connection before Scott did. Lorraine Martin was the grandmother of Lydia Martin, a classmate of theirs. Merton dug further but didn't find much as Lorraine's research had not been made public. All they knew is that whatever Lorraine had done to Meredith had nearly killed the girl. He did, however, find her current address, a local asylum. Eichen House.

Merton and Blair went to check the place out and to speak to Lorraine and ended up rescuing her from a serial killer.

xxx

They'd been at the hospital visiting Peter and Meredith, making charms for both of them to help heal them and to block out the thoughts that constantly bombarded the girl. Merton and Blair all but barreled into the room with an older woman none of them had seen before.

“What happened?” Stiles asked.
“Lorraine here had escaped Eichen House; apparently she didn't want to be there because there was a serial killer working there.” Merton told them as he helped Lorraine into the visitor's chair by Meredith's bed. “Your dad is working the crime scene and will take our statements later.”

“Crime scene?” The question came from RJ.

“The serial killer was an orderly, something Brunski, she found out he'd been killing patients and escaped...he went after her and caught up with her at her home.” Merton grabbed an extra blanket from the closet and covered Lorraine.

Maddie, who was sitting beside Meredith on the bed, reached for Lorraine and laid a hand on the woman's shoulder. She jumped a bit and looked at Madison with wide eyes. “Ariel?”

“My name is Maddie.”

Lorraine gripped Maddie's hand and smiled, though her eyes were haunted. “Sorry, you reminded me of my granddaughter.”

“I thought her granddaughter was Lydia,” Scott whispered to Stiles.

“It’s my nickname for her, she loves The Little Mermaid.” Lorraine blinked and started, nearly pulling Madison off the bed. “Why am I here? Why...I shouldn't be anywhere near Meredith...not after what I did to her.”

Blair knelt in front of her, taking her other hand in both of his. “We were hoping you could help us with her.”

“How?”

“Tell me about your research. We know Meredith can hear thoughts, voices, and Maddie can block them...but we don't know much else.”

Lorraine turned to stare at Madison. “You can block her powers?”

Madison held up one of her charms. “We're making charms. Mr. Hale is very angry and his thoughts were hurting Meredith. We wanted to give her some peace and quiet. Him too.”

Lorraine looked doubtful until Madison put down the charm and made a small white flame in her hand. Then she held up that white flame to the bruise on Lorraine's face, probably made by the man who'd tried to kill her. The flame entered her skin and Lorraine sighed in relief. “My headache...is gone.”

“What can you tell us about Meredith?” Blair asked her.

She sighed. “I was looking for someone like me.”

A round of looks was exchanged. “Someone like you?” Stiles asked.

“Once, years ago I predicted the death of my lover...with a scream.” Her eyes watered. “Her name was Maddy.”

Madison's eyes grew wide but she said nothing; Merton, however, sat down hard on the foot of Meredith's bed, drawing everyone's eyes to him. “Oh.”

“Merton?” Blair reached for his soulmate, placing a hand on his knee. “What is it?”
“Something I read once.”

“In your many books of lore?” There was a touch of sarcasm to Blair's voice.

“Yeah.” He looked from Blair to Lorraine. “You might be a Banshee...Meredith too.”

Lorraine seemed to relax. “It’s good to have a name put to the circumstances.”

“Does this mean we need to research?” Scott asked.

Stiles grinned at his best friend. “Research party!”

“I think we should start with making Mrs. Martin some charms.” RJ suggested. “Then we can do research on Banshees.”


After nearly being murdered by one of their staff Lorraine refused to go back to Eichen House, even after the board apologized profusely for what had happened to her. Instead she ended up leaving Beacon Hills with Merton and Blair, after giving her statement to the Sheriff's Department. She would, of course, be available to testify if needed, but it was doubtful that she would be. The deputies had found a collection of tapes that Brunski had made of all the murders he'd committed.

The Dragon Mage and Shaman were going to help her heal and deal with her latent powers...or perhaps find a way to seal them. Whichever she decided to do. Stiles wasn't sure what Merton did to get Power of Attorney away from Lorraine's son Jeff so that they could move her across state lines. Whatever it was the Martin's didn't fight it, their reasoning being that Lorraine had been through enough at Eichen House.

More importantly, the Cascade Community could perhaps find a way to help Meredith by working with Lorraine.

xxx

The Stilinski household was fast becoming Grand Central Station and Maddie had resigned herself to the air mattress on Stiles' bedroom floor since not even a few days after the Cascade pair left with Lorraine they got new visitors from Vegas. Nick, Greg, Brenna, and Cassie. Brenna opted to sleep on the couch, the guys in the guestroom, and Cassie shared the air mattress with Maddie.

The first thing Stiles and his friends did was test their guests for magical aptitude. Brenna and Cassie both had a small affinity for it. Enough to learn basic protection spells and rituals, enough that Maddie could teach them how to make the charms she was becoming so good at. Nick and Greg...had no such skill in the craft but watched their foster daughter with pride as she successfully made her first charm. Once she had enough practice and power she'd be able to put wards on their home.

Then all of them went to the hospital to watch Stiles, Maddie, and RJ heal Peter a little. Then to everyone's surprise Scott was able to conjure a tiny white flame and slip it into Meredith, though she remained unconscious. Nick and Greg spoke to Peter, introduced themselves and told them about the Las Vegas Community. Maddie watched the werewolf closely, as if she could sense a change in him that no one else could, she even smiled which Stiles took as a good sign.
Not a day after their Vegas visitors left, headed for Cascade, they had a surprise visitor. Bobby Singer.

He came bearing books and research on banshees. Actual books on ancient Celtic lore and not internet print outs that like what Stiles had tucked away in a folder. One or two of them weren't in English so Bobby had to translate; the rest, however, were fair game. They went through the books and the police report that his dad had finally brought home.

Bobby was fascinated, because all of his books said that banshees were spirits that foretold coming deaths. Nothing he had said that they could just be a fragile girl that didn't understand her own powers. Or in Lorraine's case a onetime prediction by a former computer tech. Bobby was undecided if he would go up to Cascade to meet Lorraine as she was still recovering. And until Meredith woke up they couldn't do much for her, except put several layers of protection on her and the room.

And as fascinated as Bobby was he didn't do anymore than observe the girl, she'd been through enough. However...it was Bobby she responded too. He had only cupped her cheek in a caring gesture...and her eyes shot open. Her voice was scratchy and barely there. “Not your fault.” She managed to say. “She doesn't blame you.” Meredith's words made Bobby grow pale and then the lot of them were tossed out of the room while the nurses and doctors attended her. Stiles and the other kids shared a few looks, none of them brave enough to ask what Meredith meant.

It was the last time they saw Meredith for a while, she was moved out of the room to another part of the hospital. They hoped the protection spells they'd put on her would hold until they tracked her down again. Bobby, still shaken by the brief encounter, left for South Dakota in a hurry, never even taking a look at Peter, nor mentioning Lorraine.

xxx

One night, not long after Meredith was moved out of the room they were camped out around Peter. Stiles' dad was on patrol because another deputy was sick and Melissa was on call, so they were where she could pop in throughout the night. She had brought them a pizza and they watched a movie on RJ's laptop. Then before falling asleep they had made new charms to tuck into Peter's hands and under his pillows. They were for peace and tranquility and they burned a white candle anointed in oil in the sink where nothing would catch fire.

When they turned in Maddie was on the bed curled up beside Peter, Stiles was at the foot of the bed sprawled out and the other boys were wedged into the guest recliner. It was possibly going to be one their last nights to do something like this, because Laura was considering having her uncle moved to a private care facility. So there was no guarantee they'd be able to come see Peter at all hours, much less get away with staying overnight in the room. Though they would still have permission to visit.

They settled in and fell asleep, and slept deeply, the peace and tranquility from the charms working on all of them. Until Stiles woke to Maddie making a shushing noise that was followed by soft sniffing and crying. Stiles flailed about and toppled off the bed to the floor, the noise startled RJ and Scott awake, the latter also tumbling to the floor while RJ shot up with a spell on his lips and fire in his hands.

The light above the bed clicked on and Maddie was staring at them with a little brow raised and a smile. Peter was sitting up, tear tracks on his face, Maddie snuggled into his side and he was attempting to smirk at them.

“So the one with the fire is my big brother RJ. The dorks on the floor are Stiles and Scott.”
Scott didn't bother getting up and just pouted up at Maddie and Peter. “Ow...er...hi. Glad you're awake, Mr. Hale.”

RJ recalled the fire and canceled the magic he'd been about to call up and nodded at Peter. “Hello Mr. Hale.”

Stiles shot up off the floor with a grin. “It worked!”

Peter cleared his throat and RJ got him some water so he could talk. He took a slow sip and tried again. “Who are you children?”

“Dragon Mages,” Maddie told him.

“Stiles and Maddie are the Mages,” RJ corrected her. “We just chip in.”

Another sip. “And why are you here?”

“We've been healing you,” Stiles replied. “I didn't think you'd wake up so soon.”

“Stiles you started working on the guy right after the fire...” RJ's voice trailed off and they all looked down.

Peter's tears started again. “I remember. I remember everything.” He blinked. “You come here a lot.” He focused on Stiles. “You told me; over and over that Laura, Derek, and Cora were alive.”

“Yeah. Laura and Derek weren't home...and Cora got away.”

“Everyone else...”

“I'm sorry.”

“And the Hunters?”

“There's no proof that anyone besides Kate Argent and the men she hired were involved. The men were arrested...and so was Kate...after she got slammed around and ended up with a broken pelvis.”

“Good.”

xxx

The next morning the doctors were happy, though puzzled by Peter's sudden change; especially after his former roommate had woken up so suddenly. They kept him for another few days of testing while John called Laura to let her and the others know what had happened. When she offered to come back to see him Peter had refused to see her, too upset that he'd been left alone with strangers while vulnerable.

This led to Stiles and the others giving his dad the best puppy eyes they could and asking if Peter could just come home with them. Besides, Peter still needed healing, and it would be a lot easier if he was at the house with them rather than at the hospital. There was less rule breaking that way, and they'd have an adult with them at all times. It was win-win. His dad and Laura both gave in, his dad to Maddie's puppy eyes and Laura to Stiles' reasoning.

“I really hope the two of you aren't soul mates,” his dad had said, “because you might just take over the world together.”

XXX
Laura had given in easily to the idea of Peter staying with them; her only condition being that the Hale family doctor checked in on him regularly. So before he'd left the hospital Alan Deaton made a visit. Stiles did his best not to make any dog jokes, but it was so very hard with one of the local vets giving Peter a checkup. Melissa sat in on the visit, taking notes and helping when Deaton needed it. It would be good to have more than one medical professional well versed in non-human biology.

Deaton was pleased with the progress Peter had made, though he gave the kids cautious looks. It was as if he knew they had something to do with Peter healing so much so fast. Laura had been sworn to secrecy, however, so Deaton knew nothing of their magic, or Stiles assumed so anyway. Honestly it was a little creepy, enough that Maddie stayed behind RJ the entire time, peeking around her brother at the strange vet.

They were glad when the check up was over and they could get Peter out of there.

Peter started out on the foldout in the living room the day they brought him to the Stilinski home. He was too weak to make it up the stairs and no one was strong enough to carry him up there. John could have attempted to, but Peter insisted that it would be a bad idea, besides he would be easier to attend to downstairs.

Unsurprisingly, now that the kids had easy access to him, each night one by one they would pile onto the bed with the werewolf in a sort of puppy pile starting with Maddie. By morning all of them were curled up around Peter in their own blankets and John took several pictures to send to Laura.

Just because Peter wasn't speaking to her didn't mean that she didn't want to know how he was progressing. Pictures were also sent to RJ and Maddie's parents in the regular updates John sent them.

xxx

Stella was clearing the dinner plates away while Adam got the pie out of the fridge and Mac poured three cups of coffee. She put the last of the plates in the sink to soak just as Mac set the three cups at the table, Adam not far behind with the chocolate pie. The knocking on the door made them all freeze before Stella looked from dragon to mate.

“You boys expecting anyone besides me?”

“Aiden, Lindsey, and Laura are out on the town.” Adam replied looking to Mac.

“I'm not expecting anyone either.” Mac focused and listened on the other side of the door. “Two people. Man and a woman.”
“How can you tell?”

“They're whispering to one another.” Mac frowned, not liking what he was hearing. “Stella, did you bring your gun?”

“Yeah.”

“Keep it close.” He walked to the door, grabbing his own piece from his holster on a side table and unlocked the door. There in the hall was a couple, the man his age with hair just starting to grey, the woman just a bit younger, her hair still a vibrant red. “Can I help you?”

The man focused on him with icy eyes. “Mac Taylor?”

“Yes.”

“Chris Argent.” Mac didn't accept the hand and Chris pulled it back. “This is my wife Victoria.”

“I know who you are Mr. Argent...your sister is Kate Argent.”

“That's right, and we'd like to talk about her, specifically where she is, and about Laura Hale.”

Mac frowned. “I think your Clan has done enough to the Hale Pack.”

Victoria's eyes narrowed, but Chris smiled. “So you know; that will make our conversation easier. May we come in?”

Mac stepped aside but kept his gun in his hand. “Adam, put the pie away.”

The pie had been put back in the fridge, but two new cups had been put on the table, now filled with coffee for their unexpected guests. Unmeant pleasantries had been exchanged through the tense atmosphere at the tiny table in Mac's apartment. He was exceedingly glad that none of the Hale's were present.

“So, you want to talk about Kate.”

“Where exactly is my sister?” Chris asked in response to Mac.

“In custody, and that's where she's going to stay.”

Victoria's eyes had remained narrowed and shrewd since their arrival. “What are the charges?”

“Murder, attempted murder, arson, and statutory rape.”

“Can any of that be proven?”

“A statement has been taken from Derek Hale; she was a substitute teacher at Beacon Hills High School and seduced him. Learned about his family's schedules and habits, and then trapped them in their home behind a line of mountain ash and set fire to the house with the help of two men who have been in custody since October.”

“I'll give you the statutory rape charge, that was something I never expected her to do and I don't condone it, none of us do.” Chris' voice was somber, serious. “However how can you prove she was connected to the fire that killed the Hale family?”
“She was seen with the two other arsonists trying to set Cora Hale on fire in the woods.”

“By who?” Victoria asked. “Another beast?”

“A child who managed to distract Kate and the men. Allowing them to break the mountain ash circle and rescue Cora.”

“And this child is unknown to us and in protective custody?” Chris guessed.

“They are.”

“But what about here? Why was she arrested here?”

“Because she went after the Hale’s again,” Stella told her. “She shot Laura with a wolfsbane bullet, who we had to rush to some specialists for the antidote.”

“But Laura Hale killed a man, did she not? Or did Kate lie to us?” Victoria gave them the smallest smirk. “You don’t condone murder to you? Lieutenant?”

“No I don't condone murder; however, the man Laura Hale killed was a suspect in more than one rape case, and in a murder case. At the time of his death he was in the process of attacking a woman, a private detective and former police officer, and was beating her to death. Laura pulled him off of the woman and he hit a brick wall. The throw killed him, but Laura was just in time to save his almost victim.”

“So there will be no charges against Laura Hale.”

“No,” Stella confirmed.

“And Kate?”

“While Laura was being moved to a secure location for medical treatment we were trying to move Derek and Cora to safety as well. I had gone up to their apartment to get them, and I left Adam with the car.”

“Kate showed up out of nowhere and put a gun to my head.” Adam spoke for the first time; his body shuddered at the memory.

Mac’s hand slid across the table to grip Adam’s. “Kate was going to kill him when I intervened.” Mac sighed. “I'm not proud of what I did to her, but she crossed too many lines, attacking Adam was the last straw.”

“Is my sister alive?” Chris asked.

“She is, her pelvis was broken, practically crushed and she was bleeding internally. She'll live though.”

“We want to see her,” Victoria demanded.

“That won't be possible.” Stella countered. “She's under lock and key and will be for the rest of her life. No visitors.”

“You can't do that.”

Chris held a hand up to hush Victoria. “How did you crush Kate's pelvis?”
Mac looked to Stella and Adam, the latter shrugged and Stella nodded. “You have permission to talk about that from higher up, go for it.”

He sighed and focused on the Argents again. “What do you know about Dragons?”

Chris and Victoria grew very still for a second; eyes wide before Chris asked, “You're a dragon?”

“I am.”

“And Adam here...”

“Is my soul mate,” Mac confirmed.

“And as a result you defended him from Kate.” Victoria finished.

“But I didn't kill her.”

“Though she really deserved to die.” Adam muttered. When Victoria glared at him he shrugged. “The Hales are good kids, and Kate's a murdering psycho loony.”

“That's for the courts to decide, or it would be if she'd been given a trial.” Victoria's voice was accusing.

“Enemies of the Dragon Nation tend to know too much, and considering the damage Kate has done she's too dangerous for a normal prison.”

“Dragon Nation?” Chris asked.

“We're allied with the US government.” Stella told them.

“And the Watcher's Council,” Adam added.

“One of our leading pairs is a Vampire Slayer and her dragon.” Mac told them. “It would be best, if you didn't push this. As far as we know you haven't killed any innocents.”

“And if you do we'll find out.”

Chris nodded and stood, Victoria following his actions. “Thank you for the coffee, we'll see ourselves out.” They left without another word, and when they closed the door behind them Stella stood to lock it. Only then did they relax.

“Time to make a call?” Stella asked.

Mac nodded. “I'll call Fornell first...Adam?”

“I'm okay...but I'll be better when we have that pie.”

“I second that.” Stella agreed. “Nothing like a little chocolate after a tense meeting with potential murderers.”

xxx

Every day moving was a little easier for Peter. He was able to get up from the foldout so RJ could put it away and walk to the kitchen on his own for whatever breakfast John or the kids put together. Then it was back to the living room where he read, or joined in on their magic lessons. Though once in a while they decided to take a break and brought out the video games.
Then one morning he awoke before all of them and managed fix breakfast on his own. It was simple, scrambled eggs and toast for everyone, but the fact that he’d been able to stand for that long was seen as an achievement that made them all grin. And the next day he was even stronger.

Before they knew it the full moon was almost upon them, leaving Peter practically energetic, in comparison to his former state, as he basked in the moonlight. The next night would be his first full moon since regaining consciousness and he was eager for it. So were the kids actually, Oz and Jonathan were on their way from Sunnydale and would be joining the festivities. They planned on camping in the woods just behind the house.

That night, however, it was just Peter and the kids, minus Scott, sitting in the backyard surrounded by citronella candles to keep the mosquitoes at bay. John was working and Scott was home with Melissa for a McCall movie night.

“Are we going to use a tent?” Maddie asked.

“I like the tent idea.” RJ yawned, stretching and rolling closer to Peter on the blanket. The werewolf was unnaturally warm and the night air was cooler than it had been. “Do you even have a tent?”

Stiles looked away from the stars and the almost full moon to glare at him. “Yes, it’s in the garage.” He started to say more when Peter sat up, startling them, and flicked off the small radio they’d brought out with them.

They stared at him as he sat there tense, eyes glowing blue. “Get inside.”

“What is it?” Maddie whispered.

“Hunters.” The word was spat out like Peter couldn’t stand the taste of it on his tongue, and his mouth became full of fangs as he growled.

Then the first canister was tossed over the side fence that blocked the view of the neighbor's yards. There was a click and smoke started spewing from it. “Uh-oh.” Four more canisters were tossed over the fence and they scrambled up from the blanket, Peter picking up Maddie and they ran for the back door.

The doorknob seemed to explode before they could get to it, and the window of the door shattered when what could only be bullets hit it. There were no real gunshot noises though to accompany the damage.

“Silencers?” RJ asked as they stood, cornered in the growing smoke.

Peter kept himself between them and the approaching hunters that only he could hear. “Yes.”

“What do we do?” Maddie asked, tears in her voice.

“I’ll distract them; the three of you get inside and call John.”

“That’s a bad plan!” Stiles objected, and it was the only one he was able to voice because Peter tackled the first black cloaked figure that approached them.

Maddie slipped one hand into Stiles’ hand, the other into RJ’s. “Would fire help?”
Stiles shared a look with RJ. “Let's do it.”

The yard lit up with a wall of bright yellow flames that cut through the smoke and they could see all of the hunters in body armor converging on Peter. Then they launched that yellow fire at the six black figures that cried out in pain and threw themselves on the ground in attempt to put themselves out.

A burning in Stiles other arm broke his concentration and the fire went out, leaving the hunters unconscious and most likely singed. Maddie broke free from them and went to Peter who was also on the ground, and twitching from the tazers that had been used on him. RJ had his cell phone out and Stiles joined Maddie at Peter's side. The tazer had been removed but Peter was still laying there, dazed.

He was able to focus on Stiles and frown. “You're bleeding.”

Stiles blinked and looked down at his upper arm, where he was indeed bleeding. He raised his t-shirt sleeve and looked at the deep scratch. “Oh...I think I got shot.” And then he blacked out.

xxx

When Stiles woke up he was laying beside Peter in the backyard, a somewhat familiar paramedic bandaging up his arm. He sat up, despite the paramedic telling him not to, and looked around. “Anybody else hurt?”

“Just you and me Stiles.”

“Okay. My dad?”

“Making sure the crazy people in SWAT gear are going to jail for attempting...whatever it was they were attempting.”

“Murder? Kidnapping?”

Peter shrugged but then winced. “None of them are talking.”

“Maddie and RJ?”

“Maddie is asleep, RJ is watching her.”

“Okay.” Then he glanced at the paramedic. “Do we have to go to the hospital?”

“You only had a graze, it wasn't as deep as it could have been, and Mr. Hale got a good shock...but I think the two of you will be okay for the night. Still you might want to let your family doctors go over you in the morning.” The paramedic said goodnight to them and packed up their kit, leaving Stiles and Peter alone.

“Did we kill anyone?”

“No, the Hunters will all live. The Sheriff isn't sure what to make of the burns, which are mostly first degree. He assumes one of the smoke grenades malfunctioned somehow, no one has bothered to correct him.”

“Any calls been made, like to New York or D.C.?”

“I believe your father has been on the phone with someone called Fornell?”
“That's good.” Stiles sighed and looked up at the moon again; it still looked so peaceful up there, no matter the chaos that happened below.

xxx

Xander glanced at his phone curiously as it rang. Spike peeked over his shoulder at the caller ID. “RJ?”

He nodded and answered the call. “RJ?”

“There was an attempt on Peter tonight...or maybe all of us.”

Xander sat up, pulling away from Spike; their night in front of the television instantly cast aside. “How bad?”

“Six guys in body armor. Peter got tazed...and a bullet grazed Stiles. No one else is hurt...well except for the guys in body armor.”

“Hunters or Initiative?”

RJ was quiet for a moment as if that hadn't occurred to him. “We assumed Hunters, with Peter being released from the hospital. Could it be the Initiative?”

“Stiles did almost get blown up by one of their car bombs...but your assumption could be right.”

“John already called Director Fornell...I don't know who is going to call the Hales in New York.”

“I'll find out, thanks for keeping me in the loop RJ. How's Maddie?”

“Sleeping...try to tell our parents in a way that won't freak them out.”

Xander scoffed. “I don't think that's possible.” Another phone rang, Spike's cell. “Gotta go kid. Think I'm about to be officially informed.”

“Okay.”

Xander hung up and watched Spike as he talked on his cell. “Yeah, RJ just called Xan.” He listened closer so he could hear the other side; Harmony's voice sounded over the air waves.

“Well that makes sense, with you two being his Alphas. Anyway, no one is seriously hurt...the bad guys have some burns from the kids and their fire but no one is dead. John Stilinski called the boss, and he's calling Detective Taylor in New York. He'll be able to tell the Hales. Also apparently a couple of Argents paid Detective Taylor, his mate, and their Council rep a visit.”

Spike shot Xander a worried look. “No one in New York is hurt though?”

“No, it was just like polite inquiries about Kate Argent. Though Detective Taylor told them how Kate Argent got hurt and why there was no trial. So they know about dragons now, and if they try anything bad things will happen.”

“Thanks Harm,” Spike told her. “Anyone in Miami been informed?”

“No.”

“We'll do it then, 'ta.” He hung up and looked at Xander. “So am I calling Miami to let Horatio know, or do you want that privilege?”
Xander grimaced. “You call Miami. I'll call Yelena and Ray, and then I'll call Oz and Jonathan.”

“Want to give them a heads-up so they'll be better armed in case of another attack?”

“Yep, I don't want them walking into possible badness blind.”

Spike nodded. “So what do you think? Hunters? Or the Initiative?”

Xander shook his head. “No idea; could be either...but I hope its Hunters.”

“Hunters with body armor?”

“I can dream...but Hunters would be less of a threat than the Initiative. Less cloak and dagger crap with them.”

“You're right, let’s hope its Hunters.” He brought up Horatio's cell number. “Good luck keeping Yelena calm.”

“Ugh. See how much I love you? Yelena can be way scarier than Horatio.”

Spike smirked and kissed him. “Love you too.”

XXX
He'd already slugged down a cold mug before heading down, even though it was the wrong time of night for coffee, but he needed something bracing that wouldn't addle his thinking. Harmony had a fresh cup waiting for him the second he stepped off the elevator and she placed it in his hands before going back to her post in the lobby. He thanked her retreating form and took a sip, preparing himself for the trek to the war room, and then made his way there.

“What have we got?” Tobias asked as he stepped inside.

Gil pointed his clicker at the large screen on the wall in the front of the room. “All six attackers are being treated for first and second degree burns. John Stilinski printed them and sent us their photos.”

“Next time Gil, start with our people.”

“Sorry sir, Peter Hale was tazed but regained consciousness and is under the care of a local nurse, Melissa McCall.”

“She was recently brought in.”

“As was her son Scott, Stiles best friend and an unchanged dragon.”

“Good, any other injuries?” Tobias asked, and Gil hesitated. “Gil?”

“Stiles was grazed by a bullet...I'm told it wasn't deep.”

He nearly choked on his coffee. “I'm feeling even less sympathetic to the bastards. I'm glad the kids singed them.”

“I think everyone feels that way sir.”

“They're under lock and key?”

“We've got people from Cascade watching over them with a few from L.A. on the way.”

“I want them out of Beacon Hills and in a secure location before any other Agency gets wind of this.” Tobias told him, staring at the six men on the screen. “That kind of attack won't stay with local authorities for long...It would be nice if we had an Agent in Beacon Hills.”

“I think the Stilinski's share that feeling. Shall I get Mal's people on it?”

He nodded. “It would be best; at this point they have the most experience with prisoner transport.”

Gil sent off a quick text message. “Done.”

“What do we know about our boys?”
“Two of them have connections to the Argents...specifically Gerard Argent. Though none of our people have come across any recent contact between them.”

“So we're thinking that it was definitely a group of Hunters attacking a werewolf...”

“It would seem so; however, they weren't worried about the children so they may know about the magic they've been using. In theory they could have had the children under surveillance and knew they were healing Peter Hale.”

“So to them the kids were acceptable collateral damage, some Hunters wouldn't care if a witch or two got caught in the crossfire.”

“Yes sir.”

“Have they said anything?”

“One word, sir.”

Tobias snorted. “Lawyer?”

“Yes, that's the one.”

“They're going to be pretty surprised when they don't get to see one. Let me know when Mal's people have them in custody, and keep everyone updated. Call Mac in New York, since he already has Chris Argent's contact information.”

“Will do.”

“I need to update the Council and the Alpha Pairs...and the President. Or I might let our Queen call the President.”

“Delegation can be useful.”

“Indeed it can...and I think he likes Buffy more than me.” They shared an amused look. “Have someone look into the other Argents, maybe Gerard used a go-between.”

Gil nodded. “Do you want Cascade and L.A. to stand guard for a bit?”

Tobias sipped at his coffee. “I do. John might like to have some back up on this.” He hesitated. “Why didn't the Watchers give us a heads up on this?”

“I'll find out sir.”

“Do that.”

xxx

Stella was infinitely glad that as a CSI, death notifications weren't part of her job, or informing family members that someone they loved had been injured. It did happen from time to time, when an investigation was just starting, but not on a regular basis. This visit, however, was one she'd volunteered for. The Hale kids were their responsibility, and as Council Rep. Stella felt it was her job to let them know about the attack. She was, however, happy to have Aiden at her side as having Laura's first bitten beta with her would only help. She was also relieved that Peter Hale was still alive.

Laura had let them in, frowning at the late hour, eyes scanning them both for injury of which there
were none. “Stella? Aiden?”

“We need to talk.”

“Is it Mac or Adam? Lindsey?”

Stella shook her head. “We have news from Beacon Hills.”

Laura's eyes flashed red and Aiden moved forward, her brown eyes swallowed by a golden glow as she put her forehead to Laura's. “He's alive.” Laura nodded in relief and stepped aside to let them in.

“Derek, start the coffee pot.”

Stella jumped a bit, not realizing the other wolf had been in the living room. “Hey Derek.”

He nodded at her. “Is Stiles okay?”

She paused, knowing any of the wolves would hear the lie in her voice if she simply said yes. Her hesitation made Derek's eyes flash blue. “He'll be okay, no permanent damage. We'll tell you everything.”

xxx

It hadn't taken long for the DSO and DragKin to look into the Argents and find the connection between them and the attack in Beacon Hills. Because they'd had the most contact with Chris and Victoria, Mac had volunteered to make the call and lay things out for the Hunter couple.

He leaned against Adam, one hand buried in the younger man's curls, while he tapped away at his computer. His other hand held his cell phone to his ear as he waited for one of the Argents to pick up; he hoped it would be Chris. He seemed to be the more reasonable of the pair.

“Hello?”

Mac tugged gently on Adam's hair to get his attention, Adam stopped typing and started recording. “Mr. Argent.”

“Detective Taylor, may I ask how you got this number?”

“You can ask,” Mac replied.

“But you won't tell me how?”

“No.”

“But you have called me to tell me something; otherwise you wouldn't have gone to all the trouble of tracking down this number.”

“True. I just wanted to let you know six hunters are now in our custody, two of them have ties to your father.”

“And what have these men done?”

“They went after Peter Hale.”

“Was anyone hurt?”
“A child was shot.” Mac couldn't quite keep the growl out of his voice.

There was a tense silence and he wondered just how upset Chris Argent was. “Are the men being charged?”

“No.”

“But you're not letting them go either.”

“There are no keys where they're going.”

“Ah.” Chris paused. “Like with Kate.”

“Just like with Kate,” Mac agreed.

“Before you ask Detective Taylor, neither my wife nor I knew anything about the attack.”

“And even though we can connect your father to the attackers?”

“Check my phone records and my email; I haven't spoken to my father in over a year.”

Mac looked down at Adam who shook his head. “Mr. Argent. Think how easy it was for me to get this number. We've already checked your family's records, and there has been contact.”

“That's not possible, I haven't-”

“I didn't say they were yours specifically.” Mac told him, and Chris was silent. “Tell your wife to watch her step. I don't like making people disappear.”

“But you will if you have to.”

“Only if I have to.”

“Understood. Thank you for calling.”

“One more thing.”

Chris' laugh was bitter. “Trust me Detective, I want as little to do with Gerard as possible. If I knew where he was I'd hand him over.” He hung up and Mac handed his phone to Adam.

“Anything?”

“He's not making any new calls. Neither is his wife, if they do I'll know.” Adam shook his head. “I can't imagine that talk is going to go well, him finding out she's in on the attack.”

“He should have chosen a kinder woman.”

Adam nodded, leaning into Mac's touch. “Or at least one who's not quite so ya know, murderous.”

xxx

During the night Beacon Hills had received much friendlier visitors; Jim Ellison and Tommy Dawkins from Cascade as well as Ian Edgerton and Charlie Eppes from Los Angeles. Jim and Tommy were in the guestroom to stand guard over the Stilinski home. Ian and Charlie stayed with Melissa and Scott the rest of the night.

Mal's people had come and gone while Stiles and the others were sleeping, spiriting away the six
Hunters who had come after them. Stiles had no idea where they'd be going, no one had told him where their enemies were being imprisoned...and he really didn't care. What he cared about was how much the attack had fouled things up.

Peter was moving slowly again, the tazing he'd received setting back his recovery a bit. So he was curled up on the couch with Maddie and Scott, neither of whom were attempting to heal him. Peter and Maddie had been there since the attack sleeping soundly through the night. Maddie was exhausted and Scott might have to be their reserve power source if there was another attack as Stiles and RJ didn't feel particularly perky themselves. Scott was nearly giddy that Tommy was there so he wouldn't have to use his limited fire to defend in an emergency.

Melissa had brought Scott over that morning with the L.A. pair in tow, and gave everyone a checkup, and then they'd stayed. Both she and his dad had the day and night off, because of the attack, and because everyone wanted to be there for Peter's first full moon. Stiles, like Scott, was glad they were all there; two changed dragons would do a better job of defending against attackers. Even better Melissa had brought them breakfast from a local bakery; all that sugar was just what they needed to perk them up.

Stiles and RJ weren't so exhausted that straightening up after breakfast was beyond them, so they were cleaning up the dishes that had been used while Melissa and his dad sat at the table with their coffee and the L.A. Pair, while Tommy and Jim were in the living room.

All at once many of them seemed to go on alert. Peter growled from the living room, Ian and Jim were silently heading toward the front door, guns drawn...and the doorbell rang.

His dad was up, gun in hand right behind Ian and Jim while Stiles dashed to the living room. “Peter?”

“There's an Alpha outside.” He struggled to get up, but Maddie and Scott did their best to hold him down...it didn't take much to succeed.

Tommy smiled reassuringly at Peter. “Everything will be okay. We'll make sure of it.”

Stiles had to agree as a single Alpha didn't stand a chance against their ensemble. “We got this Peter.”

And they did. Besides Ian and Jim, Melissa was armed with a stun baton and still in the kitchen with Charlie. His dad had switched to a clip full of wolfsbane bullets. Stiles held out a hand to RJ and they gripped tight ready to call up fire if they needed to, Scott slipping up behind them and a hand on each of their backs to offer up his magic. His dad stood to one side as he opened the door and they waited for the Alpha to smile kindly at them and step inside. She didn't seem fazed by all the weapons trained on her.

“My name is Satomi Ito. Laura Hale asked me to check in on her Uncle Peter.”

The adults kept their eyes on the Alpha, Satomi, while Stiles cleared his throat. “Peter?”

“I recognize her voice...she won't harm anyone here.” He paused for a moment before his voice came again, softer and broken. “Talia trusted her.”

Stiles relaxed, all the guns were holstered and Melissa turned off the baton. “May I see him?” Satomi asked.

Stiles and RJ separated, Scott retreated into the living room, and Stiles offered his hand to Satomi. “Come with me.” She nodded and stepped further into the house under watchful eyes until she was
close enough to take his hand. Only then did Ian close the door and Stiles led Satomi into the living room where Peter and Maddie were still on the couch.

“Hello Peter.” She gave him a small bow which he returned with a nod of his head. “Do you mind if I stay with you for the full moon?”

“What about your pack?”

“They will be fine in the hands of my Emissary.”

“We met her right?” Maddie asked.

Satomi nodded at her. “You did. Delilah speaks highly of the children who came to her shop.”

“She didn't really say anything to us when we were at Harbor,” RJ told her.

“Delilah is a woman of few words, but she sees much.”

Peter looked at Stiles. “You're the host.”

Stiles looked at his dad who shrugged. The other adults offered no insight, he sighed and nodded. “You can stay for the full moon...but we're going to have company from out of town.”

“More company than you have now?” Satomi smiled, probably amused at their overkill in protection. “Someone from yet another Dragon Community?”

Stiles narrowed his eyes at her. “What do you know about dragons?”

Satomi's kind smile gained an air of amusement. “I once asked Claudia if she would be my Emissary, she declined and asked instead that I ally myself with the Alpha Dragon of Beacon Hills. It was then that I heard a second heart beat coming from her.” She gave Stiles a little bow. “It would be an honor to be your ally, Lucjan.”

“Stiles,” He corrected her automatically. “And my dad is in charge, talk to him.”

There was a murmur of laughter, and he wasn't quite sure which adult was snickering at him. His dad, however, was grinning as he entered the room and ruffled his buzz cut. “For now anyway.”

He met Satomi's eyes. “We accept your alliance Satomi.”

xxx

Oz and Jonathan arrived with lunch; a large collection of pizzas picked up on their way into Beacon Hills. With them was another wolf like Oz, his younger cousin Jordy, who was about the same age as Scott and Stiles. When they stepped inside with the pizzas Oz and Satomi locked gazes and bowed to one another before she smiled at him.

“It takes great strength of will to live as you do.”

“The beads from Tibet help.”

“Indeed.” Satomi looked at Jordy next. “And you pup?”

Jordy held up his own bracelet, it matched Oz's. “It helps.”

They had scattered around the living room after that, eating most of the pizzas the Sunnydale group had brought, and Satomi talked to them about the other Alphas and packs she and Talia had known.
Including the Talbot pack, a small pack/family that lived in Beacon County much as hers did, but outside of Beacon Hills. Stiles asked her if they had an Emissary and she confirmed that they did not, she looked at him curiously for his question but he didn't elaborate on why he had asked.

After lunch she spoke with Stiles privately about some of the tragedies that had befallen wolves who had lived in Beacon Hills. She told him about an Alpha named Ennis and his connection to Derek Hale. About a once respected Alpha called Deucalion and how he'd been maimed by Gerard Argent.

Stiles listened intently through it all, soaking up the knowledge that she gave him, and when she was done he asked. “Was there something else?”

“I have known dragons before.”

“Who?”

“You have met Book and Inara?”

Stiles nodded. “I have.”

“Do you know the fate of your great-grandparents?”

He nodded again. “Yeah.”

“Do not let their fate be yours, Lucjan.”

He rolled his eyes. “It’s Stiles.”

xxx

The stars were hard to see as they always were in the city; the moon, however, was bright and big and refusing to be hidden. Its glow rivaled the lights of the buildings that towered over the park, serenaded by the howl of wolves. It was a mixture of modern times and wild fairytales.

“All the crank calls about wolves in Central Park make sense now,” Danny commented before tipping back his beer.

“I guess they do,” Mac agreed.

“And you've known about this, all this time? Come on Mac.”

“Danny it wasn't my secret to tell… and I didn't know about this part.”

“You mean the part where there are werewolves in Central Park every full moon.”

“Well it makes sense.” Adam grinned reaching across Mac for the box of pizza on his other side. “Where else are they gonna go?”

“Are all the werewolves in the park?” Danny asked, grabbing another slice himself.

“Only the smaller packs who don't have land of their own.” Their eyes slid to the young woman sitting across from them on a pile of cushions. Her hair was dyed black, skin powder pale, and her eyes were closed.

“Raven right?” Mac asked. “Raven St. Clair.”
“Yes.”

“Thank you for doing this.”

“It’s not like you're in any danger, the packs that live in cities police themselves very well. Any wolf not fully in control of themselves doesn't get to run in the park.”

Danny swallowed his food. “And the ones who have land?”

“Have private gated properties where they can run under the moon.”

“The Hales have money,” Adam pointed out.

She shrugged, eyes remaining closed. “I was under the impression their family used to spend full moons at home in Beacon Hills.”

“And now they're here in New York, with Aiden.” Danny shook his head. “If they hadn't shown me their transformations I wouldn't have believed it...or you Mac.”

“Well it hasn't been a month yet, so I can't show you my dragon form. When a month has passed I'll be glad to show you Danny.”

“That's fine...I'm glad to have time to process the whole werewolf thing first.”

Adam huffed a little. “It’s a gift Danny, especially in Aiden's case.”

Danny sipped at his beer again. “I know, I know. If it wasn't for Laura, Aiden would have died and DJ Pratt would still be raping women.”

“It’s also nice to have the option if one of us gets hurt really bad...”

“Like what happened to Flack.” Danny nodded. “Only he didn't need Laura to bite him.”

“Which turned out to be a good thing since we had to rush her to DC after she was shot with a wolfsbane bullet.”

“It’s just a little crazy, dragons, werewolves, werewolf hunters...” Danny gestured to Raven with his beer. “And witches who are keeping us safe in a magic circle in case any of the wolves get a little frisky.”

Raven smiled, eyes still closed. “You're welcome.”

He rolled his eyes. “What's next? Leprechauns?”

“According to our High King and Queen, Leprechauns aren't real.” Adam grinned.

“Flack will be sorry to hear that, being Irish and all. How's he doin’?” Danny asked.

“Stella and Lindsey are keeping him company, along with another DSO agent.”

“Have we met him?”

“Her,” Raven corrected Danny. “Terri Bagwell, she's a tech, an agent, and a psychic.”

“Like mind reading?” Adam asked.

“Like picking up a car with her mind and throwing it three blocks.”
“Whoa.”

“That explains why she's playing bodyguard while Flack heals.” Mac smiled, and nodded toward the edge of the line of mountain ash. “Looks like our wolves are looking for their share of pizza.”

Adam and Danny turned to watch the glowing eyes from beneath the nearest tree. One set was red, one set was blue, and two sets were gold. Laura became fully visible first, red eyes shining and a grin on her wolfed out face. “I'm hoping the pizza outside the circle is for us.”

“Every kind of meat they could think of is on those pies.” Danny told her.

“Everything okay?” Mac asked them.

Laura nodded. “Aiden has a lot of control for a new wolf; I'm pleased with her progress.”

“Good, come and eat.”

The Hale Pack gathered on the second blanket outside the circle and dug into their share of the pizzas. Aiden grinned at Mac in content.

xxx

Just before it got dark Ian made his way into the woods before the wolves and climbed up the tallest tree he could find so that he'd have the best vantage point. If Hunters came after the wolves he'd be the first to respond. Tommy and Jim were going to stay in the backyard with the majority of their group since the last attack had happened there. Everyone but Charlie was armed and ready; he was setting up a projector next to a laptop. The projector was aimed at a white sheet they'd tacked up on the back of the house.

His dad was manning the grill while they set up the tents; minus the wolves who were practically vibrating with eagerness as the night grew darker and the moon shown more brightly.

“Are we really gonna sleep in tents after you guys were attacked last night?” Scott asked.

“Dude, if Hunters try to get us Ian and Tommy will shift and squash them.”

“If you're sure.”

“Yes I'm sure.” And he was, Stiles couldn't explain it, but he had a feeling that Peter's first full moon would be fine. Satomi was suddenly at his side and he jumped a little. “Don't do that!”

She smiled at him and put her hand on his arm and he watched as black lines traveled up her skin to disappear...more importantly his arm stopped hurting. Huh. Satomi removed her hand and silently led the other wolves into the woods as they watched.

“Food's ready.”

Stiles grinned and raced to picnic table so he could fill his plate, and Charlie started the movie.

xxx

Laura yawned as she fumbled for her cell phone trying to get it before it went to voicemail. It slipped through her fingers, but another hand caught it and handed it to her. “Thanks Aiden.” Her beta nodded and curled back up next to Cora. Laura answered the phone and slipped out of the pile of wolves in the living room floor. “Hello?”
“Alpha Hale.”

“Alpha Ito.”

“Sorry to wake you Laura.”

She yawned again. “No its okay, I need to get the coffee going anyway. How did the full moon go?”

“Peter is almost fully healed...all that's left is some slowness to his movements and some scaring on his face.”

“Good. Thank you for being there...he doesn't want to see me.”

“He will, in time.”

“I hope so.”

XXX
Chapter 5

Allies and Enemies

Word count: 3842

XXX

Sam put his phone on speaker and let the call ring; earning an odd look from Dean, which only lasted a second since he was driving, but it was enough. “What?”

“Who are you calling?”

“A friend in L.A.”

Cordy chose that exact moment to answer, “Hey Sam what's up?”

“Hey Cordy, I wanted to get your take on something.”

“Shoot.”

“Okay, this is gonna sound nuts, but what do you know about killer clowns?”

“Seriously?” Dean asked.

“Who was that?”

“Sorry Cordy, I got you on speaker.”

“Dean then?”

“That's right,” Dean told her. “And you must be the mysterious P.I. named Cordy.”

“Not so mysterious. Killer Clowns, huh? I didn't realize that was actually a thing—wait…”

“Cordy?”

“I might know of an incident or two involving clowns, and both happened to Xander.”

Sam felt his jaw drop. “Wow… that never came up.”

“Xander has clown fear and doesn't really like to talk about it...” She told them, Dean snorted.

“Clowns aren’t scary.”

Sam glared at his brother and Cordy continued. “Well when Xander was a kid his then-stepdad hired a clown for a birthday party. The clown was drunk or something and chased Xander around the yard with a kitchen knife.”

“Holy shit.”

Sam had to agree. “That the first ‘incident’?”
“Yeah, trust me no one is happier than Xander that Tony Harris turned out to be a Chimera...and ya know, that he's dead.”

“I bet, and the second incident?”

“Hellmouth related. There was boy in a coma, and because wacky things happen on the Hellmouth, the kid's astral body was walking around Sunnydale and spreading nightmares. Xander's biggest nightmare back then just happened to be running from that same clown down a school hallway covered in swastikas.”

“Guy has a Nazi fear too?” Dean asked.

“He and his best friend grew up on stories of how her grandpa survived one of the camps.” She paused. “Xander stopped his nightmare though, he punched the clown in the face and it was over. Still, he doesn't like clowns. Did that help any?”

“Not really, we're looking into clowns that follow people home from a carnival and eat the parents but leave the kids unharmed.”

“Freaky, sorry I couldn't be more help.”

“Yeah, no problems Cordy. How are things for you guys?”

She sighed. “Would you believe that Stiles got shot at?”

Sam blinked, wondering if he heard right. “What?”

“Bullet even grazed him.”

“What happened?”

“Hunters.”

Dean shot him a look. “That kid from the hospital?”

“Yeah Dean, that Stiles. Cordy what happened?”

“I don't know if I should go into it...I know how gung-ho your brother is and your father was.”

“Cordy I know the world isn't black and white...I know that not everything non-human is evil.”

“Still, let’s just say those Hunters are in custody, and that's where they're staying.”

Dean looked like he was about to go off so Sam cut the conversation short. “I'm glad Stiles is okay, I'll talk to you later?”

“Gonna fight or give Dean an explanation?”

“Bit of both maybe.”

“Bye Sam, keep in touch.” She hung up and Sam flipped his phone closed.

“What the hell Sam?”

Sam sighed. “That's a long story Dean.”

“How about you start with the Hellmouth part, Hellmouths aren't real Sam.”
“According to Bobby they are.”

“What? Bobby knows about all this?”

“Yeah...” And Sam told Dean how he met Cordy and Xander...but didn't mention anything about dragons. He figured it was best to take baby steps with his brother.

xxx

“You were quick to choose this place after the realtor showed it to us...” Giles told him. “In fact I believe it’s the one and only property she brought us to.”

“It’s perfect, especially knowing what I now know about Sunnydale.” Colby grinned as they lifted and set a table to rights. “The basement seemed perfect and in a few weeks the tunnel that Clem's cousin is building will give us a way out if something happens.”

“I take it no one has told you the history of this particular place.”

“Do I want to know?”

Giles smiled, amused and leaned on the table. “The basement, or bunker, that you're so fond of was built by a man who built a robot in his own image to retrieve his wife who left him. The robot kept the woman hostage until she died...probably from unnatural causes. Then the robot went out and brought another woman, one similar to the first, and did the same thing.”

“You're kidding.”

“No, the Tedbot, as the children called him, tried to make Joyce, Buffy's mother, his fifth wife. When they were investigating him Xander found the four former Mrs. Ted's in the closet.”

“That's horrifying.”

“Yes well, Xander didn't let the girls see what was in the closet and the bodies have long since been removed and given proper burial.”

“Are they...haunting the place?” Colby asked.

“Tara and Willow did a purifying ritual the moment you decided you wanted the space to make sure no spirits were lingering. The building is spirit free, no murdered women, no murderous original Ted.”

“Good, because it really has everything. There's an apartment on the second floor with an outside staircase around back, then there's the bunker basement that's capable of withstanding a lot of firepower.”

“And the tunnel we've commissioned.”

“And this floor is perfect for the office space I’ll need as Sunnydale's Agent on Site.”

“Put that way I can see why you wanted it, though I suppose one of us should have told you the building’s history sooner.”

“That would have been nice...but I still would have chosen it...and since we're revealing the past there's something you should know.”

“Oh?” Giles moved closer to Colby, invading his space and lightly pinning him against the edge of
“What's that?”

“I wasn't just an FBI agent.”

He smiled and leaned in to kiss Colby's throat. “I knew you were holding something back, something I needed to be patient for.”

Colby's hand reached up and solid fingers carded through Giles' hair. “I was a triple agent working for U.S. Counterintelligence; spying on the Chinese for them while the Chinese thought I was working for them as a double agent.”

Giles pulled back a bit, Colby's hand still in his hair. “Good lord.”

“I contacted my handler after your change and he officially retired me from the spy game...but...just in case it comes up at any time I wanted you to know.”

“You realize I'll have to tell Xander, and he'll have to tell Buffy and Fornell and any number of people.”

“I know, the more of you that know, the less likely it'll get used against me if my name comes up on a double agent list.”

“Alright...You don't regret it do you?”

“Giving up life as a spy?”

“I meant giving up the FBI.”

Colby smiled and kissed him, tongue sliding into his mouth and erasing the question from his mind. He pulled back and shook his head. “No Rupert, I don't regret anything.”

“Good.”

xxx

“I'm beginning to think I need a cot in the war room.” Tobias paused in the doorway of said room. It was empty, the screen on the opposite wall off. “Harmony?”

“Gil's in the Security Hub!”

He rolled his eyes, backed out of the war room and headed toward the Security Hub, the DSO's version of MTAC. “And why weren't we using it before?”

“Techs used a bunch of complicated words I couldn't understand, but it boils down to software upgrades or something.” Harmony called as he passed the lobby. “They're all done now.”

“Good to know.”

“Coffee?” She asked.

“Not until after I'm done talking to the Watchers. Any idea who they have talking to me?”

“The Head Man himself is on standby.”

“Joy, the Sunnydale Natives have such glowing things to say about him.”
“I'll get the coffee ready for later.”

“Thank you.”

He entered the Security Hub and walked toward the screen that took up the entire opposite wall. To his right at a state-of-the-art console was one of their techs, Hyacinth Thistlethorpe, with a headset on and waiting for his order. Like many of his employees she'd come to him via Merton Dingle and Tommy Dawkins.

“How impatient is he?”

“He didn't seem impatient at all, sir...but I think he might be worried...or spooked.”

“Thanks for the heads up...put him on.”

And then suddenly Quentin Travers was on screen sitting behind his desk somewhere in England. London if the information they’d been given was correct. “Director Fornell.”

“Quentin Travers.” He studied the older man looking for any sign of the worry and unease Hyacinth had mentioned but Travers was a hard man to read. “You have news?”

“None especially good I'm afraid. Gerard Argent put out several false trails, but because of the seriousness of the situation we were forced to follow each lead.”

“Resulting in a multitude of wild goose chases.”

“Quite. We had reports of attacks on several packs and covens all over Europe and all turned out to be false.”

“You had time to check them all out?” Tobias asked, letting the doubt into his voice.

“Director, the Watcher's Council has been around longer than the United States, longer than even England; you cannot imagine the scope of our manpower and resources. However we did have outside help. A coven in Devon England followed up on the reports of other covens and confirmed that there were no attacks...”

Tobias raised a brow. “But?”

“There were no attacks on covens or packs...but there was a group of Hunters that was taken out.”

“Besides the group we just took into custody.”

“They were wiped out Director. The ground was burned and their bodies smoldered nearly beyond recognition.”

Tobias felt a chill go through him and he schooled his face to hide his shock. “You think it’s a dragon, you think there are dragons in Europe.”

“Dragon legends originated here.”

“I know of a First Nation dragon in the Southern Ute Tribe who would disagree with you. Europe may have given them their most common name, but every mythology speaks of similar creatures from serpents to thunder birds. I highly doubt that's a coincidence.”

“Fair enough.”
“Is there any chatter about retaliation for the Hunters that were killed?”

“No, we're keeping it quiet for now while we try to ID them. Only one man has been identified so far and he was more mercenary than hunter.”

“Just the kind of man Gerard would hire.”

“Yes, but there are no packs or covens where the hunters were killed.”

“And where was that?”

“In Scotland, at Tantallon Castle.”

He blinked, unable to hide his confusion. “You say that like it should mean something to me.”

Travers chortled, and really Tobias never thought he'd used the word to describe an actual sound that another human being made, but that's what Quentin did and it was in amusement. “Tantallon Castle has, at one time or another, been thought to be the location of Camelot.”

“Camelot.”

“Yes.”

“As in King Arthur, Merlin, knights of the round table Camelot.”

“Quite.”

“So that just makes you even surer that it was a dragon that did the damage.”

“There was a dragon trapped beneath Camelot for some time, according to legends...and as we both know there is always some truth to legends. Otherwise there would be no dragons.”

“Can you track whatever burned the Hunters?”

“No...Whatever it was has covered its tracks so to speak with magic and our witches can't find anything to track.”

Tobias scoffed. “And you think what? That Merlin and a dragon have been flying around Scotland and killed a bunch of Hunters in self-defense?”

Travers smiled. “We can only speculate.”

“Just keep us informed about Gerard's movements and communications.”

“And if we do find dragons in Europe?”

“Lets us know and we'll be the ones to make contact.”

“Very well. Good day, Director Fornell.”

“Travers.” He signaled Hyacinth to cut the feed and sighed heavily. “That's all we need, Merlin becoming a reality.”

“There could be another explanation sir.”

He looked at her. “I'm all ears.”
“We do have a pair that travels all over.”

“Book and Inara; give them a call and ask them if they were in Scotland killing Hunters.”

xxx

“We're giving the local real estate all sorts of business these days.”

“Yeah.” Xander nodded, his hands running over the counter in front of him.

Spike approached him, coming up behind him, before snaking his arms around him and placing his chin on Xander's right shoulder. “Pet?”

He blinked and leaned back into Spike. “What?”

“You were a million miles away for a moment.”

“Sorry.”

“Don't be sorry.” He nuzzled at Xander's throat. “What were you thinking?”

“How stupid I'm being.”

“How so?”

“Spike I quit my job so I could be King full time...and now we're looking at property so I can work?”

“They're not the same, what you did before and what you want to do.”

“How?”

Spike slid around him so they were face to face, keeping Xander in his arms. “Being foreman for a construction company, being in charge of someone else’s people and projects was too much responsibility for anyone to handle when they have another full time job.”

Xander frowned. “Yeah, I know. Hence the quitting.”

Blue eyes rolled and Spike huffed. “This is different because you'll work when you want, when you have time, or you need to do something to keep from worrying. I've seen how content you are when you whittle your odds and ends, I know come Christmas Jim, Joe, and Giles are going to get hand carved replica's of their dragon forms.”

“Carving knick knacks for father figures is a whole 'nother subject.”

“Not entirely. You made that weapon's chest for Buffy, Dawn wants one too. The things you build Xander are works of art, functional art because the only thing you've ever wanted was to help and be useful.”

Xander let a smile cross his face. “Found me out huh.”

“Oh I've always seen you luv, how could I not.” He kissed Xander, lips pressed tight, tongue sliding in and Xander slid his hands into Spike's back pockets to bring him ever closer.

The realtor cleared her throat and they broke apart, just barely, to give her dazed looks. “So what do you think of the property?”
They looked at one another and Xander snickered before hiding his face in Spike's throat. Spike snorted and shook his head. “We need a place that has a workshop, in the back preferably with space in front for a bit of a showroom.” He freed a hand from Xander's hip to gesture at the half finished shop they stood in. “This isn't quite what we need.”

“I do have a few other properties if you want to look at them today? As long as we're done before dark. I never show property after dark.”

“Sunnydale native are you?”

“Well with all the gangs in town...” She said the word gangs with air quotes. Xander snorted and lifted his face to meet her gaze. “Ma'am, you could stay out all night with us and none of the 'gangs' would lay a hand on you.” She blinked at them, and then smiled. “That's good to know, but I also have kids at home that look forward to my cooking.”

“Okay, let’s go look at the other properties then.” They followed her out and while she locked up they went back to her car to wait for her. “You don't mind right?”

“What?”

“Helping.”

“You kidding? I can't wait; you already have a commission by the way.”

“Who have you been bragging to?”

“That rich guy in L.A. that likes to hang out with Angel's crew.”

“David Nabbit?”

“He wants a custom made chess set.”

Xander snorted. “And?”

Spike gave him innocent eyes. “And what?”

“I know there's more.”

“He wants them to look like Angel and the others.”

“Does Angel know?”

“Nope.”

“Oh god.” Xander snickered and it evolved into a full laugh by the time the realtor rejoined them.

xxx

Tim put the rental in park and shut off the engine but made no move to get out, Jethro waited beside him in the passenger seat. He wondered if his lover was having second thoughts about this, or if he was waiting for the dust to settle in the parking lot. “Tim?”

“I haven't seen him in years.”
“But you keep in touch.”

“Yeah, and Merton trusts him so he's got a lot of sensitive information backed up in case any of us needs it.”

“I got that from the memory share when we were in that coma...you nervous about seeing him?”

Tim shook his head, and then smirked at him. “I'm just wondering if you're truly prepared for the oddness that is Ash.”

“We won't know till we go in.”

He grinned and unbuckled his seat belt, then reached behind Jethro's seat for the package they'd brought. “Come on then.” Tim was out of the car first and waited for Jethro to join him and they walked together toward the wooden porch of Harvelle's Roadhouse. The door opened easily and revealed an almost empty room, save for the brunette woman behind the bar.

She eyed them with a raised brow. “We're not open till later.”

Tim ducked his head a bit and offered an apologetic smile. “Sorry Ma'am. We're here to see Ash.”

“Ash doesn't know any Feds.”

“I met him at MIT, I'm Timothy McGee.”

“No way! You're Ash's MIT boyfriend?” A younger woman, blonde, came through the door leading to what they assumed was a kitchen.

“Um...yeah.”

“Hey Ash! You have company!” She yelled.

There was a crash, a curse, and then a man appeared from another door...He looked nothing like the memories Jethro had seen in Tim's mind. The Ash from MIT was long gone, replaced with a ridiculous mullet, torn clothes, and a scruffy chin.

“I told them 51 hours.”

“Hey Ash.”

Ash blinked, then smirked, before sauntering over to them and gave Tim a very thorough hello kiss. Then he pulled back, blinked in surprise at Jethro, and shrugged. “Oops.”

There was a familiar click, the hammer of a gun cocking, and they all looked at Ellen and Jo; Ellen had a gun pointed at Jethro. “Ash, you want to tell us why his eyes are glowing?”

“He's a dragon, Ellen. I told you about them, and it's my bad. I shouldn't have kissed Tim, him being a dragon's mate.”

Ellen lowered her gun. “Alright, no harm done?”

Jethro nodded. “It's fine.”

“So, you two hungry?”

xxx
“You know ever since I heard about Aiden's chicken parmesan I've been looking forward to it,” Flack said. “And now that I'm in on these community dinners she's out of town. How is that fair?”

“She'll only be gone for a few days, it’s not like she skipped town for good.” Adam laughed, setting another plate on the table.

“And how is it I'm relegated to guest in my own apartment?”

“Are you always this grumpy when you're recovering from being blown up?” Laura asked in response. “You're not really in any shape to be cooking for a crowd.”

Mac clapped him on the shoulder. “What she said Don, just relax and let them keep up what they're doing.”

“You mean taking over my kitchen and feeding me so much good food that I'm not gonna pass my physical by the time my medical leave is over?”

“Relax Flack,” Stella called out from the vicinity of the fridge. “We've got salad to go with the steaks.”

“And this crew does a mean steak,” Danny added.

“Maybe, but I wouldn't be craving chicken parmesan if you hadn't told me how good a cook Aiden was.”

“There's no pleasing you when you wanna be grumpy is there?” Laura asked.

“Nope.”

“I think as soon as Don eats he needs to take some pain meds and sleep off the bad mood.” Adam grumbled.

Flack sighed and ran a hand through his hair, wincing at the movements. “Yeah, that's actually a good idea. Sorry I'm not better company.”

“Pain can make anyone grumpy, right Danny?” Stella asked.

“What are you talkin' about? I'm always a ray of sunshine.”

The door opened then revealing Lindsay and Sheldon, the latter smiled as they entered Flack's apartment. “That's funny, you don't look like sunshine.”

“Shows what you know, you two bring the beer?”

“We brought the beer.” Lindsay confirmed. “Are we on time for the food?”

“No beer for me.” Don huffed. “They don't go well with the meds.”

“I'll pass too.” Laura added.

“Well yes, you're underage.” Mac told her.

She rolled her eyes. “Like I haven't had alcohol...but werewolves like me? We can't get drunk.”

“That makes me really glad you didn't have to bite me, not that I don't appreciate the thought,” Flack told her.
“Hey, any of you need emergency saving I'll be here.”

“And on that note, we should eat.” Adam grinned. “Not that being a werewolf wouldn't be cool.”

Stella grinned as they all moved toward the food. “Aiden sure seems to like it.”

“And we're all happy she's still with us.” Mac agreed.

“Soon as someone hands me a beer I'll feel a toast coming on,” Danny said; Lindsay put that beer in his hand. “To werewolves and to extending our family.” More beers, and water, were passed around and that was the first toast of their dinner.

XXX
Chapter 6

Allies and Enemies
calikocat

Word count: 3956

XXX

When Xander had told her about the attack in Beacon Hills, the first thing Yelina did was go down to the range for an hour. There wasn't much in this world that was as cathartic as shooting her gun at a paper target and imagining it was the monsters that had attacked her son, Maddie, and the other children.

The second thing she'd done was talk to Suzie, the younger woman barely keeping herself from making a run for California and dragging Madison back home. Horatio really needed to take the young woman to the range and teach her how to shoot; Yelina had no doubt that Suzie would feel better for it.

When Ray Jr. had finally called; it had been Ray who had been jumpy, practically on pins and needles while waiting. The only thing to calm him was their son and Maddie's voices and reassurance that they were fine. Their little boy was growing up, and becoming very powerful, as was his sister. Still, she'd be glad to have Ray Jr home at the end of the summer.

Perhaps next year the children should have their version of summer camp in Sunnydale after all.

xxx

Charlie and Ian were on their way out the door when an unfamiliar car with an unfamiliar driver pulled into the driveway. The passengers, however, were familiar faces, Derek and Cora Hale. There was a brief introduction and then the L.A. pair got into their own rental so they could make their flight home.

“Didn't mean to run your company off,” Aiden Burn, Laura's newest wolf, apologized.

John shook his head as he shook Aiden's hand. “Even though Charlie has fewer classes to teach in the summer, Ian still works with the FBI and needed to get back.”

“You have room for three more guests?” She asked.

“Jim and Tommy will be leaving soon, we'll make room.” He led them inside with a silent invitation and true to his word the Cascade Pair were bringing their bags down the stairs.

“The kids and Peter are in the living room,” Jim told them.

“Sheets are in the laundry,” Tommy added.

“Guests aren't supposed to do laundry guys.”

“We only tossed them in the washer; the drying is all on you.” Tommy grinned, and then called out, “Later kids!”

“Bye Tommy!” A chorus of young voices cried, “Bye Jim!”
John shook hands with both Dragon and Sentinel. “You're welcome back any time.”

“Thanks John.” And they were out the door, leaving the three wolves and John in the hall.

Peter appeared in the arch leading to the living room, the sight of him whole and unscarred seemed to shake Derek and Cora, but Cora didn't let it stop her from running to him for a hug. Derek hung back while Peter knelt so Cora could tuck her face into his neck to scent him. Aiden gave Derek a little push. “Go on Der.”

Peter looked at her over Cora's shoulder. “You must be Laura's newest wolf.”

“Aiden Burn.”

“How do you like being a wolf?”

“Beats being dead, if Laura hadn't bit me I wouldn't be alive.”

He nodded at her before giving Cora a little push toward the living room. “Tell Stiles to introduce you to his friends.”

Cora frowned but nodded, shooting Derek a look before she entered the other room. Derek bit his lip, not meeting Peter's eyes. “Uncle Peter, can we talk?”

Peter nodded. “We'll be in the backyard John.”

“Take your time.” He and Aiden watched Peter and Derek head toward the backdoor. “Peter knows the whole story already.”

“Yeah, but Derek needs to get it off his chest.” She smiled a little. “If they can stand one another after this I think Derek and Cora want to stay the rest of the summer.”

“I thought they might, but I don't think any of the kids should be here for a while.”

“You gonna ship them to Sunnydale and Xander Harris?” Aiden asked.

“That would be my first choice.” John answered.

Stiles poked his head out of the living room, a big grin on his face. “What if I had a better idea?”

“Do I even want to know?”

“Oh come on Dad! You can't shoot down my idea before you've even heard it.”

“Alright, shoot.”

“We should totally stay with a Hunter the rest of the summer.”

xxx

Ellen had offered the use of some bunks she had in a backroom if they wanted to visit with Ash longer. Tim declined while Jethro told them they were on their way to visit another community there in Nebraska.

“Where in Nebraska?” Ellen asked. “This isn't a small state.”

“Kimball County.” Jethro grinned. “They live in a decommissioned Missile Silo.”
“That's takin' paranoia to a whole new level.”

“We've been told they own a lot of land around the old base and use it for farming.” Tim paused and glanced at Ellen. “You're part of the Hunter Community.”

“My husband was one, and I know my lore.”

“Do you know a Bobby Singer?”

“Yeah, do you?” She returned.

Jethro shook his head. “Secondhand. Some of our people came across him when they went to see the Winchester boys when Dean was in the hospital.”

“You've met Sam and Dean?” Jo asked.

“Again, no; just some of our people. A bonded pair from L.A. and a young unchanged dragon that had been traveling with them.”

“Hold up now.” Ash laughed. “The Winchesters know about dragons?”

“The bonded pair that went to the hospital has known Sam over four years, the night that Mark changed to save Sara, Sam was with them. He saw Mark change.”

Ellen let out puff of air, as if gathering a moment of thought and words. “So they were there when the demon killed John.”

Jethro nodded. “Mark and Stiles, the kid with them, saw the demon. He recognized them for what they are.”

“John did?”

“The demon. They witnessed the demon taking John Winchester.”

“And the guys know all about dragons?”

“Sam knows. I don't think anyone has told Dean about Dragons.” Tim clarified. “But Bobby Singer knows too.”

“What does Bobby know about dragons?” Ellen asked.

Jethro smirked. “You'll have to ask him that.”

“Believe me I will.” She offered her hand and they shook before she did the same to Tim. When she moved away Jo did the same.

Ash, however, moved in to hug Tim; he didn't kiss him this time, not wanting to make Jethro growl again. He did, however, smirk at Jethro over Tim's shoulder, and when they pulled apart he moved in to kiss Jethro. When he stepped back Jethro laughed, all animosity toward Tim's past lover gone. “Enjoy the book Ash.”

“I will.” He looked to Tim. “You'll send me the second when it’s out?”

“You bet.”

xxx
Suzie took a breath, let it out slowly, took in another, let it out, and finally hit dial on her phone. The moment Horatio had been informed about the attack on the kids in Beacon Hills she'd been ready to hijack the first plane to California she could find. Cooler minds than hers prevailed though and she let Wally talk her into some tea and a shot of whiskey to calm her nerves. It had led to more whiskey and pretty much their entire community had crashed at Horatio and Ryan's house for safety reasons.

That meant she hadn't called her daughter yet. Once the headache had faded Ryan had pointed out that the kids would be entertaining guests, and besides Maddie hadn't a scratch on her. Suzie had glared at him, but conceded his point, not to mention Maddie had been getting more independent lately and wouldn't appreciate Suzie checking up on her every five minutes. So she'd agreed to wait until after the full moon.

The only reason she was still sane at this point was because Yelina had called her, she'd been just as scared and furious about the attack on their children as Suzie. The difference for Yelina was that she had access to guns and a firing range for stress relief.

There was a click and Stiles' voice came over the line. “Stilinski Residence, home of random chaos, how may I direct your call?”

“That's not your best opening line Stiles.”

“Heh. Hi Suzie. You wanna talk to Maddie?”

“Please.”

“Sure.” There was a rustling noise, a hand covering the receiver, and then Stiles' voice rang out. “Maddie! Phone!”

Less than a minute later Maddie's voice came over the line; Suzie used the time to put her phone on speaker so they could all hear her. “Hey Mommie.”

“Hey sweetheart,” Suzie's voice caught for a second but she managed to continue. “We heard you had some excitement in Beacon Hills.”

“Were you worried?”

“Always.”

Madison sighed, and her tone changed to a pout. “Xander was supposed to tell you in a way that wouldn't make you worry.”

Horatio's eyes met Suzie's. “I don't think that's possible Madison.”

“Hey Uncle Horatio! You and Mommie and everyone don't have to worry. I'm fine. Mr. Hale didn't let anyone shoot me, and we stopped the bad guys with fire.”

“I heard, and I'm glad everyone is okay.”

“Stiles is mad 'cause he fainted...but since he got scratched by a bullet no one's making fun of him for it.”

“That's good,” Suzie's voice broke. “I don't suppose you'd like to come home?”

“Do you want me too?”
“I would, but I want you to do what you want Maddie.”

Maddie was quiet for a minute, thinking about her response. “I want to stay with RJ and the others for the rest of the summer, besides Cora and Derek just got here to see Mr. Hale. We might not be safe here because of what happened...but Stiles has a plan.”

“What plan?”

“His dad knows; do you want to talk to Deputy Stilinski?”

Suzie shared another look with Horatio who nodded. “Yes, we would.”

“Okay, I love you Mommie.”

“I love you too sweetheart.”

“Bye Uncle Horatio! I'll see everyone when I come home.”

Everyone said goodbye and waited for John Stilinski to come to the phone. Speed, however, was frowning. “Wonder what kind of plan Stiles has.”

Horatio smiled. “I guess we'll find out.”

xxx

Xander frowned at the two smaller screens on the wall that were just under the larger one. “I do have a set up at home or I could have just talked to them on the phone,” He grumbled.

Jonathan grinned. “Willow would rather we use the equipment here at the Magic Box, since it’s kind of our base.”

He rolled his eyes, but came to attention when the screens went from a screensaver to showing Tobias and Buffy. “Hey guys, what's the what?”

“I've already updated Gibbs; he gets cranky if I don't talk to him first.” Tobias started. “I've spoken with Quentin Travers.”

“Does he know anything about the Hunters?” Buffy asked.

“Gerard Argent is aware that someone is keeping tabs on him, he left us several false trails. One panned out; a group of Hunters, either mercenaries or some mix of the two, was slaughtered in Scotland.”

“And?” Xander and Buffy said it at the same time and Xander had to bite his tongue to keep the word jinx from following.

“It happened at Tantallon Castle.”

Xander's eyes met Buffy's. “You know what that means?” He asked her.

“Nope.”

“Don't feel bad, I didn't get it either, Travers had to spell it out for me.” Tobias smirked a little. “Apparently that castle has some connections to the Camelot myth.”

“Camelot,” Buffy stated. “Like King Arthur's Camelot, with the uber-wizard Merlin?”
"The very same."

"Whoa."

Xander snorted. "So what? Travers wants us to think that Arthur, or Merlin, is still alive and killing Hunters?"

"Xander, the Hunters were burned up, the identities are being confirmed by dental records."

"Wait, so it was a dragon?"

"That's the going theory, according to legend there was a dragon trapped beneath Camelot."

"So...are we looking for a rogue dragon?" Xander asked. "Or are we trying to find Arthur and Merlin?"

"No idea, one of my techs suggested we ask Book and Inara if they had been in that area recently."

Xander and Buffy shook their heads. "Those two have been stateside for a while."

"Which has been confirmed. They're settling in the Houston area."

"Middle of the country," Buffy said. "That puts them in my area. They're joining Levon and Joe then?"

"As the Beta pair."

"Huh, I'll have to congratulate Dad and Levon on expanding their Community. So, are we going to try to make contact with this supposed dragon?"

"I told Travers that if he found anything concrete to leave contacting them to us. After all we have no idea what sort of reputation the Watchers have with any dragons over there."

"They're better than they used to be, but I agree. I'll never entirely trust that man." Buffy frowned. "Anything more on the Beacon Hills attack?"

"You know what I know," Tobias told them.

"Okay, keep us in the loop Tobias."

"My Queen, My King." Tobias smiled at them before he signed off.

Xander smirked at Buffy. "You think he calls Gibbs King?"

"I bet Gibbs would shoot him if he tried."

He nodded, and then shook his head. "Merlin? Really?"

She shrugged. "Guess he's not just a myth...just like the Slayer."

xxx

Cora couldn't stand it any longer, no matter how much fun it was to catch up with Stiles and meet his friends. She wanted to know if Derek and Uncle Peter had made up, if Peter had forgiven Derek for his part in what had happened to their family. She zipped out the backdoor before Aiden could stop her, since she was more familiar with the layout of the Stilinski home. However, the newest
wolf in the Hale pack was just a step behind her.

The second she caught sight of her brother and Uncle she breathed a sigh of relief, they were sitting on the bench of the picnic table, leaning against the table part itself, though Derek was also leaning against Uncle Peter. She could smell salt in the air, tears, and was glad to see Uncle Peter's arm around Derek.

“Come here Cora.”

She did as he bade and sat on his other side, his arm wrapping around her shoulders mimicking the embrace Derek was in. They sat there for a moment before Aiden sat beside her. “Laura wants to know if you'll join us in New York.”

“No.” His reply was swift, no indecision whatsoever.

“Is it because of me?” Derek asked; voice rough and broken.

“No, Derek. It has nothing to do with you. Laura should never have left me behind.”

“But-”

“As Alpha it's her duty to take care of the pack, all of the pack. We do not leave our injured in the care of strangers on the other side of the country.”

Aiden growled and flashed gold eyes at him. “She might be our Alpha, but she's just a kid. Cut her some slack.”

“How did you come to be a wolf? I haven't heard the whole story.”

“I was fired from the NYPD; I crossed a line on a case. So I was working on my P.I. license...and trying to catch a rapist in the act so he could finally be brought to justice.”

“It was his case that you crossed that line?”

“Yeah, and my boss had to fire me.” She took a breath. “I'd been keeping tabs on him since then...and when he noticed me following him he laid a trap. I didn't know Laura was a werewolf, and when he started stalking her I panicked. I couldn't let him hurt her the way he'd hurt so many other women. If Laura...” Her voice wavered. “Laura dragged him off of me, threw him into a brick wall so hard he died on impact. By that time though he'd practically beaten me to death...”

“So she bit you.”

“It almost didn't take, my heart stopped for a second...but then it started up again and my eyes turned gold.”

“Someday I might be able to forgive her...but that will be a long time in coming. I'm glad she's becoming a good Alpha, and I'm glad she has you as a Beta.” Peter looked her square in the eyes, blue meeting gold. “But I won't go to New York.”

“Okay. You mind if these two stay with you for the summer then?”

Peter finally smiled. “Now that, I don't mind at all.”

xxx

“Hello?”
Xander grinned at his father's voice. “So I hear congratulations are in order.”

Joe paused. “Oh yeah? You know something I don't?”

He rolled his eyes, though Joe couldn't see the physical sarcasm. “Book and Inara.”

There was a laugh. “Yeah, they're staying here at the ranch with us for now. I think they're going to buy a neighboring property.”

“I'm surprised they've decided to settle down.”

“Well...there's a reason for that.”

Xander blinked and wondered if he should be worried. “What? What reason?”

“Inara is pregnant.”

“Wow...but...they've been together for more than half a century. They've never had kids before.”

“Xander...”

“What?”

“Infant mortality rates were a lot higher when they first bonded.”

“Oh...” Xander winced and felt like the King of Cretins once more. “So they lost a baby...or more?”

“They didn't say it outright, but that was what we got out of the conversation. I didn't ask how many or how they died...but I think it’s a safe bet that at least one was killed by Chimeras.”

“I can see that, especially the way they tend to hunt Chimeras down more than any other monster. So...who's gonna hold the baby shower?”

“She's only a few weeks along; I think it'll be months before she's ready for something like that.”

“Okay, I'll hold off. Just let me know when they're ready to make a big announcement so I can act surprised.”

“You got it kid.”

“So, is anyone else expecting little bundles of joy...or an egg?”

“No kid, I'm not pregnant.”

“And here I was hoping for a little brother or sister.”

“As long as Levon and I have been bonded with no eggs to show for it I doubt I'll lay one.”

“Ha, bet you will. I mean Gibbs is gonna have a baby, Inara is gonna have a baby...maybe we'll have a baby boom in the Dragon Nation.”

“Do not jinx us like that, at least not until you pop out a grandkid for us.”

“Oh don't even go there.” Xander grumbled. “Ugh, you win. No more baby talk. Anything else going on in Houston? Besides your new Beta Pair and the Community expansion?”
“Not really kid, but how you doin’?”

Xander laughed and told his father about the property hunt he and Spike were on.

xxx

Derek lifted the sleeve of Stiles' t-shirt to examine the bandage on his arm. “Couldn't you have just healed this?”

Stiles looked up at him and nodded. “I could have. Or Maddie, or RJ, even Scott could have healed it a little.”

“It'll scar now.”

He shrugged and gave Derek a little smile. “It's just a scratch. If the bullet had done any major damage one of the others would have healed it while I was passed out.”

“Does it hurt?”

“Not as bad as it did, and Satomi took-” Derek placed his hand on Stiles' arm just below the bandage and a few black lines traveled up the older boy's hand and faded out as they went up his arm. “And now it doesn't hurt at all.” He frowned a little. “You didn't have to do that, but thanks.”

Derek pulled his hand away and tugged Stiles' sleeve back down. “I should be thanking you.”

“Why? You're the one who took my pain.”

“You saved Cora...and all of you helped save Peter.”

“Dragons have been hunted just as long, if not longer then werewolves.”

“Yeah, but most hunters think dragons are myths...or they've died off. Mac told us about the spell dragons pulled off thousands of years ago.”

“My ancestors were just playing catch up; werewolves have always been able to hide in plain sight.”

“Still...”

Stiles bumped their shoulders together, glad his arm didn't hurt. “Werewolves and Dragons should stick together anyway.”

Derek smiled. “I don't know...you're the only kid I know that almost bought it in an explosion.”

Stiles rolled his eyes. “The car bomb wasn't meant for me specifically, anyone from the Summit could have been in that SUV. Seriously dude, are you and Cora gonna stay with us this summer?”

“Laura already okayed it...but I got the impression we wouldn't be staying at your house.”

“Nope, we'll be in the safest place ever.”

xxx

Bobby hung up with a curse and slammed his home landline down. Sam poked his head into the kitchen. “Bobby?”
“Yeah?”

“Everything okay?”

“It’s fine.”

“You don't sound fine.”

“Well I am...I'm just gonna need your help.”

He stepped into the room, face grim and ready for hell. “What do you need Bobby, name it.”

“I'm gonna need help cleaning up all the bedrooms.”

That made Sam puzzled. “Uh...why? I mean Dean and I are already in one.”

“Yeah, and apparently I'm runnin' a summer camp for dragons and werewolves.”

“Uh...what?”

“Stiles and a bunch of other kids are comin' here for the rest of their summer vacation. So come on, we need to make paths to all the beds.” He started out of the kitchen and Sam followed like huge puppy.

“Why are they coming here?”

“Because some fool hunters went after them at the Stilinski place.”

“Cordy told me about the attack and okay, I get the dragon part...but werewolves?”

“We had that talk Sam, about the different types.”

“Yeah...but...what are we gonna tell Dean?”

“I don't know yet.” They started up the stairs. “I'm hopin' it won't come up.”

Sam had no response, but he had a funny feeling about the whole thing and he wondered if maybe Cordy and Doyle should be on hand when Dean found out. Bobby, on the other hand, was wondering how he'd gotten talked into the whole crazy plan that Stiles had laid out. Though he had to admit it was smart, who in their right mind would go looking for dragons and werewolves in a Hunter's home?

XXX
“I can't believe I let you talk me into this.”

“Oh come on Dad, it’s not like we're breaking the law.” Stiles said, before looking up at his dad. “Are we?”

“You should have asked that before we started this.”

“It's not like her parents put a restraining order on us. We haven't done anything, except help her wake up.”

“And if her parents come with her we may have some explaining to do.”

Stiles sighed. “Dad, I think you worry too much...there she is, and she's alone.” He pointed at Meredith Walker who had just rounded a corner at the edge of the block. “You could always go back to the truck and pretend you have no idea what's going on.” He ignored the look his dad gave him.

Meredith stopped in front of them and offered them a shy smile. “Hello.”

“Hey Meredith, how are you?”

“I'm not sure. Why did you want me here?”

Stiles pointed to the building, it was more of a house really. “This place is called Harbor and it belongs to a woman named Delilah. She's an emissary for a werewolf pack, and she might be able to help you with your powers.”

“Do you really think she will?”

“It wouldn't hurt to ask.” They all jumped at Satomi's voice; somehow she had opened the front door without making a sound and approached them. “Would you like to come in Meredith?”

Meredith nodded and started toward the house, Stiles stopped her though and handed her a bag. “We made you some more charms, to help you sleep.”

“Thank you.”

“You're welcome. If you need help with anything ask Satomi and Delilah.”

“Not you?”

“I'll be out of town for the rest of the summer, but Dad will be here.”

“Where will you be?”
“You remember when you first woke up? The old guy who was there?”

“The man who's sorrow woke me up.”

“Yeah, Bobby Singer, I'll be at his place.”

She nodded. “I remember. His wife doesn't blame him; he did what he needed to survive.” She didn't elaborate, instead she walked to Satomi and followed the Alpha inside.

He frowned at her words, wondering what they meant; however, they were on a tight schedule. “So what do you think?” Stiles asked.

“If I was entirely sure what you were up to I'd be able to answer that.”

Stiles rolled his eyes. “Oh come on. I sent her to get trained by an emissary.”

“And?”

“Dad, there's still a pack here in Beacon County that doesn't have one.”

“The Talbots.”

“Bingo.”

“So that's what you're up to.”

“I'm a genius,” He boasted. “The Talbot pack will get an emissary, and Meredith will have a support system. I rock.”

A familiar hand smoothed over his buzz cut. “Alright Mr. Genius. Let’s get you to the airport, everyone is waiting on you.”

“Kay.... Hey Dad. Thanks for letting me go.”

“Sure thing kid.”

xxx

“I can't believe we have to do this, I should be working on my car, not playing house.”

“We're not playing house Dean, we're just straightening things up a little.”

“You're putting clean sheets on a bed Sammy, what do you call that?”

“It’s Sam and it’s called helping Bobby.”

Dean grunted as he combined two stacks of books into one much taller stack. “Why did he say yes to this anyway? What's he gonna do with a bunch of kids underfoot?”

“He did okay with us whenever Dad left us here, and they know about the things that are out there.”

“Whose idea was this anyway?”

“Stiles’.”

“Figures.” Dean shook his head. “Still can't believe those hunters went after a bunch of kids. They
haven't hurt anyone, and Stiles even tried to help me. Or so you said.”

“He did Dean, he even knew the Reaper that was after you, he called her Tessa...she's the one that took his mom.”

“That bites.” Dean kicked at the stack and nearly sent it tumbling, and he scrambled to keep it upright. “Why did I get stuck with moving the books?”

“Because you bitched about cleaning and putting clean sheets on the beds.”

“You mean cots; those kids better bring some sleeping bags or something.”

“Things would go a lot faster if you two would stop discussin' every move you make.” Bobby's voice echoed up the stairs, making them jump.

“Sorry Bobby,” Sam called back.

“Guy has ears like a bat.”

They heard one of the phones ring, but before he answered it Bobby called up to them again. “I heard that, and stop kickin' my books. Most of them are one of a kind!”

“Jesus.” Dean muttered, Sam laughed and Dean grabbed the nearest pillow and smacked him with it.

Bobby rolled his eyes at the scuffling he heard from upstairs and picked up the cordless for his home line as the second ring happened. “Singer.”

“Bobby.”

“Ellen.”

“I think you have some explaining to do.”

He glanced at the ceiling before stepping into the kitchen. “About what?”

“Dragons; and how you know about them.”

Bobby frowned. “How do you know about dragons?”

“Ash is old friends with a dragon's mate...that pair stopped by here to visit. They're the Alpha Pair of D.C....and they're visiting a Community in Kimball. Ash has told us everything he knows about dragons. Your turn.”

“This doesn't go beyond you, Jo, or Ash.”

“You know you can trust me Bobby.”

“I am a dragon, Ellen, unchanged.”

“Damn Bobby. How have you staid under the radar? I know the dragons have tracking spells.”

“You've seen all the sigils I have all over the property. Some of them block outside magic, not to mention the sigils and spells I have on me. Last thing I need is another hunter coming after me.”
“You could have told me Bobby.”

“It never came up, and I've been hidin' for a long, long time.”

“How did you know you were a dragon?”

“It’s a long story Ellen, and not one I want to get into over the phone.”

“Fair enough. Look, you need to come by again some time. Jo would love to see you.”

“When I get a chance, I'm gettin' ready for company right now.”

“Aren't Sam and Dean already there?”

“Yeah, they're helpin' clean up a bit. Some kids, dragons and such, were attacked by hunters and need a safe place to spend the rest of their summer.”

“Bring them all with you when you drop by, I'll close up the saloon early for a private party.”

“Thanks Ellen.”

“Take care, old man.” She hung up and he glared at the phone, putting it on the counter.

“Ain't that old.” He grumbled, and then jumped when there was a knock on the door.

“Bobby, tell your company we aren't ready yet!” Dean yelled.

He rolled his eyes and went to the door, peeking through the peephole to see a delivery man on his porch. His frown deepened and he opened the door. “I didn't order anythin'.”

“Yes sir, I know sir. This delivery was sent courtesy of a-” he glanced at his clipboard, “Laura Hale of New York City. They're all bought and paid for.”

He looked at the delivery truck, then back to the man. “What is it?”

“Bunk beds and all their accoutrements.”

“Bunks beds,” Bobby repeated

“Yes sir.”

He groaned and rubbed at his face. “I don't suppose they've been put together?”

“Uh.... no. They're still in their boxes.”

Bobby sighed. “Just as well, easier to get them up the stairs that way. Boys! Stop what yer doin' and git down here!”

There was a crash above them and it made the delivery man's eyes go wide, then Sam and Dean trumped down the stairs. “What is it Bobby?”

“We got some bunk beds to put together.”

“Seriously? We just got the beds made.” Dean grumped.

“Cots remember?” Sam said. “And I made them, you just made a mess.”
“Only because you tripped me with your sasquatch feet.”

“I hope you two don't act like this around the kids when they get here, or their folks won't let them visit anymore 'cause of the bad element.” The boys' jaws dropped at his words and Bobby signed for the beds, the delivery man was grinning. “Now, help this guy get the stuff out of the truck and get the boxes upstairs. We got a lot of work to do.”

xxx

“I'm surprised you're leaving your daddy without backup.” Mal said, glancing at the map in River's hands. “Beacon Hills bein' dangerous enough recently that you kids are goin' into hidin'.”

Stiles took offense at the comments. “He's totally prepared. He and Mrs. McCall know what’s going on, and they have two packs that’ll check in on them while we're gone.”

“Okay.” He caught Mal's smile in the rearview mirror and Stiles rolled his eyes. “Whatever you say.” Mal looked at the map again and frowned at River. “Quit pointin' at one place and tellin' me another in my head.”

River laughed. “Take the shortcut on the map that I'm pointing at, so we can get to the address that I put in your head. It’s outside of town, opposite of the way we got here.”

“Are road trips with you two always this interesting?” Peter asked from beside Stiles.

“They're more fun when I get to drive.” River informed him.

There were some worried sounds from behind them and Stiles glanced at the others in the last two rows of seats. It was a rather large van that Mal and River had rented at the airport, an older model without built in GPS, hence the map and the interesting bickering. The entire ride from the airport where they'd left the small plane Mal's Community owned had been interesting.

Peter and River had struck up a strange friendship due to similar mental trauma and Stiles wasn't sure he wanted to know what the secret smiles between them meant. River could look into most minds if she wanted to, and he had a feeling she and Peter had been having all sorts of conversations that no one else could hear...except maybe Mal since he and his mate were almost always in one another's heads.

“It’s not bad when River drives...just more interesting.'” Mal told them, trying to reassure the unease coming from the back. “Some of the detours we end up on are worth it.”

“No detours today.” River added.

“Awesome.”

Things grew quiet for a while as they made their way out of Sioux Falls and took the road that led to Singer's Salvage, until RJ asked a question.

“Did you ask what Meredith meant when she said 'she doesn't blame you' to Bobby?”

“No.... and I don't think anyone else should either.”

“Meredith didn't mention it?” Scott asked.

“Dude, Scotty, I think it’s a sensitive subject.”

“Okay, okay.”
“We're here.” River announced, changing the course of conversation and causing all the kids except Stiles to peer out the windows as they crossed under the sign that said Singer Salvage.

“What lovely décor.” Peter said; lip twisted in a bit of a sneer.

Stiles snorted. “Yeah, so Bobby's not the best housekeeper, but he runs a junkyard, what were you expecting?”

Peter frowned as the house came into view. “Tell me the inside isn't as bad as the outside.”

“It’s not that bad.”

“I'm not sure what to think of your standards.”

Stiles huffed. “You'll like the guy for his books alone.”

“We'll see.”

Mal put the van in park in front of the house; the cluttered front porch was just as Stiles remembered it. The front, which had once been painted a soothing blue that time had turned into a faded gray, had only one adornment - a porch swing that no one could get to because of the clutter of car parts. The front door, white and peeling, opened as they started to bail out of the van. Derek and Cora rushed out first, eager to stretch their legs after being cooped up in so many vehicles.

Stiles and Maddie shared a grin and hopped out, followed by RJ and Scott. Peter was slower about getting out and River was there to offer an arm to steady him just in case. Mal was already heading toward the very back where their luggage was, except for a few things that were strapped to the roof via the luggage bars.

The door, finally open all the way, revealed Bobby who, like the house, looked just as he did the last time he had seen him. Old faded jeans, scuffed up work boots, grease stained t-shirt covered in a vest with multiple pockets and an old cap on his head. Stiles could almost feel Peter judging the guy for his appearance. Mal, however, had no qualms about shaking hands with the blue collar class.

He'd gotten most of their luggage out of the back to set it on the ground beside the van, one duffle, however, was still in his grasp when he and Bobby shook hands. “It’s nice to finally meet you Mr. Singer. Malcolm Reynolds, Alpha Dragon of Kimball, Nebraska.”

“Mr. Reynolds.”

“Whoa, just call me Mal. And that deadly beauty on top of the van unstrapping the bags is my wife and mate River Tam.” River waved at Bobby before tossing one of the bags to Mal.

“Ma'am. And it’s just Bobby. I'm surprised you folks made such good time gettin' here.”

“Well we got our own plane, it’s not anything fancy, but it gets us where we're goin’.” He eyed the kids and then Bobby. “You need help gettin' these rascals settled? I almost hate to leave them with you, you're outnumbered.”

“We'll be fine.” Bobby assured him. “My helpers are out buyin' groceries.”

“Is there going to be room for all of us?” Stiles asked.
Bobby raised a brow at him. “Maybe you should have asked that before you talked everyone into this.” Stiles stuck his lip out and folded his arms; however, the old Hunter didn’t let him pout long. “Laura Hale ordered some bunk beds for you kids. Just finished puttin’ them together. There’s plenty of room.”

“Oh...good...and thanks.”

“No problem, you know the way kid, show your friends around. The room on the second floor with two sets of bunks bed is for you boys. The girls have their own room with a set. Mr. Hale gets a room with a twin bed to himself.”

Stiles nodded and picked up a couple of bags. “Come on guys.” The rest of the kids picked up their bags, Cora and Derek carrying the heaviest ones, and they followed the ring leader who’d gotten them into their current situation. Peter, however, stayed to watch the other adults.

“Hopin’ to get the kids in place before your young hunters get back?” Mal asked.

“Not really, Sam knows everything...it’s just Dean we'll have to worry about. We'll do our best to keep a lid on things here.”

River hopped down from the top of the van with the grace of a dancer. “You have our number.”

Bobby nodded. “Speaking of, there’s a place in Nebraska where hunters stop by. Harvelle’s Roadhouse. It’s owned by a friend. You might want to get in touch with her.”

“That sounds like a good idea.” Mal agreed.

“We'll stop by after we go home.” River told him. “Have to take the plane home first, besides we'll have company of our own.”

“That right?” Bobby asked.

“They just stopped by and introduced themselves to your Harvelles, and by now they're probably at our base.” He offered his hand to Bobby again, shook, and then did the same to Peter. “You need help you call us.”

“Mal can fly faster than our little plane so it wouldn't take long to get here.” River smiled. “And you need to come see us sometime.”

“I'll put it on my to-do list.” Mal and River shared a grin and got back in their rental, leaving a trail of dust as they left in the big van. Peter stared at Bobby and Bobby stared back. “You look better; those kids know how to work a wonder or two don’t they.”

Peter nodded, still not quite comfortable with the idea of being under a hunter's roof, especially with hunters with a reputation like the Winchesters. “They do.”

“Well, come on. I'll show you your room and we'll get ya'll settled.” Bobby turned to go inside and Peter followed him cautiously several paces behind, reserving judgment.

xxx

“Are you sure you want to donate all of these?” Amita asked, looking through the box of haphazardly wrapped dishes, pausing to smile at the newspaper comics section.

“Just returning them as I found them,” Alex told her. “We don't really need two sets of dishes...and
if we were just moving in together here in L.A. I'd still be getting rid of them.”

She nodded at the logic. “Do you think we should have moved in together sooner?”

“Well we practically had; somehow, when we weren't paying attention, most of my clothes ended up at your place.”

She smiled at him and stood on her toes to kiss him. “That's true.”

“And your dishes are nicer than mine.” His words made her laugh and she hugged him close. “Are you going to miss living in L.A.?”

“Yeah, I have a lot of friends here, and the Community has been so nice, like a second family. What about you?”

“It’s a big step; I think I'll miss the Sloans and Jesse the most.”

“They adopted you huh?”

“Sometimes it felt like it. Think Harvard and Cambridge are ready for us?”

Amita turned in his arms to gaze around his apartment. The furniture had been taken away and donated already as had most of hers. It didn't seem practical to ship their secondhand décor to the other side of the country. They were keeping her dishes, their clothes, towels and such along with their personal items. It was going to be a fresh start, the beginning of the next step in their lives, an adventure even.

“I think Harvard and Cambridge won't know what hit them.” She laughed and leaned against him. “I'm going to be an assistant professor at Harvard.”

“Yes you are.”

Amita smiled at the pride in his voice. “And you're going to be on staff at Mount Auburn, all on your own. Is it scary?”

“A little...but I think it'll be good to get out of Mark and Jesse's shadows. They're both so well known among the medical community here, I'm excited to be out on my own. Leaving the nest so to speak.”

“Good. Then we don't have any regrets.”

“None. So...about that going away party Cordy is throwing for us...”

“There’s no getting out of that, you know how family is.”

“And I wouldn't change them for the world.”

xxx

Ellen had been keeping an eye on the couple since they had come in at sundown. None of her usual clientele had even blinked at them when they came. The man held himself like a professional soldier, scoping out the room with a single glance when they entered. The girl who looked like she might be close to Jo's age walked on silent feet all grace like she could break into dance at the drop of a hat. They acted like hunters, aware of their surroundings, ready to pull the weapons she could tell they were carrying at a moment's notice.
For all that controlled power they projected an aura of calm as they had taken a corner booth and ordered drinks and kept to themselves for the first hour. Then they ordered appetizers, such as Ellen offered fried mushrooms and a side salad, followed by another round of drinks. As the night went on the couple had eaten a full course meal of open sandwiches, baked potatoes, and topped it off with the pie she’d baked the day before. The only time either of them stood was to hit the head, or start up the juke box.

No one else seemed to pay them any mind, too busy going over their journals, looking over maps, cleaning their guns or sharpening their knives. However Ellen sensed something about them, something that set them apart from all the other hunters in her saloon. So she kept an eye on them, just in case.

A few hours later when the last of her regulars slapped some cash on the bar and tipped his hat to Jo before swaying toward the door, Ellen looked toward the couple in the corner booth. They seemed to be in deep discussion, though neither one was saying a word...it made her wonder.

“Last call folks; we don't stay open that late.”

“Could you make an exception Mrs. Harvelle?” The man asked. “We'd like a word.”

“About what?” The sudden conversation had Jo on edge, and Ash, finishing off a beer he'd swiped, froze.

“Bobby Singer told us to stop by.” The man smiled.

“Is that right?”

The girl, woman, grinned. “Jethro and Tim recommended the food. They were right.”

Ellen relaxed and saw Jo and Ash do the same. “You're a bonded pair?”

“That we are.” He nodded. “Malcolm Reynolds, Alpha Dragon of Kimball, Nebraska. This is my mate and wife, River Tam.”

River's eyes were lit with amusement. “River Reynolds didn't sound good.”

Jo had stopped busing the table she'd been at and put a fist on her hip. “Kimball, huh? That's not far from here.”

“No, it’s not.” Malcolm agreed. “And I have a proposition for you folks, if you're interested.”

Ash looked from the Kimball Alpha to Ellen nervously. Ellen, however, folded her arms and leaned on the bar. “We're listening.”

xxx

The afternoon and following evening had been hectic and heartwarming all at once and left Bobby reeling a little. For the first time his house was full of kids, which was what Karen had wanted. His guests had taken charge the moment they set foot inside his home, Stiles showing them their rooms and the entirety of the house. They put their bags in the rooms, many of them stashed under the newly assembled bunk beds, before helping Peter with his more meager belongings.

Then they'd taken over his kitchen.

The only somewhat clear surface had been the table and the stove top, cleared off back when Mark
Sloan had fixed pancakes during his brief visit. Now the table was completely clear, and had been extended...he hadn't known where that extra leaf had been but they had found it and added it. The stove was clear again, as was the counter, and they had gone through his fridge and pantry coming up with enough ingredients to make omelets for supper.

Bobby always had eggs on hand because they were easy to fix, it was blind luck that he had just bought an eighteen pack. He watched in fascination as Peter fixed the omelets, catering to each kid. Stiles and Scott wanted leftover pepperoni and mozzarella cheese in theirs from the pizzas Dean had made the day before. Maddie only wanted cheese in hers. RJ wanted his plain, but found salsa to pour over it. Cora wanted bits of sausage in hers and confiscated the ketchup to add to it. Derek wanted pepperoni, mozzarella, sausage and onion. For himself Peter had pepperoni, mozzarella and half a can of spinach mixed in. When Peter asked Bobby what he wanted he shook his head, he'd already eaten the last of the ham in a sandwich.

They ate heartily and then cleaned up after themselves, washing their plates, forks and glasses and then drying them before putting them away. Then they all trooped upstairs with their full bellies and practically passed out on the new beds. Save for Peter who was sitting at the kitchen table with Bobby, two glasses and a bottle of scotch between them. Conversation was light as he was distracted by one of Bobby's many books.

It was that scene that Dean and Sam came back too, tromping through the front door, the hall and into the kitchen loaded with grocery bags. They paused just inside the kitchen, looking around at the difference the kids and Peter had already made and Dean made a show of sniffing the air. “Something smells good.”

“Omelets.” Peter replied looking up from the book. “It was an easy fix. You must be Sam and Dean. You're a little late with the groceries.”

Sam nodded. “Sorry about that. Dean wanted to get some more funds.”

Bobby rolled his eyes. “You didn't hustle anyone local did you?”

Dean frowned. “Come on Bobby, we're not stupid. We went a couple towns over and hustled pool there, it was worth it. We got all kinds of good stuff.” He set his bags on the table and Sam did the same. “Those kids will be in heaven with all this stuff.”

Peter leaned forward and peered into one of the bags; his lips twisted in a sneer as he reached in and pulled out a frozen dinner. “Do none of you know how to cook?”

Dean sneered right back. “The only time anyone has ever cooked in this kitchen was when Bobby had guests, a guy named Mark Sloan was here with Stiles. He took over the kitchen.”

Peter sighed and stood up, frozen dinner in hand as he headed for the freezer. “I have my work cut out for me.”

Bobby didn't like the sound of that. “What's that supposed to mean?”

xxx

The next morning Bobby woke to the smell of coffee and biscuits wafting up the stairs from the kitchen. He shuffled out of his room, just as Dean and Sam peered out of theirs, bleary eyed and confused. Sam yawned. “Bobby? What's going on?”

“I guess we'll just have to find out.” They tramped down the stairs, him in the lead, pausing at the bottom when they heard the kids in the living room. Bobby detoured there to find all the kids up
and reading through books and papers.

Stiles looked up. “Hey Bobby.”

“What's goin' on Stiles?”

“Just a little light reading. Peter is in the kitchen with your breakfast.”

Bobby frowned and made his way to the kitchen...he almost didn't recognize the place. Not only was it cleared enough to be used as a kitchen, every surface had been scrubbed until it practically glowed in the morning sun. Peter was at the stove, scrambling the last of the eggs, but the table was covered in food. There were two pans of steaming biscuits, a large bowl of pepper gravy, and a platter full of pork sausages. Peter turned, having put the eggs in another large bowl and put them on the table.

“Hungry gentlemen?”

“Holy crap.” Dean muttered, and then looked at Bobby. “Tell me you're keeping the guy.”

Bobby rolled his eyes. “Idgit.” He headed toward the coffee pot, grabbed a mug and filled it. “Looks good.”

“You'll need more eggs and flour, but it was worth it. The frozen dinners and instant meals will do if we're in a hurry...but I'd like to get some real food and ingredients soon.”

Dean, who had already helped himself to a biscuit, moaned in appreciation. “Yeah you need to keep this guy. Bobby these things are homemade.”

Bobby huffed and sipped at his coffee...it was perfect. He glared at the pot, wondering why it tasted so different than what he usually made. As if hearing his thoughts Peter smirked. “I cleaned the pot.”

He grumbled. “You cleaned a lot more than that.”

Peter grinned. “Oh this is only the beginning.”

Sam and Dean, now sitting at the table, plates piled with sausage, biscuits and eggs all smothered with gravy watched them in fascination. Bobby ignored them and frowned at the werewolf who had taken over his kitchen. “What?”

Peter gestured to the rest of the house beyond the kitchen's borders. “I don't know how you find anything in this place.”

“I have a system.” The words came out defensive and grumpy.

“Really?” Peter asked, eyebrows lifted in disbelief, “Do you just wander around until the pile of crap you're looking for falls on you and bashes you in the head?”

Bobby stared at the younger man. “Snarky bastard aren't you?”

Peter just smirked and turned his back on Bobby to start washing the skillets and Bobby ignored the snickers coming from Dean and Sam, and the distant giggles from the living room. What exactly had he gotten himself into?

xxx
It was still early; the morning dew had yet to dry in the shade of the trees that sheltered the front yard of the small farm house they had explored. The modest house wasn't quite a full two stories, but the attic was big enough that they could turn it into a library/study and it had a large cellar under the house which would be perfect in case of emergencies...or storage.

The three bedroom, one bathroom, house sat on sixteen acres of land and their nearest neighbors would be Joseph and Levon on their small ranch that surrounded the property on three sides. It hadn't been lived in for at least ten years, to Levon's recollection, so there was no one to notice their slightly illegal exploration of the all but abandoned property. The little house would need a lot of work, but hard work was something they had never shirked from.

“Do you like it?” He watched her reactions as she stepped back into the living room, leaving the beautiful old front porch behind them. Inara's smile was even more breathtaking than the view outside, and the happiness he felt through the bond made the decision final before she said the words.

“I love it.”

“We'll need to change a few things, add another bathroom of course.”

She nodded. “I'm sure a long line of inspectors will be coming in and out to tell us what exactly needs to be done, but Henry...it’s perfect.”

“And the outbuildings? The old chicken coop and the barn?”

“We've always wanted a working farm...and there's a pond behind the house.”

“I think we should build a garage, attach it to the house.”

“That would be lovely. And make the back porch into a sunroom, like Tim and Jethro's.”

Henry nodded, willing to promise her anything, as he took her into his arms and kissed her forehead. “We'll need to make a few additions ourselves, not contract them out.”

“Oh course.” Her amusement made him smile. “How else would we hide my sword?”

xxx

To Bobby's amusement Peter managed to maneuver Sam and Dean into doing the dishes, which distracted them from the arrival of a set of bookshelves that arrived. They were already put together, wrapped in packing blankets to protect them on their journey. The movers carried them in, handed Peter a clipboard to sign, unwrapped them, and left again. They were high end shelves, made of real wood, oak, and Bobby raised a brow at the pricey pieces of furniture. There were only two of them, but he had a feeling it was only the beginning.

“And what exactly are these for?” Bobby asked.

Peter gave him a haughty look. “A lot of your books are rare or one of a kind, they deserve decent shelves.”

“When did you have time to buy them?”

“I didn't, however, my niece Laura has good taste. They're a gift to you from her, since you're looking after her brother and sister.” Then Peter smirked. “The ones I ordered will be here tomorrow.”
“Just who gave you permission to do all this? Reorganize my books and such.”

“Should I leave the shelves in the foyer then?” Peter asked; eyes wide. “Not like anyone will notice they're out place in this mess.”

He took a breath and through gritted teeth said, “Do what you like.”

“I will.” Peter replied. Bobby huffed and turned to stomp out of the room, behind him though he heard Peter mutter. “I'll fix everything up even if kills me.”

xxx

Shrieks from the front yard had Mac running to look out the window, worried about what might be happening in the sleepy older neighborhood of Cambridge, Massachusetts. However it was nothing to worry about, it was only Lindsay and Danny chasing each other with paint rollers, and Stella laughing and catching the entire scene on her camera. He laughed to himself and got back to his own painting, the living room almost finished but for one wall around the fireplace.

“What's going on?” Adam called from deeper in the small house.

“Just a paint war.”

“Sounds fun.”

Mac snorted and picked up his own roller. “They won't think so when they have trouble getting the paint out of their hair. How's the wiring coming?”

“I think I got it, of course a professional will have to check it out...but for now...” A sudden breeze from above made Mac look up at the ceiling fan that was suddenly moving. Adam peeked in the room a smudge of dirt on his right cheek. “We have air flow.”

“Good, that will help the paint in here dry faster. What's next on your agenda?”

“This.” And Adam moved closer so he could give Mac a long kiss.

“Someone open the door please.” Laura's voice made them break apart and Adam darted out of the room to let Laura in the backdoor. “Thanks Adam.”

“You're welcome, hey nice table. Need help bringing in the chairs?”

“Yes please, they're out back in the van.”

Mac smiled at the conversation and carried on with his painting, they didn't have all the time in the world before the new tenants arrived. A week at the most, but it was probably going to be less than that as the move was rather sudden. Since Amita had taken the job offer at Harvard the New York Community had scrambled to find a place for her and Alex to live that was close to the University.

It was pure luck they'd found the little rental house in Cambridge, that had been vacant for six months. The owner was considering putting it on the market, though it needed a little work. Everyone was hoping that the work they were putting in could shave the price a bit and hopefully Amita and Alex could eventually buy the property. It was perfect for a couple just starting out.

Mac's only regret was that Flack wasn't there to help, still recovering from his surgery...and Sheldon was keeping Flack company...and keeping the detective from doing anything too strenuous other than his physical therapy. Aiden was going to join them later to help with any
heavy lifting, and bring them lunch.

Another shriek from the front yard made Mac roll his eyes; Adam, however, breezed through with a box fan and opened the front door and propped it open. “Guys! You can flirt with each other later! Finish painting the outside already!”

The verbal denials were drowned out by Stella's laughing...and then Stella's shrieks when Danny and Lindsay realized she was recording them. Stella dashed inside, slid the camera into Adam's hands and ran through the living room and back out again, heading for the backdoor. Danny and Lindsay came running in after her, but stopped at Mac's disapproving look. Both adults blushed and turned right back around, hopefully to finish painting the front of the house.

“You'll make sure we have a copy of that video right?” Mac asked him.

Adam slipped the memory card out and pocketed it. “Oh yeah.”

xxx

“This would go faster if you’d let me help.”

Dean looked over his shoulder to glare at Sam, who was sitting on an old heap that had probably been sitting in the salvage yard longer than either of them had been alive. “I don't think so; my worst nightmares involve you under Baby's hood.”

“I can't just sit here Dean, I need to do something, be useful.”

“You can go help Peter rearrange Bobby's whole life.”

“And listen to them snark at each other...you'd think they'd known each other for twenty years, not less than twenty hours.”

“Yeah they kinda remind me of grumpy sitcom couple.” He grinned and turned back to his work. “It’s entertaining.”

“Peter has kinda taken things over huh.”

“Dude he had us doing dishes, and then kicked all the kids out of the house so they could actually you know, do kid stuff.”

“You mean play?”

“Yeah, not that there's any place to play in a scrap yard.”

A scream sent them both scrambling away from the Impala and toward what they assumed was one of the kids in trouble. They rounded a stack of cars, Dean in the lead despite Sam's longer legs and froze as a ball of fire flashed in front of them headed straight for Maddie. Helpless they watched her stand her ground...and then catch the ball of flame in her hands. She grinned, tossed it up a bit and caught it again. “Scott catch!” And she threw it to Scott who scrambled to do just that, barely catching it.

“What the hell!” Dean yelled.

Scott eeped as he fumbled the flames causing them to go out; disappearing from his hands as if they had never existed in the first place. Cora booed from atop another stack of cars, Derek sitting beside her. “It was just getting good!”
The sound of running footsteps caught their attention as Bobby and Peter rounded another corner, eyes wide and weapons in their hands. Bobby had a shotgun and Peter had a machete. “What happened?” Bobby asked.

“I don't know.” Dean said. “That's why I said 'What the hell'.”

“They were uh...throwing fire.” Sam said, oh so helpfully.

Peter snorted and lowered the machete. “You interrupted a game of fireball?”

“Fireball?” Dean asked. “What the hell is fireball?”

“This.” Stiles told them, and a ball of orange flame appeared in his hands, identical to the one Scott had fumbled. “Heads up RJ.” And he threw the flames at the older boy. RJ caught it, and then threw it to Maddie, who threw it to Scott and Scott tossed it back to Stiles who made the fire disappear. “Fireball.” He said simply.

“How?”

“Dean...” Sam started. “Stiles used a white flame to heal you...and he can absorb fire so it doesn't burn him. I guess they can all do that.”

“We can't, “Derek corrected him, “which is why we're up here.”

“Out of the line of fire, so to speak.” Peter smirked. “Shocked you, did they?”

“Well I certainly wasn't expecting it.” Dean muttered.

“There's no trees or anything to catch fire back here.” Scott said. “We thought it would be safe enough.”

“Except a few of these heaps might have enough gas in them to catch flame and possibly blow up,” Bobby told them.

All the kids made wide shocked eyes and Stiles coughed. “So we'll use white fire then...it doesn't burn.”

“How can it not burn?” Dean asked.

“Dude its magic.” RJ told him. “Our white flames heal. Some of us need to practice white fire anyway.”

“Scott and I are doing good.” Maddie protested.

Scott agreed. “Yeah, since we couldn't even make any fire a month ago.”

“White fire is harder though...guess we should have been practicing it all along. Sorry Bobby.” Stiles sighed and created another ball of fire, this time it was white. “Ready?”

Dean and Sam scurried out of the way to join Bobby and Peter as the kids started tossing the ball of white flame around. “Why are you so calm about this?”

“The white flames are harmless.” Peter informed him. “Just as they said. In fact, if it wasn't for those kids and their white fire I'd still be in a catatonic state, covered in burn scars.”

“What happened?” Dean asked.
“I'll tell you later when the kids are asleep...Derek and Cora don't need to relive it.” His eyes grew sad and he turned back toward the house.

“I don't think he needs to relive it either.” Bobby said. “Go back to your car boys; I'll call you up when lunch is ready.”

xxx

Jethro had been watching Tim closely since they had first arrived at the Kimball Community's compound and he was worried that Tim would someday want a compound for their Community. He had to admit though that what Mal and his people had was very impressive.

Above ground within the walls was a working farm, complete with large farmhouse, though personally Jethro figured it qualified for a small mansion. The only full time occupants of the house were Jayne's mother, Radiant Cobb, and Mattie Cobb, Jayne's fifteen year old sister and the youngest of the Cobb brood. The rest of Jayne's siblings all lived close by with their families, though they apparently helped their mother during the busier seasons and when Mal's team was on a mission.

The farm was impressive all on its own, with the farmhouse, the extra bunk house, the big traditional red barn, stocked pond, orchard, livestock and large gardens. However, the silo was a completely new kind of impressive. It was like an underground mansion with its kitchen, living room, multiple bathrooms, greenhouse, gym and fully stocked surgical suite. The underground garage was huge, and probably the only place big enough, besides the barn, for a dragon to fit. Jethro had a feeling it was the garage that Tim envied most.

“Think how handy it would be to have a place big enough for you to lay the egg.”

“We have a safe house, it’s even under renovations.”

Tim nodded. “Still...”

The sound of familiar voices caught their attention; still it surprised them just who the voices belonged to. Mal stepped from the tunnel and into the living room, Ellen and Jo Harvelle just behind him.

“So that's why you've been an absentee host.” Jethro smirked.

“Just a bit of a sales pitch Agent Gibbs.”

“Sales pitch?” Tim asked.

Ellen didn't look quite convinced. “Mal here wants an Agent on Site.”

“Oh.” Tim smiled at her. “That would be perfect for one of you. You both already have some knowledge of the supernatural, more than a lot of dragon kin do. There's still training you'd have to go through but you're already partly qualified.”

“Mom's worried about this being a charity gig.”

Jethro shook his head. “DC is ahead of the rest because we have the DSO HQ right in our backyard. Our official Agent on Site is Kate Todd, she used to be part of our team and before that she was Secret Service and part of Bush's detail. It's a lot of work, but we need agents and most Communities don't have an agent yet.”
Tim nodded. “Sunnydale literally just got theirs, he's a former FBI Agent, and he's moved there to be with his dragon.”

“Being a DSO Agent is going to take a lot of work, there's nothing charitable about it.” Jethro added.

Ellen still looked unsure; however, Jo was smiling, as if she were eager to sign on the dotted line. She looked to her mother and Ellen shrugged. “I'll think about it.”

xxx

“Hey Doc.”

Mark looked up from his mountain of paperwork and blinked at Ian in surprise. “Hey there Ian. What brings you by?”

Ian closed the office door behind him, shutting out the hustle and bustle of Community General. “Recently an idea was proposed to the council, about bringing in demon clinics.”

Mark nodded as he watched Ian walk further into his office and take a seat in one of the chairs in front of his desk. “Yes, I believe it was Spencer Reid's idea...and Haley pitched it to the rest of us. Its genius really, and would save quite a bit of time and money to have demon clinics provide care to dragons who are expecting. We're actually in the process of incorporating one such clinic here in L.A.”

“How is it going?”

“Well we're just in the beginning stages since Haley brought it up only recently. But Mr. Nabbit put us in contact with the clinic who takes care of the staff of the um...brothel he frequents.”

Ian raised a brow. “A demon brothel?”

“Yes. Everyone should have access to good healthcare, and Madam Dorion takes care of her staff. The clinic they use is open to working with us...why the sudden interest?”

“I haven't been feeling well.”

Mark dropped his pen. “Ian, dragons don't get sick...not after their change. Unless...”

The sniper winced. “Morning sickness?”

“Oh my.” He sat back and looked closely at Ian. “You think you're pregnant?”

Ian nodded. “Charlie and I have been trying rather vigorously for that result.” Neither dragon mentioned the blush on his face.

“So it was planned.”

“As much as it could be.”

“Do you mind if I examine you? I had a little experience with John Gage before he and the others disappeared...and my senses are even better since my own change.” Mark blinked in realization. “That's why you came to me; I was just in DC and after being around Gibbs in his current state-”

“You should be able to tell if I'm the same.” Ian finished. “Go ahead Mark.”
Mark stood and came around the desk so he could kneel in front of Ian. “May I?” Ian nodded and untucked his shirt so Mark could reach the skin of his abdomen. Mark touched the still firmly muscled flesh and closed his eyes, reaching out with his senses. It seemed to take forever, sifting through the feeling of dragon that was Ian...and Mark frowned.

“What is it?”

Mark kept his eyes closed. “You and Gibbs are different...with him I can sense his son, who is a dragon...You...” He smiled and gave Ian's stomach a pat. “There's definitely another life in there, but this child won't be a dragon.”

Ian smiled. “Boy or girl?”

“I can't tell that...I only sense that they're human.”

“That's good enough for me.”

Mark stood and let Ian right himself and tuck his shirt back in. “Do you want me to set up an appointment with the clinic?”

“Not until we're sure they can be trusted with dragon secrets.”

“Okay, but I'll want to monitor you closely during the next three months. So get a notebook and start recording everything you feel, every change you go through. All we have are Hannibal's journal and the brief notes I made on John.”

“You got it Doc.”

“And Ian, congratulations.”

“Thanks.”

xxx

Bobby sipped at his whiskey as he sat on the screened in back porch and took in the changes his guests had made. The backyard had been cleared of junk, and surprisingly there was still grass back here. They had used the space to meditate; much to Dean's amusement...and then distaste when Sam joined them. Honestly the yard hadn't looked that good since Karen...

He downed the rest of the drink and set the glass down on the little table between the chairs he and Peter were sitting in. The werewolf glanced up from the book he was reading. “I have to say, you have one of the most extensive libraries on the supernatural I've seen in a long time.”

“I try.”

“Can you read them all?”

“Most of them, some of them I have to muddle through and take time to translate.”

Peter raised a brow and held up the book of German Fairy tales. “So you're fluent in German?”

Bobby nodded. “And Japanese, Latin, Russian, Spanish and once you know Spanish, Portuguese and Italian aren't that hard.”

“Many more dead languages?”
“A few.”

Peter chuckled and opened the book back up. “You are a man of many hidden talents Mr. Singer.”

“It’s Bobby...and thanks. I think.”

XXX
“Yer sure that's all ya want?” Jayne asked. “I made plenty.”

Jethro grimaced and shook his head. “The cereal is fine.”

“He hasn't been keeping anything cooked down in the mornings.” Tim added. “It's been cereal or crackers for the past week, which has made travel very interesting.”

Jayne nodded. “My Ma had morning sickness with every one of us kids except Mattie. Know you shouldn't have regular coffee neither, but I can fix a pot of decaf for ya.” Then he grimaced. “Those are the parts I'm not lookin' forward too when Simon and I start tryin' fer kids.”

“I'm looking forward to being a father again.” Jethro said, then eyed Jayne's coffee longingly and Tim laughed.

“Our little boy doesn't seem to like anything coffee related.”

“Well that sucks.”

Jethro grumbled in agreement. “That's an understatement.”

“What about you McGee? Want a plate full?”

“I'll take some of the fruit you cut up for my cereal.”

Jayne moved the bowls of cut banana and apple closer to Tim so he could spoon them into his cornflakes. He did, and then with a look at Jethro, added a few banana slices to his dragon's breakfast. Jethro nodded in thanks and took a bite, though Tim could sense his unhappiness through their bond. He really, really missed his coffee.

Their host for the morning moved to cover the fruit when they heard voices echoing from a corridor, rather loudly. Jethro glanced to the tunnel the sound was coming from. “Ellen & Jo?”

Jayne nodded as he started to put away the food he'd fixed. “Ellen wants Jo to go back to school...she thinks being an Agent might be too much like Hunting.”

“I think it's a lot safer than Hunting.” Tim said.

“Would you want your sister to be an Agent?” Jethro asked him.

He winced. “Well...if she really wanted to...but I don't think Sara has the right temperament for any kind of agency. The DSO could use more agents though.”

“Didn't know you had a sister McGee.” Jayne commented. “Older or younger?”
“Younger.”

“She know about any of this?”

“Only the stories our grandmother told us. Sara didn't want the tattoo. Mom didn't either when she turned eighteen.”

“They never believed.” Jethro's words were a statement.

“No. So I haven't told them anything. Though with the baby on the way I might ought to let them know soon.” Tim grimaced, and Jethro reached for his hand.

“What about that Ash guy that lives at the Roadhouse?” Jayne asked, changing the subject slightly. He gonna join the DragKin?”

“I invited him too...and I'm pretty sure Merton is gonna extend an official invite later...so we'll see.”

xxx

Ian didn't want to admit it, but he was sulking. He was sitting on a couch in the Hyperion Lobby, and he was sulking, forbidden from helping get a ball room ready for the party that Anna, Amita and Cordelia were going to throw for him.

The entire LA Community was buzzing because they were going to get their first baby from him and Charlie. It wasn't a secret, he'd only wanted Mark to keep quiet until after he'd told Charlie, then Don and Alan. After that though Mark let everyone know...one thing led to another, and now Anna Hodges was throwing a baby shower for him. And he was sulking, something he hadn't done since he was a boy.

Angel approached him, catching his attention with the tray he was carrying. On it was a glass of milk and plate of cookies. Ian raised a brow at him. “Thought you were hiding in your office.”

“I was, but its too obvious. Thought I'd play host before retreating to the library.”

“Thanks.”

The vampire placed the tray on the low table beside the couch. “You don't like all this fussing over you.”

“No.”

“But its good for morale. With two of their own leaving for the east coast, they needed a reason to celebrate.”

“They should have just thrown a going away party for Amita and Alex like they originally planned.”

Angel smiled, but didn't say anything before he walked away, presumably to hide in the library so he couldn't get drafted to help decorate the ballroom. Ian blinked at his back, then smirked as he pulled out his phone. Maybe the party could be for him, and for the departing couple. Charlie had been wanting to do something special for his friend before she left for Harvard anyway.

Cordelia picked up. “Hey Ian, what's up.”

“Sorry to interrupt your shopping, but I have a request.”
“You're not getting out of this party.” She informed him, her voice like steel.

He rolled his eyes. “Of course not, but I have a better idea.”

She listened to his request and Ian could imagine the grin she was probably sporting as she laughed in delight. “And Amita thought she was getting out of a party.”

Ian shared her amusement with a smile of his own. “Not a chance.”

xxx

They were in the middle of breakfast when Stiles' dad called to share the news that LA was getting its first baby. Moments later Peter had hijacked Bobby's computer and ordered ten boxes of newborn diapers to be delivered to the Eppes home that day. Then before he even signed off Xander called on another line of Bobby's to tell them that Book and Inara were settling in Houston because Inara was pregnant. Which led to Peter ordering five boxes of diapers to be delivered to Joe and Levon's ranch, accompanied with a note that there would be more later since Inara's pregnancy would be much longer than Ian's.

Peter was about to sign off when Stiles pointed out something important.

“Gibbs and McGee are going to have their baby first. You haven't met them, but we'll get you introduced to everyone eventually.”

The werewolf just smirked and ordered another ten boxes of diapers to be delivered to the Alpha Pair's home in Virginia. Then he signed off and Stiles called Aaron Hotchner so he, Haley and Spencer would be able to get the packages inside with their spare key.

“You know a lot of people adopting babies.” Dean commented from the kitchen.

“Err, only two couples. Book and Inara are actually having theirs.” Stiles shared a look of worry with Peter. Dean wasn't in the know about dragons yet.

“Who are all these people anyway?”

“Gibbs and McGee are federal agents who just came out at work. So far NCIS has been pretty accepting of them. Ian is FBI and Charlie is a Math Professor.”

“And this Book guy?”

“Henry Derrial Book and his wife Inara Serra are Hunters.” Stiles told them. “But they're semi-retiring because of the baby.”

“Lucky them.”

“Maybe...I think...” Stiles hesitated. “They've been together for a long time. I think the reason they got into hunting was because something killed their kids.”

Dean's expression changed. “Its good of you to do that then, help look after them.”

xxx

After an interesting breakfast with the Kimball Community they were back in their truck and on their way home to the roadhouse. Jo almost wished she hadn't eaten anything, the silent treatment her mom was giving her wasn't exactly kind to her stomach.
She couldn't remember things ever being this tense between them, not even when she dropped out of college to come back to the Roadhouse. They'd had a yelling match then and while things hadn't devolved that badly yet...she could feel it coming. At least they hadn't had their big fight while visiting the Kimball Community.

“Mom.”

“I don't want to talk about this right now.”

“We need to, because I'm gonna do it.”

“Joanna Harvelle-”

“I told you how miserable I was at school, I was a freak who never fit in. This, this offer feels right.”

“You'd just be a Hunter with some fancy papers.”

“It would be safer, and they're not just gonna send me out with nothing. I could go to DC right now and start my training.”

“Jo-”

“And you could be Kimball's Agent-on-Site.”

Her mother didn't say another word, and Jo wasn't sure if she was thinking, or just too mad to speak. Maybe her Mom did need a little more time to think things over...but Jo was still making the call once they got back to the Road House.

xxx

After his phone call to Stiles Xander and Spike drove both of their cars to the apartment Willow and Tara had been leasing. The girls and their belongings, the bigger items and furniture anyway had already been moved. But there were boxes of clothes and magical paraphernalia that needed to be moved and the DeSoto had a rather large trunk.

It had been a rather sudden decision, but the witches were moving into the mansion, the old Crawford place that Angelus had once used as a headquarters. It had been sitting empty for years and they had been discussing whether they should put it to use since Angel had somehow obtained legal ownership of it.

How he'd done that wasn't something Xander wanted to think on too long, but since Angel wouldn't be coming back to Sunnydale anytime soon he'd turned over its ownership to Willow and Tara. They'd tried to give it to Xander and Spike but neither wanted to move from Rovello Drive. Spike didn't have any good memories of the mansion and Xander was attached to the former Summers' abode, it felt more like home than the house he grew up in ever had.

So the witchy pair got the mansion with plans to host the next summer camp for the kids. They'd decided that the Hellmouth was safer than they thought, especially since the attack in Beacon Hills.

Xander drove past the open gates of the Crawford place and parked his truck beside the DeSoto and got out, appreciating the view of Spike in tight jeans and a tshirt in the California Sun.

“I'll be glad when we get this over with.” Spike said, moving to the trunk to open it.
"You mean because we're invited to the shindig in LA tonight?"

"It's a two hour drive. Unless you want to fly."

"You really think I can carry everyone who's going and all the gifts we'll be bringing?"

Spike smirked at him. "You're big enough."

Xander rolled his eyes. "Yes, but I don't know how delicate some of those gifts are gonna be."

"So the witches can spell some protection on them and we'll save on petrol. It's win win love."

"Maybe...but you realize after we get this stuff inside we won't be done."

"Why not? The apartment is empty now."

Xander grinned. "Amy and Faith are moving into it."

"Bloody hell."

"They're raiding the thrift stores for furniture now before they get brand new mattresses...and I think Amy still had a few things in storage that used to be in her Mom's old house."

"Picked a hell of a day to move."

He moved to help Spike unload the DeSoto. "It was getting awkward for Faith, she didn't want to cramp Giles and Colby's newly wed style. And since Amy doesn't want to live alone just yet they're gonna be roomies."

Spike nodded, though he was grumbling under his breath about helping the Slayer and Witch move. "We'll be cutting it close then, trying to make it to LA, and that's after we buy a gift."

"Gifts, the party is for Amita and Alex too."

"They expecting?"

"Just moving to Massachusetts."

"Are we getting them a gift?"

Xander, glad that the front door of the mansion was propped open, led the way inside and put down the box he was carrying and watched Spike do the same. "I think a gift card will suffice. They're moving across the country...less stuff to take with them will make things easier."

Spike nodded. "Sounds good, have one of the computer savvies do a search of restaurants in the area so the happy couple can eat without having to cook while they're dishes are still packed away."

Xander moved in for a kiss. "You're a genius. I was just gonna suggest a Walmart gift card."

xxx

Bobby signed for the newest shipment of bookshelves, listening and nodding at the delivery guys joke how they almost didn't find his house. Apparently their gps system didn't include addresses in rural areas outside of Sioux Falls and they'd gotten lost and had to ask for directions. They shared a laugh and Bobby sent them on their way while Sam and Dean set up the shelves wherever Peter
wanted. This set like the previous ones had already been put together and all they needed was to be placed somewhere in the house. All of them were high quality, real wood that shone with richness that Bobby never would have chosen, but he had to admit that they looked good filled with his books.

They were just about to break for lunch when Bobby heard another vehicle pull up in his drive, and a peek out the window made him curse. Sheriff Mills was climbing out of her car, a suspicious frown on her face. “Balls.” He peeked in the kitchen where Peter was putting together the food. “We got company.”

“I heard the car, not another delivery then.”

“Nope, its the sheriff.”

“Shit.” The curse came from Dean. “Why is the sheriff here?”

“Because people can't stay out of my business. I'd bet almost anything that those delivery guys asked the biggest gossip in town how to find this place.”

“And with all the deliveries we've brought you to the local law's attention.” Peter sighed. “Sorry, just let her in and stay calm.”

Bobby scoffed, but waited until he heard a knock at the front door, then took his time answering it. He felt dread in his very bones as he opened the door to see the Sheriff's suspicious face up close. “Sheriff.”

“Bobby Singer.” She peered around him to stare at the newest set of shelves, sleek and rich dark wood at odds with the faded walls of his home. “You've been getting quite a few deliveries the past couple of days.”

“Yep.”

“Mind if I come in and look around?”

It was on the tip of his tongue to deny her entry, but Peter blew that plan out of the water. “Oh let her in, she's just in time for lunch, such as it is.” Peter breezed past Bobby and took the Sheriff's hand in a light handshake before bringing her hand up to kiss her knuckles. “Peter Hale. Today's lunch isn't my finest work, but you're welcome to join us.”

She blinked and nodded. “Sheriff Jodie Mills, lunch sounds wonderful.” Peter smiled, all charm and Bobby watched in fascination as his house guest led the Sheriff into the kitchen and pulled a chair out her. The perfect old fashioned gentlemen.

“I feel I have to apologize for the meager meal.” Peter told her. “Bobby let his nephews do the shopping and they came back with frozen dinners and junk food. So we're having baked cheese sandwiches and potato wedges.”

“We didn't know you and the kids would be so damn picky.” Dean muttered sliding in to grab a beer from the fridge.

Her eyes were drawn from Peter to Dean. “And you must be one of the nephews I've never heard of.”

He nodded at her. “I'm Dean.”
“Dean?”

“Winchester.” His voice was almost sullen.

“And you know Bobby Singer how?”

“Whenever our Dad needed a place to keep us out of the way he brought us to Bobby,” Sam said, joining them. “I'm Sam.”

“And you're here now because?”

“Dad's dead and we had nowhere else to go.” Dean's voice had changed from sullen to angry and he practically stomped out of the kitchen.

“I'm sorry.” Sam apologized. “We were in a car crash, and Dad didn't make it. Dean...he's working on the car. It's the only thing he can fix right now.”

“I'm sorry.” Her eyes were softer, given Sam's kicked puppy demeanor, but it only lasted a moment. “But that doesn't explain the fancy deliveries.”

“The deliveries are partly my fault.” Peter admitted. “We're completely taking advantage of Bobby's kindness and hospitality. The bookshelves are my way of trying to pay him back for looking after all of us.”

“And just who is 'us' Mr. Hale.”

He smiled and held up a finger. “Wait for it...” The back door slammed open and a mini-stampede shook the house just a bit as the kids made their way to the kitchen, then skidded to a stop at the sight of Sheriff Mills sitting at the table in her uniform. Stiles nearly stumbled at their sudden stop but Derek reached forward and caught his shoulder, pulling him upright again.

“Thanks.”

The Sheriff’s eyes were wide in shock and Peter chuckled. “Sheriff Mills, allow me to introduce my niece and nephew, Cora and Derek.” Both Hale children gave little waves. “And their friends, Maddie, Stiles, Scott and RJ.”

“Looks like you've got a houseful Bobby.” Her eyes had narrowed, the shock gone replaced by her earlier suspicion.

Stiles was frowning at her. “Why is that a problem?”

“Well sweetie, Stiles right?” He nodded and she continued. “It doesn't exactly look good when a bunch of kids are staying with a handful of grown men.”

He snorted. “Seriously? That's what's making you all frowny and suspicious?”

“I know it's hard to understand—”

“Sheriff.” Stiles said, cutting her off. “My Dad's a deputy. Maddie and RJ's Dad and Uncle are cops, RJ's Mom is a cop and Scott's Dad is FBI. We know all about 'Bad People'.“ He added air quotes to the last, and Scott elbowed him in the ribs. “Ow, Dude!”

“What Stiles is trying to say,” Peter interrupted with a smile. “Is that nothing untoward is going on here. Bobby is actually giving us a safe place to spend the summer.”
“A safe place.” The Sheriff said. “From what, who?”

“We don't know.” Maddie told her. “We were in Stiles’ back yard when they started shooting at us.” Her voice wavered. “A bullet hit Stiles.”

“It grazed me.” He corrected. “But we think the attack is connected to what happened to the Hales.” Stiles winced when Derek pulled away and walked out of the room. “Crap. Derek wait up!”

Peter sighed and picked up a set of oven mitts Bobby had never seen before and pulled out two baking trays. They looked brand new, both filled with cheese sandwiches, Peter put them on the range to cool and placed a third tray in the oven to warm the store bought potato wedges. When he turned to face them again it was with a much more somber expression. “Last fall our family was murdered, trapped in our home and burned alive.”

“My god.”

“The woman responsible was a substitute teacher at Derek's school. She seduced him...and...” He swallowed back his grief. “Derek still blames himself.”

“You all weren't home.”

“Derek and his older sister Laura weren't...Cora and I were.”

“You survived? How?”

Cora answered. “Uncle Peter threw me out a window.”

“Not my best plan, but we got out.” He shuddered. “Cora ran into the woods, and that woman and her accomplices chased her down. I tried to open the outer door to the old cellar to save our family...but it had been sealed shut.” Peter closed his eyes. “I don't remember much after that. I know I was burned some...and I could hear their screams until the end...the next thing I know I woke up in a hospital seven months later. Apparently the trauma sent me into a catatonic state.”

“I'm so sorry.”

Peter nodded, acknowledging her sympathy. “Stiles' mother and my sister were friends and I've been staying with him and his father.”

“And the second attack happened.”

“Maddie and I were visiting for the summer...but after that...” RJ shrugged. “The adults wanted us far away until they could figure out what happened. Not sure the guys with guns have said anything though.”

She nodded. “I'm sorry to bring up such horrible memories.”

Peter managed a smile. “We'll have to talk about it sometime...the sooner we start, the sooner we'll heal I suppose.” He closed his eyes for a moment and took a breath before continuing. “So, how do you feel about cheese sandwiches?”

“I love a good cheese sandwich.”

Stiles caught up with Derek in their bunk room, perched on the top bunk the older boy had
claimed. He climbed up the ladder, foot only slipping once, a reminder why he had the bottom bunk. Still he clambered up on the bed and settled beside Derek, legs hanging off the bed.

“I'm sorry.”

“For what?” Derek asked, eyes staring straight ahead.

“For talking too much...sharing things you're not ready to share. Sometimes my mouth gets ahead of my brain.”

“I'm not mad at you Stiles.”

Stiles nodded and nudged the older boy. “Are you still mad at yourself?”

“I think I'll always be mad at myself for what happened.”

“I get that.”

Derek looked at him in disbelief. “How?”

He ducked his head. “You know my mom was a witch right.”

“Yeah, so?”

“She had a lot of power, maybe enough to heal herself...maybe enough cure her cancer.”

“But...”

Stiles lifted his head and looked at Derek with watery eyes. “Instead she gave her magic to me. All of it. She had a fighting chance, but she gave me all that power...and...and sometimes I hate her for it.” He swallowed and felt the tears start to fall. “I'd rather have her here than all this magic.”

“She wanted you to have it.”

“Yeah, she said I'd need it, but that doesn't make the mad go away. I'm still mad at her, mad at myself that I couldn't use it it save her, she wouldn't let me.” He took a breath and wiped his face on his arm. “It feels like the mad will never go away.”

Derek pulled him close so his head was resting on the older boy's shoulder. “Maybe we can let go of all that anger together. With time.”

“I'll try if you will.”

“Deal.”

xxx

Bobby eased his foot on the brake as they passed Sheriff Mills at a local speed trap. Peter waved at her from the passenger seat and she waved back with a smile, Bobby rolled his eyes and concentrated on the road. They were just outside of town and he wanted to get their chore done as painless as possible.

“Its not like I tortured you to get my way.” Peter huffed, arms folding over his chest in a pout.

“Nope, ya just grumbled the entire time you were makin' breakfast and lunch.”
“Bagels with cheese is a far cry from a decent breakfast.”

“The kids had milk and juice to go with it, sounds pretty balanced to me.”

“Maybe for most of them, but werewolves need more protein in their diet, and we have higher metabolisms. Not to mention we followed up breakfast with a lunch full of carbs.”

Bobby nodded, he had noticed that Cora and Derek ate nearly twice as much as the others. Also he couldn't deny that cheese and bread for two meals in a row wasn't the best idea for anyone. “I got it, you won, we're in town. Hope you can afford to feed everyone.”

Peter nodded. “I have plenty of money.” He frowned. “Why exactly does your truck smell like dog when you don't have one?”

He frowned and narrowly avoided a redlight. “I used to.”

“Used to?”

“Demon killed it.”

“Well that's comforting.”

“The boys exorcised it, sent it back to hell.”

“Too late for the dog, what kind was it?”

“Rottweiler.” Bobby replied as he turned into a supermarket parking lot.

Peter seemed amused at that. “Typical junk yard dog. Could you be anymore of a stereotype?”

“Your family have any pets?”

“No. What was your dog's name?”

Bobby sighed. “Rumsfeld.” He could feel Peter staring at him and he glanced at the other man. “What?”

“As Stiles would say, you're not allowed to name anything ever again.”

“Shut up.” He parked the truck and shut off the engine. “We're here.”

Peter unbuckled and looked at him expectantly. “Are you just going to wait in the truck?”

“That was my plan.”

He shook his head and got out, walked around and opened Bobby's door. “Come on, you know the area and for all I know I'll need a second cart.”

Bobby had a sneaky suspicion that Peter would stand there until he complied so he undid his own seatbelt and slid out of the truck. “Fine, lets go.” Peter smirked and practically dragged him into the store.

Bobby had never been the center of attention for so long in his life. From the moment they walked in the door people stared at them. At some level he could understand their surprise, he was pretty
much a shut in. The most he ever bought was sandwich supplies and beer, yet here he was pushing the cart for a stranger who filled it in what felt like but a moment. In fact Peter left him alone with the full cart so he could get a second and start all over again.

“Ya realize my kitchen ain't that big. My pantry is nonexistent.”

“You let me worry about that Bobby.” And Peter was off again, filling his cart, leaving Bobby to trail behind while the people of Sioux Falls stared.

It was then he realized the majority of the people staring, were women. Which made sense, Peter was a good looking man. If you liked unusual green eyes and model good looks, which apparently the women staring did. Peter however completely ignored the stares, paying attention only to his shopping, and Bobby when he lagged behind. Needless to say Bobby was glad to be out of the store and pushing the carts toward his old truck.

Peter eyed him almost worriedly as they approached the truck. “Are you alright?”

“Fine.”

“You're sure?”

“Just not used to shopping this much.”

The werewolf flashed blue eyes at him in amusement. “That I can believe.” He hopped up in the bed of the truck and Bobby handed him the first of the groceries.

Together they loaded the truck, Bobby handing everything off to Peter who arranged things how he liked. The only part of the werewolf's system that he got, was that all the cold items were grouped together to stay cold longer. They emptied one cart, then the second, working methodically, finding a rhythm without meaning too. Then before he knew it he was moving to the end of the truck bed and offering Peter a hand.

Peter smirked, but accepted the hand for balance, “Such a gentleman.” And he hopped down, making Bobby realize that the assistance wasn't needed. However Peter's smirk changed to a smile and he squeezed Bobby's hand. “Thank you.” And then he was pushing the carts together and moving them to the nearest caddy.

“Find yourself a partner in crime Singer?”

Bobby turned to look at the speaker, a man younger then him, but older than Peter. “'scuse me?”

“Bad enough we have a drunk like you around here, now you're recruiting?”

Peter was at his side again and Bobby glanced at his sudden appearance, and the brow the werewolf had raised at their new audience. Then Peter smiled softly at Bobby. “Robert Darling you didn't tell me you had a reputation to keep up.” He moved in close and kissed Bobby's cheek. “You can talk with your friend later, we don't want the ice cream to melt, the children would never forgive us.”

He moved around him then to get back in the truck and Bobby glanced at the rude local who was staring at him slack jawed. Bobby smirked. “You're gonna catch flies like that.” And he joined Peter in the truck. Neither said a word until he had the truck going and pulled out of the lot. “I ain't never seen Brandon Shaw that speechless.”

“You're welcome...town drunk?”
Bobby took a breath and slowed for the first redlight. “I went through a rough patch after my wife died.”

“I’m sorry...” Peter paused, as if he too needed a breath to control his grief. “I lost my wife in the fire. Does it get any easier?”

Bobby gave a halfhearted shrug. “The pain dulls in time...with enough alcohol anyway.”

“Damn.”

He gave Peter a sharp look. “What?”

“Werewolves can't get drunk.”

“Well shit.”

xxx

He navigated his way up the outdoor staircase for what felt like the hundredth time that day. Every trip up was different since every trip had him carrying a different item or box of unusual size. Finally he reached the top, glad the door to the apartment above his new office was propped open. Andrew's voice startled him and he nearly dropped his load.

“So who's going to the party tonight?”

Colby reaffirmed his grip, dodged his way around a box labeled fragile and set the chair he was carrying next to the tiny kitchen table. “Since its for Ian, Amita and Alex I'm expected to show.”

Andrew looked up from the cook books he was shelving across the kitchen. “You going?”

“Well, I mean, since I left LA to join you guys and now the happy couple are bound for Massachusetts I figure I better.”

“Sorry to drag you into this when you have a schedule to keep.”

“Don't worry about it Andrew, I'm just glad this is working out as well as it has. You'll be here to hold down the fort so to speak, and I won't be here by myself when I get the office up and running.”

Andrew grinned. “I guess it would be boring to run the Sunnydale Field office all by yourself, and I appreciate the job offer. I'll be the best secretary I can be.”

“And the best tenant?” Colby asked smiling back.

“Well yeah, I needed a new place and this apartment is perfect. Even better the commute to work will be a trip down the stairs and a merry jaunt around the building to the front door.”

“That will definitely reduce your carbon footprint, not to mention you can have the coffee ready by the time I come in.”

The blond rolled is eyes, though there was a grin too. “So who else is going to the party?”

Colby paused in thought. “Oz is tending bar at the Bronze tonight. Jonathan and Clem are watching the Magic box. Faith and Amy will be on Patrol.”

“So that leaves you and Giles, Xander, Spike, Willow, and Tara.”
He nodded. “I think Yelina and Ray are going, it'll give them something else to think about while RJ is out of town.”

“That's good. What's left in the moving van?” Andrew asked.

“You're other kitchen chair and that recliner.”

“Cool, help me get them up here, and then you better head home so you and Giles can get ready to go.”

“Roger that.” Colby paused again. “So how did so many of us end up moving today?”

“I have no idea.” Andrew admitted. “It started out with helping Willow and Tara finishing up...and then Faith was all about giving you and Giles you're honeymoon space...I don't know how I got dragged into moving today. Sorry.”

“No problem, doing all of it today means we don't have to worry about it later. Come on, let's get the recliner first.”

Andrew put the last cookbook on the kitchen shelf. “How about we leave the recliner in the truck and wait until someone with super strength shows up tomorrow to lug it up the stairs.”

“I suppose I qualify now.” Giles' voice made them both jump and the dragon smirked a little from the open doorway. “Sorry.”

Colby rolled his eyes. “You don't sound sorry.”

“I'll make it up to you.” He promised, moving closer to give Colby a kiss.

Colby gave him a little push back toward the door. “Bring the recliner up, then you can get your welcome.”

“Understood.” And Giles headed back out and down the stairs.

“He practically gave me a heart attack!” Andrew grumbled, hand to his chest.

“Was he that sneaky before he changed?” Colby asked.

“Nope, must be a dragon thing.”

xxx

Tim eyed the choice of snack foods critically. They'd just had lunch with the Kimball Community but Jethro's appetite had increased and Tim wasn't sure how long it would be before his dragon would want more food. Or what he'd be craving. The gas station they'd stopped at on their way out of town carried the usual fare...and he was seriously leaning towards a variety of jerky.

Jethro's presence at his back made him smile. “Got the tank filled up?”

“We're ready to go as soon as you figure out what you want.”

“Oh I'm not shopping for me.”

“I'm not that picky.” His dragon peered at the choices. “Anything that's peppered.”

Tim snickered and grabbed several bags of peppered jerky. “Grab some water would you? And
then we can decide which direction we're going.”

“Aren't we driving back to DC?”

“We could always stop by Sioux Falls.”

“That's North Tim, we need to head East.”

“So you don't want to check on Stiles and the other kids?”

Jethro hesitated. “He seemed fine when he called...and we have unfinished business at home.”

Tim raised a brow. “You noticed that did you? That Ducky is mad at you.”

The response came out in a huff. “Yeah.”

“You really should have told him about Shannon and Kelly.”

“I couldn't...not then.”

“Make sure he knows that...and make sure you apologize. Its not a sign of weakness when you know you're in the wrong.”

Before Jethro could comment, his phone rang. “Gibbs.” He frowned, then smiled. “We're on our way.” He shut his phone and pocketed it again.

“New crisis?”

“Nope, not on our end.”

“But?”

“We're heading back to the the Roadhouse. Jo Harvelle wants a lift to DC to start her DSO training.”

Tim smiled too. “I'll pay for these and meet you at the car.”

xxx

When they got back to the house Sam and Cora were the only ones to help them lug the groceries in, Dean and the other kids were mysteriously out of sight. Despite that they got the food inside and stacked around the kitchen.

“So where is everyone?” Bobby asked, looking around his kitchen and wondering where all the new food was going to go.

“Most of them are practicing their magic and fire in the junk yard. Derek is helping Dean with the Impala. And you had another delivery.”

“More shelves?”

“Actually there's a nice set of cabinets for that little nook in the corner.” All eyes settled on the nook and Bobby blinked wondering how he'd missed it.

“That would be your new pantry.” Peter's voice was smug and Bobby rolled his eyes.

“And there's a new chest freezer on the back porch.”
Bobby snorted. “Guess that's my cue to put the ice cream up then.” He located the three buckets of ice cream that Peter had picked out and took them through the house to the back porch. Just like Sam said there was a large freezer there, big enough to hide at least three bodies. He opened it, satisfied to find it rapidly cooling inside and placed the ice cream at the bottom.

“Once you have a roof on the side porch I'll order an upright freezer with shelf space.”

Bobby looked up at Peter and shut the freezer. “And just who is gonna build that?”

“We'll work that out later.” Peter smirked and disappeared inside the house, probably to put the rest of the groceries away. Bobby just shook his head.

xxx

After supper the kids had divided up, the older boys were with Dean in the kitchen going over car books. The older Winchester had decided to give them a crash course in mechanics and body work with the Impala being the class project. Though he insisted that by the time summer was over all of the kids would know how to check their fluids and change a tire. For the moment though the younger kids were in the living room with Sam going over all the werewolf lore they weren't familiar with.

Bobby had little to no information on the type of wolves the Hales were, everything he had referred to a species that was weak against silver. Very similar to the skin walker myth. He had no doubt that the kids were writing down everything they knew about their own kind for him...as well as the kind of werewolf that they'd met from Sunnydale. At least his records would be accurate.

“Penny for your thoughts?”

Peter's appearance on the back porch made him jump, just a bit. “Don't do that.” The werewolf gave him a little smile and held up the empty glass he'd brought outside with him. Bobby rolled his eyes and gestured to the other chair on the other side of the small table where his own glass and a bottle of whiskey sat. “Go ahead.” Peter sat in the chair and Bobby poured him some whiskey, and watched the younger man throw it back. “Thought werewolves couldn't get drunk.”

“We can't, doesn't stop us from trying.” He put the glass down and Bobby poured him some more. “I didn't drink much before the fire.”

“You have a few reasons too now.”

Peter nodded and threw it back, but held onto his glass for a moment. “My wife...” The pain in Peter's voice brought up an old pain in Bobby. It was familiar, that devastation, he'd had years to live with it...for Peter it was still a new wound. “…she was pregnant. When the fire happened.” He put his glass on the table and Bobby poured him another shot.

“Did anyone know?”

“We hadn't announced it yet...but her scent had changed...the hormones. The others had figured it out...maybe not the kids yet. My sister was just waiting for us to tell everyone, but I'm pretty sure she'd already been planning a baby shower.”

“I'm sorry.”

Peter's smile was bitter, hand on the glass, but he didn't drink the whiskey. “I just needed to tell someone.”
Bobby knocked back his own drink for a bit of courage. “It’s not easy...losing someone like that. My wife...her death is how I got into hunting.”

“I guessed that.”

“One night it was like she was a different person...not even a person at all really. She just attacked me...came at me with a knife. I did everything I could to stop her, without hurting her, but...”

“Self preservation kicked in.” Peter’s voice was a balm on that old wound.

“Something like that...only when I fought back...no matter how much I hurt her, how much damage I caused she just kept coming at me.”

“She was possessed?”

Bobby nodded. “I didn't know what was going on, she just kept coming at me, it was enough that I stopped fighting. She would have killed me if a Hunter hadn't come busting in when he did. He preformed an exorcism then and there, she screamed and the black smoke of the demon came shooting out of her mouth. When she fell to the floor, she was dead.”

“And then?”

“Cops showed up. The only reason I didn't go to prison is because the Hunter testified on my behalf.”

“And that's how you got into hunting?”

“That hunter? He taught me everything he knew, and then I just kept going.”

Peter picked up the bottle and poured Bobby another drink, then poured one for himself. “To the women we lost, who were too good for this hell.”

Bobby clinked his glass against Peter's. “May they find peace without our sorry selves.”

“Amen.”

XXX
Tim twitched a bit when he felt something warm graze the skin of his bare shoulder. He twitched again when he felt amusement coming from Jethro's side of the bond. The warmth came back to his shoulder and he realized it was a kiss. More information filtered in as he felt the kiss change to a smile against his skin. The bed was soft but firm, familiar and their own. The smell of coffee hit his nose, too close to be coming from the kitchen. Jethro had been awake for a while.

“You ready to start the day?” Tim asked, not opening his eyes, reveling in the feeling of Jethro wrapping an arm around him.

“No.”

“Liar. I smell coffee.”

“There's a cup on your side of the bed, it should be cool enough to drink.”

He opened his eyes, seeing the cup of coffee with steam still wafting from it. “So… coffee in bed?”

Jethro laughed against his neck. “Just enough to wake you up for other things.”

“And so you can get your coffee fix from kissing me after every sip.”

“You caught me.”

Tim finally turned and looked at Jethro with a raised brow. “It’s not like you to put things off.”

Jethro frowned in confusion and he sighed. “The sooner we get up the sooner you can start mending fences with Ducky.”

“Any suggestions?”

“Maybe our son can call him Grand-Ducky?”

Jethro smiled before leaning in for that first real kiss. Tim smiled into it and cupped his dragon's face, when Jethro pulled back Tim had a new question for him. “We still need a name, thoughts?”

“Maybe.”

Tim looked close into those blue eyes, but all he got from them and the bond was amusement and love...and a need for the coffee that was rapidly cooling. He smiled and changed the subject.

“Think Jo got any sleep after we dropped her off at HQ?”

Jethro’s gaze flitted to the coffee and back to him. “Probably not. Did you get any sleep when you were accepted into FLETC?”

“Not the first night, too excited.”
“There's your answer. Drink your coffee.”

Tim laughed and sat up before reaching for the coffee, it was still warm enough to enjoy and he took a sip, swallowed, and then Jethro kissed him, licking the taste from his mouth.

It was going to be an interesting cup of coffee.

xxx

Haley hummed to herself as she worked around the kitchen, she’d been up for an hour and a half, and was on her third and final cup of coffee for the morning. Any more and she'd be jittery until lunch. Aaron and Spencer, however, were barely awake; each with their own coffee in front of them, while Spencer attempted to feed Jack his oatmeal. Both of them would probably need a wipe down by the time breakfast was over.

The doorbell rang and she shared a glance with Aaron who perked up at the sound, listening closely with his newly enhanced hearing. “It’s Elle. I'll get it.” He stood, and coffee in hand, made his way to the door. Haley smiled and put the bacon on the table before finishing up the eggs.

A moment later, after murmured greetings and apologies for showing up early, Aaron led Elle into the kitchen and sat back down at the table beside Spencer who was slightly more awake and finally aware of the amount of Jack's oatmeal he was wearing. He blushed as Elle smirked at him. “Breakfast looks good on you Reid.”

He rolled his eyes and nudged another chair out with his foot grumpily. “Good morning to you too.”

She sat in the offered chair and Haley put a plate and cup of coffee in front of her. “Cream and sugar are on the table. Toast?”

Elle nodded. “Thanks Haley.”

“No problem.” Haley put bread in the toaster and put the bowl of scrambled eggs beside the bacon. Another trip and her men had plates in front of them, and her own was at its usual place. She added the butter to the breakfast arrangement and snagged the toast as it popped up adding it to the stack she'd made on a saucer and delivered it to the table as well. There were enough slices for each adult to have two.

They ate mostly in silence; allowing Haley to observe them keenly. Spencer had managed to get the worst of the oatmeal off of him and Jack with a wet cloth he'd had on hand just for that purpose. He'd given half of his buttered toast to the toddler to gum on while he ate his own breakfast.

Aaron was even more alert now, enough to get his second cup of coffee before tackling his eggs and bacon. He glanced at Elle now and then who wasn't making eye contact with any of them, except for Jack who was unusually quiet and studying Elle with rapt attention.

“Elle?”

She put her fork down at Aaron's voice, her food only half gone. “Yeah. I wanted to talk to you about leaving the BAU.”

Spencer paused, eggs falling off his fork. “You want to transfer?”

“No Reid...I want to leave the FBI.”
“Because of the last unsub? The Fisher King?”

“Maybe...maybe I'm a little burnt out. Maybe I just need a change.”

“What sort of change?” Haley asked.

“The DSO needs agents. I still want to be part of all this...I just need to be involved in a different part.”

“How soon?”

Elle met Aaron's eyes. “The sooner the better...I hear there's going to be a new agent-in-training soon.”

“She got into D.C. last night.” Spencer told her. “Jo Harvelle will be training alongside Becky Dingle.

“You're sure about this?”

“Yeah Hotch, I'm sure.”

“I'll make some calls after breakfast.”

xxx

Ellen dialed the phone in her office, unused to the near complete quiet that filled the bar. It hadn't been this quiet since Jo's stint in college, hell it hadn't even been this quiet then...because Ash was clunking around. At the moment though he was staying out of her way and out of her sight, she wasn't in the best of moods and he didn't want to piss her off.

The call went through and rang at the other end of the line, it rang a second time and someone picked up. “Hello.” Malcolm Reynolds' voice came out a bit grumpy, but she expected no less.

“Just the man I wanted to talk too.”

“Mrs. Harvelle, what can I do for you on this fine morning?”

“I told you its Ellen, take a sip of that coffee I'm sure you've got in front of you and then ask me again.”

There was a pause, and she could just hear what sounded like someone gulping, and his voice came again. “Thank you, I'd just sat down with it. So Ellen, what can I do for you?”

“That offer you made us?”

“I remember, I told you we needed an Agent-on-Site and I was hoping one of you would accept.”

“Jo won't, obviously, I'm sure you've heard she's already in D.C. so she can be a Mobile Agent.”

“I did hear a rumor of such a thing.”

“Well, I'm calling to accept your offer. When Jo is done with her training, I'll head to D.C. myself. Then I can be your Agent-on-Site.”

“It'll be much appreciated, and there will be a paycheck.”
“As I've heard...however while I'm gone, someone will need to be here to run my saloon.”

“I'll see to it that someone is there. A few of my people might welcome the change.” Mal paused again, another sip of coffee. “You have the number for D.C.?”

“I do.”

“Good, then I wish you and Jo luck, and we'll be around later to officially welcome you to the Kimball Community.”

“Thanks.”

xxx

She'd spent a good portion of the night tossing and turning and had ended up coming in early leaving Sean to take Owen to daycare that morning. The reason for her inner turmoil centered on the kids she'd met at Bobby Singer's; something, she wasn't sure what, was eating at her. Something about their reasons for being at Bobby's didn't ring true, so she was running a background check. Jodie felt a little ridiculous for running the check on a group of kids, but over the years she'd learned to trust her gut instincts.

It took a while to check out each child, but one by one she confirmed their identities. Lucjan 'Stiles' Stilinski was from Beacon Hills California and his father was a deputy there. Scott McCall was the son of FBI Agent Rafael McCall, his parents were divorced and his mother was a registered nurse. The background on Raymond Caine Junior 'RJ' and Madison Barnham-Keaton was a little more difficult to obtain but it was there, the story checked out.

Jodie downed another cup of coffee and tackled the Hale fire, and the details nearly brought the coffee and her breakfast back up. Everything Peter had said was true...what he'd left out though was the woman who orchestrated the entire tragedy had tried to come after the Hale children again. She'd gone so far as to hold a member of the N.Y. crime lab at gunpoint before being taken down by one Lieutenant Detective Mac Taylor. The woman was now in police custody, and was not expected to walk again due to injuries sustained during her arrest. Couldn't have happened to a more deserving person than Kate Argent.

There was just one more thing she wanted to do, just to satisfy the gnawing feeling she had that things weren't quite on the up and up. She called the Beacon County Sheriff's department and asked for Deputy Stilinski, glad that he was in so early. It took a moment for the call to be switched over before a masculine voice came over the line.

“Deputy John Stilinski.”

Here went nothing. “Hello, this Sheriff Jodie Mills over in Sioux Falls, South Dakota-”

“Is my son alright?”

Jodie blinked, surprised at the question. “So you are aware of his location?”

“I thought I was, isn't he at Singer's Salvage and Scrapyard? In the care of Bobby Singer and Peter Hale?”

“Yes.”

“And he's alright?”
“He was yesterday.”

There was a pause, and Jodie could almost feel his annoyance over the line. “Then why are you calling Sheriff Mills?”

“Are you aware that not too long ago Bobby Singer had a dead girl in his house?”

She thought she heard him sigh, yep, definitely annoyed. “I know that the day she died was the first time Bobby had ever seen her.”

Time to bring out the big gun. “Did you know he killed his wife?”

“I know his wife attacked him.” Stilinski's voice was colder now, bordering on angry. “No one knows why she suddenly lost it, but he was forced to defend himself.”

“So you're okay with your son staying at his house, knowing all this?”

“Yes. Bobby Singer is a good man, no matter what you or the town of Sioux Falls believes. Now if you'll excuse me, I have actual work to do.”

“Wait, about the attack that happened at your house...”

“A higher authority has taken over the case, thank you for your concern Sheriff.” His voice was followed by a click...she'd pushed him a little too hard.

xxx

Ian trudged out of the bathroom, his stomach still quivering uncomfortably, though he knew there was nothing left in him to come up. He deemed the kitchen and dining room unsafe since that's where the food was. So instead of rejoining the Eppes men for breakfast he made his way to the sitting room and settled on the sofa, stretching out on it. Charlie appeared a minute later with a plate of crackers and a steaming mug of what smelled like ginger tea. Carefully he placed the simple fare on the coffee table and then settled on the floor in front of the sofa.

“Feeling better?”

“No, but I'll try to eat some crackers in a few minutes.”

“And the tea.”

He rolled his eyes. “And the tea.”

“You need to stay hydrated, and the tea is decaf, maybe that will help.” Ian raised a brow and Charlie clarified. “Caffeine is bad for the baby.”

“Tell Alan I'm sorry about breakfast.”

“Don't worry about it; we can always say you ate too many sweets last night at the party.”

He felt his face heat, just a bit. “I don't think I've ever eaten so much cake in life, I don't even like sweets that much.”

Charlie smiled. “Cravings are already starting? Really Ian, Dad will understand, he went through this with my mom twice you know.” His smile faded at the mention of Alan.

“What's wrong?”
“Dad's thinking about moving out.”

“He's done that before though, and he's still here.”

Charlie nodded and rested his chin on Ian's shoulder. “That was before the baby, with us starting a family he wants to give us more room.”

“Charlie your house is huge.”

“I know, but he wants us to have the master bedroom...and I think he may want to move in with Anna.”

“So he's using us as an excuse to shack up with his girlfriend.”

Charlie laughed and kissed his shoulder. “Something like that.” He reached up to rub Ian's stomach. “Any word about the clinic?”

“I think Mark is satisfied with them, but part of the deal is that he, Jesse, and Amanda all take shifts there after some training.”

“That makes sense, they would need to be familiar with demon anatomy and there are so many different kinds of demons. It may be on the job training.”

“Maybe.”

“Will you let me know when your first appointment is? So I can go along?”

Ian nodded and took Charlie's wandering hand in his. “Of course Professor.”

xxx

Kate made a note of the memo she'd just gotten in her email with a smile. Their first class of agents-in-training was going to grow by one it seemed. Which made a total of three, but still, it was a start. Becky Dingle, Jo Harvelle, and now Elle Greenaway would make up their first class, as soon as a few more calls happened and the paperwork came through.

She opened up another folder, this one containing the files of the next class that would attend training later in the summer. Aiden Burns, Colby Granger, and Ellen Harvelle. Aiden had been New York's Agent-on-Site for months, but they were only now providing official training and the new werewolf was looking forward to it. Kate made another note, on Colby's paperwork, that Rupert Giles would probably come with him since the pair was newly bonded. Maybe Mr. Giles could go through the library inventory and let them know if they were lacking in anything supernatural.

The phone rang and Kate answered it without hesitation. “Agent Todd.”

“Kate, it's Terry Bagwell, down in tech support. Someone's done background checks on the summer camp kids.”

Kate frowned. “Who knows about this?”

“We've been monitoring any mention of their names and the attacks... the background checks were done from Sioux Falls, by a Sheriff Jodie Mills. John Stilinski called as well; because she called him, asking if he knew Bobby Singer's background. And now I've told you...Rudy is still keeping an eye on the screens.”
“What else has this Sheriff Mills been looking into?”

“The Hales, the fire, and Kate Argent. What I'm worried about...is what she'll find if she looks up the Winchesters.”

“Just keep an eye on her for now, don't engage or shut her down unless absolutely necessary. I'll make a call.”

“Thanks Kate.” Terry hung up and Kate double tapped the phone so she could make a call out and hit the short cut to Fornell's office.

“Director Fornell’s office, this is Gil, how may I help you?”

“Gil its Kate, is the Director in his office?”

“He is, is this an emergency?”

“It might end up as one, Bobby Singer's local sheriff has been running background checks and the Winchesters might be next.”

“Oh.” Gil said. “Yes that could be an emergency, I'll connect you.”

“Thanks Gil.” There was a click and another, and then Fornell was on the line.

“What's the almost emergency Kate? I was about to make a call regarding Elle Greenaway's transfer.”

“The Sheriff in the Sioux Falls area has been doing background checks on the kids and the Hales...we're worried the Winchesters might be next on her list. Their backgrounds are enough to alarm anyone.”

“They are aren't they? I remember the L.A. Community suggested they be wiped clean a while ago.”

“Might be something to bring up to the Director of the FBI when you call about Greenaway.”

Fornell made a displeased noise. “That call was going to be interesting enough; we've already poached a few of his agents.”

“Including you.” She smiled.

“Yes.”

“Your former Director should be glad he still has Eppes, Edgerton, and his BAU boys.”

She heard Fornell stifle a laugh. “True. Tell Terry and Rudy to shut down that Sheriff if they need to.”

“Yes sir.”

“And Kate,”

“Yes?”

“Call Stiles and let him know what's going on.”
“On it.”

xxx

Bobby picked up the phone on its second ring, he and Sam were the only ones in the kitchen and he was closer to the wall phone. “Singer Salvage.”

“This is Agent Caitlin Todd with the DSO, may I speak to Stiles?”

“Yep, hang on a sec.” He held the phone away from him. “Stiles! Phone!”

A thump came from somewhere else on the first floor, he wasn't sure where and then there were rushed footsteps coming toward the kitchen. Stiles appeared in the doorway a moment later. “My dad?”

“An Agent Todd? From the DSO?”

“Oh, Kate Todd. She's the Agent-on-Site for D.C.” He accepted the phone from Bobby. “Hey Kate. What's up?” Bobby and Sam watched as Stiles frowned at whatever the DSO agent was telling him. “Seriously?” Stiles asked. “Ugh. Thanks for letting me know. I thought we were convincing enough when she was here. I'll tell the others, call back if she gets to close or whatever. Bye Kate.” He huffed and hung up the phone.

“What was that about?” Sam asked, newspaper long forgotten on the kitchen table.

“Sheriff Mills has been running background checks.”

“Oh oh.”

“Balls.”

Stiles rolled his eyes. “On us, as in me and the other kids and the Hales. But she may check you and Dean next, so prepare to have your records erased by the DSO if she goes snooping.”

Sam made wide eyes at Stiles. “They can do that?”

“Director Fornell is gonna call his old Director at the FBI to arrange it.”

“Cool.”

Bobby took a sip of his coffee. “I knew her showin' up yesterday wouldn't be the end of it.”

“Yeah, but our people can handle her.”

xxx

Tobias hung up the phone with a frown as Gil came in with his coffee and lunch on a tray. “I am capable of walking to the cafeteria Gil.”

“I know sir, but best not to make the new recruit nervous, she's not quite settled in... and you look a little grumpy.”

He huffed and leaned back in his chair. “Maybe a little.”

Gil placed the tray on the desk in front of him. “What did your former Director say?”
He eyed the roast beef sandwich eagerly. “Obviously he was alright with erasing the Winchester records and clearing them of any charges...but he's still not happy that the DSO has poached another agent. It’s three now including me.”

“But Agent Greenaway's transfer is underway?”

“It is.”

“You know, Agent Granger is already setting up a field office. Perhaps other communities can do the same once they have an Agent-on-Site.”

“I like that idea, I did get the email he sent about the property they bought and the secretary he hired.”

“I might also have a suggestion.” Gil admitted as he stepped away.

“What's that?”

“A second office, not a field office, but a full scale operation in another city.”

“I like the idea, but we would need a location and people to run it. We barely have all of our positions filled here.”

“It wouldn’t' hurt to ask, sir.”

“Alright, draw up a proposal and I'll look it over after I eat, then we'll call the Monarchs before we email it to the Council Reps.”

“Will do.”

xxx

It took some figuring out, since the system was still new and she didn't need to access the traffic cams very often. However she got what she needed, pictures of the young men staying with Bobby Singer. Sam and Dean Winchester.

Sam was more or less clean, though the article she found on the death of his girlfriend Jessica was horrific and heartbreaking. Dean on the other hand...was supposed to be dead and buried in St. Louis, Missouri. Before she could look into the cause of death and record that was attached to the young man her screen flickered...and her computer crashed.

“What the?” Jodie stared at the frizzy blue screen and waited for it to reboot. When it didn't she leaned down to hold the power button and shut the computer off manually. As a precaution she waited a couple of minutes before turning it back on. It went through its protocols, telling her it was shut down improperly and booted back up.

She opened her browser up and went back to work...only...all her recent searches in the law enforcement database were gone. When she typed in Dean's name again, nothing happened. All she could find were a few parking tickets in various cities that had all been paid.

“What the hell?”

xxx

Rudy breathed a sigh of relief and met Terry's eyes across the room; she gave him a thumb up from her terminal. She looked just as relieved. “I'm gonna get a refill.” She said with her own sigh. “You
“Want coffee or CafPow?”

“Tea please.” She nodded and left the lab and Rudy leaned back in his chair and spoke into his headset. “That was a close one.”

Merton’s voice came through the headset. “A little too close, too bad the Winchesters have no idea we just saved their butts.”

“On the contrary, Sam Winchester is in the loop on this.”

“Oh, good.” Merton sounded happy, glad their work was being recognized by someone. “Better keep him in the loop then in case that sheriff goes back to Singer’s with more questions.”

Rudy winced. “She's probably really suspicious right now.”

“So am I calling Stiles or are you?”

“Would you do it? I need to update the Director so he can pass word along.” He paused and then asked; “How’s things in Cascade?”

Merton laughed. “Not bad. The house we bought is almost livable, which is good since we’ve already moved in. Jim kept his loft though so we'll still have a place in the city.”

“Good plan. Glad to hear you’ve settled in so well.” He sighed. “Well, things to do and DSO Ids to make. Want to have things ready for the new recruits.”

“Later Aphid.”

“Always a pleasure Gargoyle.”

xxx

Jo nibbled at her roast beef, almost too nervous to eat. She'd spent her morning getting a physical and having blood drawn for tests. Pretty standard stuff, and so far she'd gotten a clean bill of health. Still, she was starting something new, something exciting, and even though she hadn't started her actual training yet she was thrilled to be at the DSO HQ.

“Hey, you're Jo right? Jo Harvelle?”

She looked up to see a pretty brunette and nodded at her. “Yeah that's me.” Jo offered her hand to the other girl as she sat across from her. “Nice to meet you-”

“Becky Dingle.” They shook hands. “I'll be your classmate.”

“The only one?” Jo asked.

“No, I've heard we'll have one more. An FBI agent transferring in from the BAU.”

“BAU?”

“Behavioral Analysis Unit...they profile serial killers, arsonists, rapists. All serial offenders.”

“Wow. And they're joining the DSO?”

“She's part of the D.C. Community...but I don't know much else about her. I haven't been here that long; I've been helping my brother move and settle into the Cascade Community.”
“Where's that?”

“Washington state. Do you know much about the Communities?”

“No, I've only met the D.C. Alphas and the Kimball Community. Malcolm Reynolds has offered the position of Agent-on-Site to my mom. She'll be coming here later for training...different class, thank god.”

“Wow; that would be so awkward to go through job training with your mom in the same class.”

“I know. So how did you get into this life?”

Becky smiled. “Well, I was born to it.”

“Tell me?”

“Sure.”

xxx

Ducky stared in surprise when he answered the door, and Tim smiled hopefully. “Hey Ducky, have time for company?”

“Yes of course Timothy.” He stood aside to let them in and closed the door behind him. “I suppose its best you didn't call first; the phone would have woken Mother.”

“Sorry about that Duck, we didn't want to give you a chance to say no.” Jethro told him as he led them to the kitchen where he had tea waiting.

That admission earned them a knowing look from the good doctor as he poured them each a cup of tea. “I'm sorry I don't have coffee Jethro.”

Jethro made a face and sat down at the kitchen table. “The baby doesn't like coffee anyway Duck.”

Ducky smiled and sat with his own tea at the head of the small table. “Your little one is giving you trouble already?”

“Morning sickness...look Duck...the reason we showed up...is because...” Jethro took a breath. “I wanted to apologize, for never telling you about Shannon and Kelly.”

“I never expected you to apologize, Jethro, since it’s a sign of weakness.”

“Not between friends, and knowing when to apologize is a sign of strength.”

“Sounds like very sage advice.”

“Tim does his best.” Jethro shot him a grin.

“And as part of the apology, we wanted to give you this.” Tim handed over the gift bag he'd carried in.

Ducky accepted the bag and pulled out the t-shirt with the phrase Grand-Ducky airbrushed onto it. “Grand-Ducky?”

“We haven't told my father or Tim's family yet, but we'd be honored if our son could call you that.”
Ducky's eyes teared up a little. “Oh Jethro, Timothy. I'm the one who's honored.”

“And there's more.” Tim told him.

“What could be more precious than this?” Ducky asked.

Jethro opened the box he'd brought with him and lifted out the photo album. “I want to tell you everything about Shannon and Kelly.” He slid the book over to Ducky; there was a picture of the three of them on the front. “I'm finally ready to talk about them to someone besides Tim.”

“This is indeed a precious gift Jethro, thank you.”

xxx

Merton was on the shared computer at the desk in the expansive living room when he got the forwarded email from Blair. Fornell and Gil Wilde had sent a copy of said email to each Council Rep; and Blair, being at work, had sent it on to Merton. He looked over the proposal thoughtfully, it wasn't a bad idea.

“Junk mail?” Tommy asked from the corner couch where he was battling one of their houseguests via video game.

“Fornell and his assistant want to open up a second HQ and are looking for a community to host it and people to staff it.”

Tommy paused the game. “I thought they had a skeleton crew in D.C...especially since Lori is gonna move out here and be our Agent-on-Site.”

“Its makes sense Tommy. Other agencies have more than one large scale office...though I don't know that we need much more than a small field office.”

“You should probably have three large offices.” Lorraine suggested from a recliner where she was curled up with a book. “Your D.C. office for the east coast, another one in the middle, and then one on the west coast. Not here necessarily.”

“Chicago's Community is pretty small...I doubt they would need a larger office,” Merton added, thinking out loud. “Not sure what Denver's plans are.”

Tommy yawned and stretched. “Houston's Community is getting bigger.”

“True.” Merton agreed

“But where would they find people to run it?” Tommy asked.

“What about us?” They all turned to look at Danica, one their houseguests, a cyborg like John Kennex and Dorian Alleyne. “You've been working to help us adjust and reintegrate...we'll need jobs...and a support system.” She shrugged. “I can't speak for the others, but I wouldn't mind being a DSO Agent.”

Tommy looked from Danica to Merton. “What do you think?”

Merton smiled. “I think we should pitch the idea to the others and see what happens.”

xxx

Everything was packed and the apartment was almost empty, it was their last night in L.A. and
they were spending it eating Chinese takeout and watching Sparsh, one of Amita's favorite Bollywood movies on her laptop. It wasn't one of Alex's favorites, but it was good, even if he'd rather watch Mohan Joshi Hazir Ho! But since they had a plane to catch in the morning a shorter movie was in order, and to be honest, since dating Amita, he didn't mind watching love stories.

He watched her, her beautiful brown eyes focused on the screen, and felt his heart beat a little faster. Alex knew he was lucky, and never wanted to forget that.

“I love you.”

Amita nearly choked on her noodles, but managed to swallow them with some grace, and then threw a piece of carrot at him. “Don't do that!”

Alex ducked his head with a snicker. “Sorry, I didn't mean to make you choke.”

She huffed, but smiled at him. “I love you too, even if you did just try to kill me with a surprise love confession.” Then she took the carrot back from his shoulder and popped it in her mouth. “I knew that already though, why else would you want to move all the way to Cambridge with me?”

“I just thought I should say it, and say it more often.”

“Thank you.”

XXX
Rudy entered the computer lab, eyes still a little bleary and his coffee cup halfway to his mouth. Terry was already at her station and gave a little wave in his direction. “Morning Rudy.”

“And good morning to you Ms. Bagwell, anything interesting on the screens?”

“Nope.”

He nodded and headed toward his station. “Good, let’s hope it stays that way. The last thing we need is a fiasco like the Parker-Nichols family last week.”

“If you just jinxed us I’ll never forgive you.”

“I doubt I jinxed us, it’s not like the San Diego bunch are going to go on another vacation.”

“Pay attention Rudy, the Nichols boy is going to spend part of his summer on the Apache Reservation getting to know his uncle John Blackwolf.”

“Oh...well...that's not so bad. If something happens Mr. Blackwolf can call for help and the Denver Community can be there in a flash. That's really our only pressing matter.”

“Did you conveniently forget about the summer camp kids?”

Rudy sighed. “Almost, but things have been quiet with them for a week now. What could possibly-”

“You finish that sentence Rudy and I'll fill your CPU with jello.”

He slammed his mouth shut and didn't say another word. The jello threat was mild in comparison to what she could do with her telekinesis.

xxx

The domestic routine they'd fallen into was eerie to say the least, Dean couldn't remember a time when something besides the Impala felt like home. Bobby's house had always been a sort of haven, a stopover when their dad couldn't take them with him...or when he just needed them away because they reminded him too much of Mom. Now, though...Bobby's house was starting to feel like a home. In large part because of Peter.

The guy was up early, every morning, with coffee and food ready by the time Bobby and the kids came down. Hell before even Sam was up. This morning, however, Dean happened to venture down just as the coffee started perking, a welcome sound and smell to his senses. He peeked into the kitchen to see Peter at the stove, iron skillet in front of him and the smell of bacon nearly made Dean drool. “Don't just stand there, come keep the bacon from burning, lift the press and check it while I get the fruit cut.”
“Press?”

“Bacon press, it keeps the bacon from curling and keeps it crisp.”

Dean peered closer and saw the iron implement on top of the bacon. “When the hell did you get that?”

“It was buried in one of the lower cabinets.” Peter stepped aside and moved to the cutting board where there were apples and bananas waiting to be cut. “My guess is that nobody has used it since Mrs. Singer.”

Dean paused, and frowned at Peter. “What?”

Peter already had an apple cut in half and proceeded to cut it into fourths and didn't look up. “Bobby's late wife.”

“Bobby was married?”

That made Peter look up, eyes a little wide. “You didn't know?”

“No.”

“Then this conversation is over.”

“What the hell?”

“Dean, if Bobby hasn't told you why or how he got into Hunting, it’s certainly not my place to.”

Oh. Dean nodded and peeked at the bacon, it still looked raw-ish. “So...why do you know?”

“We bonded over alcohol and dead spouses.”

“Sorry man...your wife? That fire?”

Peter nodded and started on another apple, cutting it very precisely. “It gave us common ground.”

“Fuck. Sorry.”

“Just watch the bacon Winchester.”

xxx

Tobias looked at the newest email in his inbox with a smile. Since Gil had drawn up a proposal for a second office they'd had several suggestions. In the end though Houston had been chosen and the Community had agreed to host the secondary office. Though no one had yet inquired about any property for the project. They did, however, have several offers for future staff; every one of Kennex and Dorian's fellow rescued cyborgs were interested in being DSO agents.

It would be slow going, like baby steps, but they'd get there.

A new message suddenly appeared in his inbox and he blinked, surprised, it was from Dorian Allyene. For a moment he wondered if just thinking about the cyborgs had conjured the email, because at this point he figured anything was possible. He clicked on it and read the message, then grinned. Dorian had suggested someone for the position of Assistant Director for the future Houston office.
Tobias picked up the phone and dialed Gil's desk in the outer office, his secretary picked up right away. “Sir?”

“Get me everything you can find on a Sandra Maldonado, Boston PD.”

“Yes sir...good news sir?”

“I think so.”

The old plantation house that Fornell had acquired to be the DC Community's safe house was going to need a lot of work. Too much to have any of the house ready for Gibbs; for the time he was ready to lay his egg. So instead, they were focusing on the barn that was backed up to the woods that surrounded the property. Their Alpha would fit in the barn better anyway and would even be able to stretch his wings, almost to their full span.

So for now they were installing electricity, provided by brand new solar panels on the roof, next would be a series of ceiling fans to help circulate the air. The summer heat didn't bother dragons, but everyone else would appreciate the airflow. Water would come next, followed by plans to install a small apartment/guesthouse inside the barn where it would be hidden from prying eyes.

It was only going to be three rooms. A bedroom for privacy, a bathroom, and a combined kitchen/living area. It would be simple and serviceable; something that Gibbs would prefer over the extravagant house. However they had no idea how much their Community would grow, so better safe than sorry. They'd get to the house eventually.

At that moment Spencer was holding a ladder steady for Abby as she worked the last screw into one of the fans. They were on their second one of the morning, and it was already nearly a sauna in the barn, even with the doors wide open. He, for one, would be glad when they had all the fans up and running.

“You're very good at this.” He told her, still in awe of Abby's outfit, she looked completely professional with her overalls, tool belt and hard hat.

She grinned, not looking away from her work. “I volunteer with Habitats for Humanity.”

“Ah, that explains it.” He glanced away to check on Aaron who was up on another ladder, and nearly went into a daze as he watched his dragon reaching upward toward the fan.

“Mind on your work Spencer.” Aaron, like Abby didn't look away from the fan he was installing, he did however give Spencer a mental nudge through their bond. “We'll have time for that later.”

Spencer laughed and ducked his head, catching Jimmy Palmer's amused gaze. Jimmy was holding Aaron's ladder steady, as he was Abby's. Before either of them could say anything though Abby gave a satisfied sigh.

“Hey Spencer, can you get me one of the bulbs?”

He nodded and knelt down to get a light bulb from the box and placed it in the basket. Rather than have either of them going up and down the ladder needlessly they were using baskets with ropes and pulleys to transport the smaller items up.

“Allow me, my boy.” Ducky offered as he strode over to Spencer, who was grateful to put his concentration back on the ladder. The old doctor grabbed hold of the rope and pulled, raising the
basket until it was within Abby's reach.

“Thanks Ducky.”

“You're quite welcome, and if you lot are close to a stopping point I suggest we take a break in the breeze and have some water.”

“Oh thank goodness.” Jimmy muttered.

“Heat getting to you Jimmy?” Abby asked.

“A little.”

“Doctor Mallard, could you send some light bulbs my way?” Aaron asked.

“Ducky, Aaron. Please call me Ducky.” He lowered the basket back to the floor and moved to one at the foot of Aaron's ladder. “How many?”

“Three, and thank you Ducky.”

“You're quite welcome.” Ducky raised the basket, three bulbs inside for Aaron to install and things were quiet again as they worked.

Jimmy, however, had a question. “After the barn is finished are we going to start on the house?”

“That would be a lot of work Jimmy. Like full time professional work if we want it done this century.”

“I've been thinking about that.” Spencer said.

“Do tell Spencer.”

“Since we're reaching out to Demon Clinics for future use in our communities for Dragon health...I've wondered if there were non-human contractors that could handle things like this.”

“I'm sure Xander would know.” Aaron suggested. “But before we tackle the house, we might consider converting the carriage house to a garage and adding an upstairs apartment to it.”

“That would take less time and provide another bed or two wouldn't it.” Ducky said.

“That's a great idea...there's the old stables too and the actual guest house. Those are all projects we could work on while we have professionals work on the main house.”

“Something to discuss when we're all together for a meeting,” Aaron added. “Good thinking Spencer. You can lower the basket Ducky.”

“Very good.”

A minute later Abby and Aaron were making their way down the ladders and Ducky escorted them all outside for the aforementioned water break.

xxx

The house was perfect.

It was actually a tiny thing with a partial shotgun design. The front door opened into the living
room and from that vantage point one could see through an arch into the kitchen and right out the backdoor. To the right of the front door was another open archway into the hall where there was a staircase, another arch to the kitchen, and doors leading to a small bathroom and laundry room.

Upstairs there was another hallway, tiny in comparison to the one downstairs. There was a bedroom on each side of the hall, and a larger bathroom to the right. They'd picked the larger bedroom as the master, and the smaller one was their new home office.

In the week they'd been in the house in Cambridge they'd accumulated an interesting menagerie of furniture. Instead of transporting what they'd had on the west coast, all the way to the east coast, they'd given up pretty much every piece of furniture they'd owned. Now their new bedroom sported a new queen size mattress and box springs. They hadn't gotten a frame yet but it was on their list of things to do.

Their living room had a couch they'd gotten from the Hales, a dark blue three-seater that unfolded into a decent sized guest bed. Next to it was probably the ugliest plaid overstuffed chair that existed in the city, but it was also the comfiest chair either of them had ever owned, a gift from Adam Ross. A couple of mismatched end tables one from Danny Messer, one from Mac Taylor, sported matching lamps from Stella Bonasera. All of them were arranged to face either the fireplace or the TV they'd gotten from Aiden Burns. She promised that there would be an entertainment center on the way, as soon as she helped one of her brothers to move.

The New York Community, which was practically next door to Cambridge and Boston, had been good to them. Not only finding the small two story rental, but fixing it up for them and finding them furniture, or passing on what they didn't have room for. Everything was slowly coming together and starting to feel like a home.

“I have a good feeling about this place.” Amita said, looking up from where she sat on the floor, unpacking their books and placing them on one of the bookshelves. The smaller bedroom turned office had a set of low shelves built into one of the walls that came up about waist high.

“I do too.” Alex smiled at her from their desks, thrift store finds they'd gotten while shopping with Laura. The desks faced one another, pushed together, at the other side of the room, their laptops were on them and Alex was fiddling with his.

“How's our internet?”

“Looks good, decent speed, we shouldn't have any problems.”

“You guys ready to take a break?” Laura's voiced sounded from downstairs.

“I think so, lunch ready?” Amita called back.

“Yeah, Stella says to eat it while it’s hot.”

Alex shut his laptop and stood before walking to her and offering her his hand. “You heard the lady, lunch is served.”

Amita accepted his hand with a grin; glad they'd made the move, glad they already had friends and glad that everything was going their way.

xxx

Having a full house had become a normal occurrence over the past few years. It had started with just the team coming over for dinners, movie night, and barbeques. However since the Quantico
Community had fused and joined the DC Community last October it wasn't odd to see the entire team from the BAU in their home. Even before the rest of the team had been brought in on all the secrets.

That day most of said team had invaded them. Garcia had joined Tim in setting up a new monitoring system throughout the house. Baby monitors and nanny cams were in nearly every room and the live camera footage could be accessed by any TV in the house, living room, basement or master bedroom.

They had also installed, with a little help from Rudy and Terry B, security cameras outside the house. All the cameras were on the same system and could be accessed the same way. Jethro thought it was a bit much, but if it made Tim happy he was okay with it.

While they were tinkering away with the security system Gideon had taken over the kitchen, filling the downstairs with an absolutely mouthwatering aroma. Jethro could swear he could hear everyone's stomach's growling in anticipation of their impending lunch. From Haley where she was upstairs putting away the baby clothes she had brought over that Jack had already outgrown, to Derek and Elle in the living room where they were putting together a bassinet.

Even down in the basement where Jethro was making a rocking horse for Jack, he could smell the food, and hear the grumbling stomachs, and the grumbling agents. The verbal grumbling was coming from Derek, who seemed at his wits end with the bassinet.

"The instructions are simple Morgan." Elle was practically laughing at him.

"In what language?"

"Spanish."

"That must be my problem then, I was trying to follow the ones in English."

"Yeah, some things just don't translate well."

"Tell me about it, I'd rather be helping out at the safe house. I mean what's Reid gonna do there? Does the kid even know how to hold a hammer?"

"You'll get your chance." Gideon's voice sounded from the kitchen, "Besides, he wanted to help over there."

"And since you're here, you get to keep company with us, and hopefully eat some of whatever smells so good in the kitchen."

"I second that." Haley agreed, footsteps coming down the stairs from the second floor. "Jason is an amazing cook."

"Bet you're missing your men though." Derek teased her.

"Of course, Jack too, but my sister was thrilled to watch him today."

Jethro smiled and let the conversation fade into the background and refocused on the rocking horse, satisfied that everyone in the house was fine and safe.

xxx

After lunch Maddie had fallen asleep on the couch which left all of them walking softly to keep
from waking her up. The rest of the kids were reading and on the fast track to a nap themselves, except for Cora who was helping Peter organize Bobby's spell supplies.

They were in a cabinet in the second story hallway and Dean could hear them from the room he shared with Sam. From what he could tell they were putting the empty bottles and jars in a basket to be refilled once the online orders came in. Then reorganizing the remaining contents which made him grin. Bobby would be grumbling about that for days.

He gathered up the last of his and Sam's dirty clothes which had a date with the washing machine and exited the room. Just as he was about to pass Peter and Cora; the girl reached for a bottle of liquid and the cork popped off. Time seemed to slow down as it tipped and Peter pulled Cora back and the liquid splashed out just missing them.

“Crap, is that stuff toxic?” Dean asked, then froze in horror because Peter's eyes were glowing a bright blue...and were those fangs in his mouth? “Jesus!” Dean jumped back, dropped the laundry and pulled out his gun. “What the hell are you?”

Peter didn't say a thing; just put himself in front of Cora, who looked terrified even with golden glowing eyes. No one said a thing, but the standoff was interrupted by feet pounding on the stairs, somehow Stiles had beaten everyone to the scene. He could hear the other kids whispering though...and it sounded like they were barely keeping Derek in place.

“Dean.”

He kept his gun trained on the Hales and they kept their glowing gazes on him. “Get back downstairs Stiles.”

“Dean you need back down.”

“Stiles they're not human.”

“Dude, if you can handle us using magic then you should be cool with a few friendly werewolves.”

“No such thing kid.”

“Cordelia said Sam has been talking to you about this kinda thing. Non-humans aren't always bad. Hunters aren't always good.” Stiles kept moving, putting himself between Dean and Peter. “The crazy lady who killed their family; who trapped them and burned them alive? She's a hunter. How many hunters do you know that go that far? The Hale pack was peaceful, still are.”

“Yeah right-”

“Bobby knows.”

Dean's gun lowered a smidge in surprise. “He knows they're werewolves?”

“He knows about them, about me. I'm not human either Dean. You gonna shoot me?”

“You a werewolf?”

Stiles shook his head. “Dragon.”

“Prove it.”

He sighed, like he was annoyed. “I can't.”
“Why?”

“A dragon can only achieve their true form by saving their soulmate. I haven't saved my soulmate; I don't even know who they are. Also I've never heard of a kid making the change...which is good because there's a sex or die clause.”

“You've got to be kidding.”

Stiles shrugged. “Ask Bobby.”

Now Dean wanted to sigh, instead he yelled. “Bobby!”

It took a minute, apparently Bobby had been in the basement and by the time he made it to the second floor he was in a foul mood. He was grumbling under his breath, but when he saw Dean holding a gun on Stiles, Peter, and Cora he cursed. “Balls.”

Sam was right behind him. “Why are Maddie, Scott and RJ holding Derek down with magic—oh.” He glanced at Bobby, then the scene before them. “So I guess Dean found out?”

Dean contemplated shooting Sammy in the foot. “You knew?”

“What part?”

“Friendly werewolves? Dragons?”

Sam had the gall to shrug. “I met my first dragons in L.A. in my first semester of college. I saw Mark Sloan change for the first time to save Sara from a vampire...and not the kind of vampire we're used to.”

“Are you serious?” He couldn't believe he was hearing this.

“Put the gun away ya idjit and come downstairs, we'll tell you everything.” Bobby said. “We can even call some dragons so you can meet them.” He glanced at Stiles. “I'll leave that part up to you.”

Stiles nodded. “I can call the Kimball Community...unless you wanna meet someone from Denver.”

Peter and Cora's eyes had stopped glowing and they had relaxed a bit; and everyone, but Sam, was ignoring Dean. So he put the safety on and put his gun away, but kept his hand near it, just in case.

Bobby nodded at Stiles. “Your Queen is in Denver right?”

“Yes.”

“She's a Vampire Slayer?”

“Yes.”

“Call Denver, looks like I'm joining the Dragon Nation.”

That made Stiles grin and he pumped a fist. “Awesome!”

Dean stood there, still very confused. “What?”

xxx
“Buffy?” Buffy looked up from the book she was reading to see Dawn peeking into the classroom, a cell phone in her hand. The phone was Buffy’s, she’d left it in her office because it was her turn to watch the daycare kids while they napped.

She put her book down and stood. “Watch them?”

“Sure.” Dawn handed over the phone. “It’s Stiles.”

“How important?”

“They brought Dean into the know.”

Buffy nodded. “Something must have happened.”

“He didn't go into detail, catch me up later?”

“Yeah.” She slipped out of the room and headed back to her office before putting the phone to her ear. “What’s up Stiles?”

“So I know everyone is kinda recovering from the craziness the San Diego unchanged dragon was involved in...”

“But...”

“Dean caught Peter and Cora with glow-y eyes. There was an incident with some liquid wolfsbane and Peter barely kept it from spilling on Cora.”

“No one's hurt?”

“Cora and Peter are a little shaky since Dean pulled a gun on them, and Dean just got his whole world view knocked around.”

“But no one got shot?”

“No one is bleeding...but Bobby said he's open to joining the Dragon Nation.”

“And he needs someone to play show and tell since there's no Changed Dragons in South Dakota.”

“Yep.”

“I'll talk to Chris; we'll try to be there tonight.”

“Thank you, My Queen.” He hung up before she could object.

“Cheeky brat.” Then she called Chris.

He answered promptly and with a question. “What has you so amused?”

“I don't suppose you'd mind taking a little trip to Sioux Falls tonight?”

She heard him snort. “A little more warning would be nice. They tell the other Winchester boy what's going on?”

“They had to after a couple of the wolves wolfed out a bit.”

“Any shooting?”
“Stiles said no.”

“How much you wanna bet he put himself between the gun and the wolves.”

Buffy rolled her eyes and gave him a poke through the bond so he'd know what she thought about that bet. “Like the kid would do anything else. He's too much like Xander.”

“I noticed that too. We can leave at dusk.”

“Well with the nifty charms Willow made we don't actually need to fly under cover of darkness.”

Chris laughed. “We'll knock out early then.”

“Yay!”

Her response made him quiet for a moment. “Sometimes I forget how young you are.”

“Ha! I'm very mature for my age. Especially when you compare me to your oldest good buddy.”

“I don't think Buck will ever grow up.” She could hear the smile in his voice. “I'll pick you up from the center and we'll leave from home.”

“Love you.”

“Love you too.” He hung up, and Buffy sent a wave of love through the bond before she shut it down.

xxx

His cell phone rang, and Steve was glad to be at his desk rather than in the field since the number wasn't local. “Sloan.”

“Hey Steve, its Buffy, give me a sec while I get Xander on the line?”

“Sure?”

“Are we having a conference call?”

“Obviously.”

“And hello to you too Cordelia.”

There was a click, a ring, and then Xander's voice joined the group. “Hello?”

“Hey Xan, sorry for the unfamiliar number, my cell battery got low and I'm calling from the community center. Steve and Cordy are on the line too.”

“Hey Buff, Cordy, Steve. What's up?”

“That's something we all want to know.” Cordelia told him.

“Sorry, wanted to get you all on here so I wouldn't have to say it more than once. Dean Winchester is in the know. Sam and the kids had to spill the beans after a wolf-y incident, no one's hurt, just a little shook.

Xander sighed. “Maybe the kids and Peter Hale should have come here after all.”

“It was only a matter of time.” Steve said. “Glad everyone is okay.”
“Yeah, so Chris and I are going to meet him and show him dragons are okay.”

“That old dog and pony show.” Cordelia laughed. “I’d love to witness Sam's brother seeing a dragon for the first time. In all seriousness though, Sam wanted to bring Dean in on this eventually, guess it’s been long enough.”

“So maybe we can finally put them on the payroll?” Steve asked. “So they don't have to scam credit card companies?”

“That's a good idea.” Buffy agreed. “Maybe our High King can put a good word in for them with Director Fornell?”

“What?” Xander asked. “You want them to be DSO Agents? Like, mobile ones?”

There was a quiet after that, while they all considered it, and really Steve didn't see a downside. “They'd be able to keep doing what they're doing...but be on hand for any Dragon Emergencies that they were close to.”

“Xander you're a genius.”

“That would be perfect for them.” Cordelia said.

“So,” Buffy continued. “Is our King gonna talk to the Director?”

Xander laughed. “I guess it’s only fair since you'll be playing show and tell. I'll have him call you with the details.”

xxx

Jo landed on her back on the mat and stared up at the ceiling for a full two seconds before Becky Dingle landed next to her. Hand to hand combat training with Lori Baxter, DSO Agent and potential never called was nothing to sneeze at. Lori was 25 now and probably never would be called, not that the woman needed slayer powers to kick ass.

“How long are you two going to lay there?”

“Water break?” Becky asked weakly.

“I second that.” Jo agreed.

“Come on girls, I won't be here much longer to help with your training. I have a post waiting for me in Cascade.”

“I was wondering if you were going to be working with the Freaker.” Becky said.

“You're an adult now; you shouldn't keep calling your brother that. Especially when you're on the clock.”

“Whatever.”

Jo sat up a bit. “Freaker?”

“Becky's older brother Merton. He and I have been friends since high school, along with our other buddy Tommy Dawkins.”

“Merton and Tommy are both dragons, and they changed for their soulmates at the same time.”
They were in a SUV with the Alpha of the Cascade Community...who also changed when a car bomb went off.”

“So you're brother is part of the Cascade four-some? I've heard a few things.”

Lori sat down across from them, legs folded. “Merton and Tommy were high school sweethearts and had no intention of looking for their soulmates. Said soulmates, Blair Sandburg and Jim Ellison were lovers...so...rather than give up what they had...”

“They just became a four-some?” Jo asked.

“I don't know any details, but they just got a house outside the city and they're all living together.”

“Huh. So where will you live? With them? Or the Alpha pair?”

“The DSO has bought the building that Jim and Blair's old apartment is in. All the tenants can stay and I'll be moving into an empty apartment. And the guy's apartment will be free if they need it. Now come on, enough gossip.”

“Water break.” Becky repeated as she scrambled up to get her water bottle.

“Me too.”

Lori laughed at them, even as she joined in.

xxx

They'd spent the majority of the day cleaning out the old farmhouse; it was a good bonding experience for the Houston Community, and an even better way to incorporate Book and Inara into the group.

It was the first time the entire Community had been together and the first time Book and Inara had met the Gutierrez family. It had gone well; Esteban, his wife Joan, and especially their daughters Lillian (Lilly) and Silvia enjoyed their company. The girls, fourteen and twelve, hadn't been keen on the work part, but they enjoyed the breaks and stories Book and Inara shared.

Now though it was getting late and Chicken had the gas grill going on the back porch in preparation for dinner. The kitchen was clean enough for cooking now, but the power hadn't been turned on yet, though the water had. So they could use the toilet and had water to drink, but they had a generator for power.

To keep the bugs away Book was lighting tiki torches and citronella candles all over the backyard and porch, a small flame at the end of his finger. Esteban was sitting next to Joan at the table they'd brought from home and looked at Joe and Levon who hadn't aged a day since he met them. “How much longer do you two think you'll be at Major Crimes?”

“You mean because everyone else besides you has moved on?” Joe asked.

“No Gringo, I mean because you two still look so young.”

“He's not wrong Joey.” Levon said. “We've been lucky that no one's questioned our looks.”

“You two have been cops long enough that you can retire right? You have at least twenty years each?” Joan asked.

“That's a long time.” Silvia exclaimed from the steps. “Longer than me and Lilly have been alive.”
“You bet it is kid.” Joe agreed. “Not sure what we'd do if we weren't cops though.”

“There's the ranch.” Levon said. “We've talked about breeding horses a little.”

“Yeah we have, and I like that idea.”

“What about this business with the second DSO office?” Inara asked. “You two could help with that, maybe not full time, but it couldn't hurt.”

“Lady's got a point.” Chicken told them. “But for now, everyone get your plates, meat's done. And it's all kosher.”

Joan smiled at him. “Thank you for the consideration Chicken, but I'm only half Jewish.”

“I'll keep that in mind Joan, come on Book, food's ready.”

Book lit the last torch and joined the line for the food, but not before stealing a kiss from Inara and sharing a smile with her. For their first Community dinner, things were going well, and with a little luck the house would be ready when the baby came in February.

XXX
Chapter 11

Allies and Enemies
calikocat

Word count: 7239

A/N: Went to bed early and totally forgot to post this last night. Oops.

XXX

Mal peeked into Kaylee's workshop before he knocked on the open door to get her attention. “Kaylee?”

“Yeah Boss?” She didn’t look up from the parts she was tinkering with.

“May have a job for you.”

That got her full attention. “Oh come on Cap’n.” She pulled her best pout. “I don’t do prisoner transport.”

He blinked, sudden confusion on his face. “What prisoner transport?”

“I heard a call came in from Denver and I figured the summer camp kids got attacked again.”

Mal raised a brow and smirked at her. “Well you’d lose that bet young lady.”

It was Kaylee's turn to blink. “Then what's goin' on?”

“The older Winchester boy found out about things. Buffy and Chris are gonna head to Sioux Falls to offer both boys jobs.”

“As agents?”

“Yep. But they'll be needin' some transportation for their smashed up car.”

A smile crept over her face until she was beaming up at him. “So I'll get to go on a road trip in Lady Bug with two handsome fellas?”

“Maybe, Buffy is gonna call again to let us know. But you ought to make sure she's ready for that long a trip.”

“Aye-aye Cap'n.”

xxx

Dean had spent the rest of the afternoon listening to everyone tell him about all the things he hadn’t been privy to before. He had suspicions that Sam and Bobby had left a few things out when they first told him about demonic vampires and Hellmouths...and now he knew why. His whole world view was once again shaken, stirred up anew, and he was having to deal with it, without blowing up at everyone. Or shooting anyone.

So he listened and processed, all the while keeping his hands busy cleaning out the old charcoal grill they had unearthed on Bobby's side porch the week before. Stiles, Maddie, and RJ told him
about Dragons, Dragon Mages, Dragon Mates, and Dragon Kin. Scott happily added in that he'd only found out that summer that he himself was an unchanged dragon. Maddie wasn't a dragon, there hadn't been any female dragons for thousands of years, but she was a Dragon Mage. Among the kids only Stiles and Maddie were Dragon Mages, as their magical potential seemed boundless; especially when it came to fire. None of them were sure if it was because of the bone marrow Stiles had donated to her when she'd been sick or if the magic had been there all along and it just gave her a jump start.

He finally got the full story about what had happened to the Hales. Derek left the room as Peter told the story, still unable to sit though the telling of it. Dean got it, he did, and there was nothing on this earth that would make him pull a gun on either Cora or Derek ever again. Maybe it was because they'd lost their family to hunters...maybe it was because their mother had died in a fire. Either way, now that he had a grasp on the situation, any hunter that came after the Hales would have to go through him...and definitely Sam and Bobby.

Hell if hunters showed up here at Bobby's he figured between the three of them and the magic the kids had, the Hales would be plenty safe. Especially if actual dragons were only a phone call away. This brought his thoughts full circle.

Once he'd gotten the grill scrubbed clean, and filled with new charcoal, Peter started on some steaks. They were all gathered in the backyard close to dusk, the kids had found some ancient Christmas lights and strung them up with Sam's help to light the area up and make it easier for the High Queen of the Dragon Nation and her mate to find the place.

The politics seemed...well he didn't know much about politics but Dragon Politics at least seemed simpler than anything the United States had come up with. Each Community had an Alpha Pair, a Beta Pair, a Council Rep, and some had an Agent on Site from the DSO (Dragon Security Office). Anything of importance was brought up to the Council, the leading pairs and the Director of the DSO, the three most powerful parts of their government.

And he was about to meet one of the Leading Pairs, Buffy and Chris Larabee. Chris was considered one of the Kings of the Dragon Nation, as were the DC Leading Pair and William Blake. But Buffy Larabee, the Vampire Slayer, and Alexander LaVelle, the White Knight, were considered the highest Authority of their fledgling Nation. When Dean had questioned that, the explanation had involved the shutdown of Nazi type experiments done by the US Government...and lots of world saving. Something that Buffy, Xander and their friends had done in their teen years. He supposed not everyone could brag that they'd saved the world at sixteen and shut down Nazis at nineteen.

The first steaks were almost done and there was a long table set up; not that Dean knew where the table had come from, probably another online order that Peter had made, when Stiles and Maddie both looked up toward the darkening sky.

“They're here,” Stiles said.

Dean and everyone else looked up. “I don't see-”

Stiles was still looking up at the sky. “There's a charm we can use to hide while in flight.” He'd barely finished his sentence when suddenly a slate grey dragon appeared just overhead. It landed in the area that the Hales had cleared out; they had literally picked up the cars and moved them. On its back was a tiny woman, Buffy, Dean assumed, who waved at them and flipped off the Dragon's back. Stiles approached her first leaving the table to kneel in front of her.

“My Queen.”
In response Buffy rolled her eyes and picked him up, only to toss him to the Dragon who caught him with a wing. Stiles slid down the wing and landed on the Dragon's back and he grinned. “I call dibs on the first ride!” Then the Dragon lifted off and flew a few circles around the property, Stiles yelling in delight. When it landed again Stiles slid to the ground, still grinning. “That never gets old.”

Dean could only stare as the Dragon changed into a man. Tall, skinny, about his own height with blond hair and he was glaring at Dean. The glare was actually kinda scary. “Holy shit.”

Buffy raised a brow at him as she moved toward the man, her husband and Dragon, Chris he assumed. “We cool Winchester?”

“You really a vampire slayer?”

“One of two. The other lives in Sunnydale, where the active Hellmouth is.”

“Wait, there's more than one Hellmouth?”

“Two in North America, the baby one is in Cleveland. So? Do we need to worry about you?”

Dean looked toward Derek and Cora Hale who looked hopeful, then on to Peter who looked like he didn't have a care in the world, except for the tense shoulders. “No.”

Chris actually grinned, and it was almost scarier than the glare. “Good, because we have an offer for you.”

Sam perked up where he was sitting beside RJ and Scott at the table. “What's that?”

Buffy grinned as they moved closer hand in hand. “How would you two feel about going legit?”

Dean frowned. “Come again?”

RJ looked really excited by the offer, even though it wasn't for him. “Whoa, you wanna make them agents? Whose idea was that?”

“Xander's.”

Dean held up a hand in protest, feeling a physical motion of denial was needed. “Wait, pretending to be FBI is one thing; I don't want to be a real suit.”

Buffy rolled her eyes. “Hear us out, you'll never have to fake being an agent again, and you wouldn't be FBI.”

“What? We'd be a couple of your DSO Agents?” Dean asked. “We don't stay in one place very long, we hunt. That's our calling, Your Majesty.”

“We get that, and there are plenty of violent non-humans who need to be dealt with...whether its negotiation or decapitation. Sometimes there's no time for the first. I get that, we all do. Xander suggested that you be among our first Mobile Agents. You can keep on hunting as you have been.”

“But? There's gotta be a catch.”

“Negotiate when you can.” Buffy said. “Save humans and non-humans who need to be saved. You may even find some mixed families who are being hunted.” Like the Hales was left unsaid. “And there are a few perks.”
“Like what?” Dean asked.
“A steady paycheck.”
“Where do we sign up?” Sam asked.
He turned to glare at his brother. “Dude!”
“What? I'm tired of scamming credit cards.”
“About that… your records, yours especially Dean, have been wiped clean.”
He frowned. “What do you mean?”
“Not long after we got here Sheriff Mills got nosy and our people gave you a clean slate and undid your whole legally dead thing. You're a free man.” Stiles grinned.
“Huh. Thanks I guess.” He looked back to Chris and Buffy. “What's the downside?”
“Paperwork,” Chris told him, “And keeping records of all your receipts and expenses.”
“That'll be Sammy's job.”
“Gee, thanks.”
He grinned. “That it?”
“Well there is your training.”
“Training? Seriously?”
Sam huffed. “Dean, it makes sense. There's more out there than what we learned about growing up. Of course they're going to want to train us.”
“You won't be the only ones in class.” Buffy winked. “Jo Harvelle has already signed up and is in DC at the DSO HQ.”
“DC? How the hell am I supposed to get my car there?”
“If you agree,” Chris said. “We have someone who can help with that.”
He debated for a minute, but the puppy eyes that Sam was giving him sealed the deal. “Okay. Let's do this.”

xxx

“Thanks for having me over.” Laura said, from where she was lounging on the couch in Mac's living room. Well it was their living room now, Adam's lease had come up on his apartment and he had finally moved in with Mac. This had led to them each giving up some of their furniture to Alex and Amita when they moved to Cambridge.

Now they were making vague plans of moving to a new place, maybe one a bit bigger, when Mac's lease was up. It would still be a while though, which was fine with Adam, he wasn't the type to be constantly moving from place to place.

So for now they were in the apartment where Mac had lived with Claire and they had invited Laura
over for dinner. “Must be strange to be alone in your apartment,” Mac said, pouring three cups of coffee. “With Derek and Cora in South Dakota.”

Laura nodded at him over her shoulder, peering into the kitchen. “Aiden's over a lot so that helps, but yeah, it’s weird not having the rest of my pack with me.” She raised a brow as they entered the living room, coffee in tow. “Now. What do you two want to talk about?”

Adam put on his best innocent face. “What do you mean?” He handed her a mug of coffee which she accepted with a raised brow.

“I'm a werewolf Adam; it’s hard to keep secrets from a werewolf...though you two are really good at it.” She took a careful sip. “So? Spill.”

They shared a look before Mac settled into his recliner, pulling Adam into his lap, careful of their own hot drinks. “Dean Winchester knows.”

“About werewolves like me?”

“Peter and Cora wolfed out when they were going through some of Mr. Singer's supplies. A bottle of wolfsbane came uncorked.” Adam told her.

“Did it get on them? Did he shoot them?”

“No to both,” Mac shook his head. “Stiles kept things under control...and Dean is being told everything.”

“Okay, nothing else is going on?”

“Not as far as we know.” Mac said. “You okay?”

“Yeah...it’s just one thing after another isn't it?”

“I guess.” Adam agreed. “Was summer camp this exciting for the kids last year?”

“Last year it was just Stiles and RJ learning from the coven in Sunnydale. Madison wasn't able to join them due to her treatments.” Mac said. “Let’s hope the rest of their summer is quiet.”

xxx

“Sir?” He looked up to see Gil peeking into his office.

“What is it?” He asked, eyes going back to his paperwork.

“It’s getting late, you should go home.” His assistant's words were said in earnest, and almost apologetic, probably because of the mountain of paperwork that was still on his desk.

Tobias kept his tone light, though he felt heavy with exhaustion. “Technically this is my home too; I have an apartment here with my very own bed.”

“It is convenient to live and work in the same building.” Gil's tone was agreeable, but there was a bit of something sturdier creeping in.

“Endlessly,” Tobias agreed. “And my daughter loves it here.”

“Still, it’s late and your bed, even the one upstairs, is cozier than the sofa in here.”
Tobias nodded. “I agree, and I’ll head up as soon as arrangements are finished.”

Gil stepped fully into the office. “The call from our Queen? It was good news?”

“The Winchesters accepted our offer of employment. Now we need to make sure there's an apartment ready for them. Maybe on the same floor as the one agents-in-training Harvelle and Dingle are sharing.”

“I'll take care of that Director, you get some sleep. Besides it’s a long drive from Sioux Falls, the apartment doesn't need to be ready for at least a day or two.” He paused, taking a breath as if preparing for battle. “Please don’t make me get Harmony to manhandle you up to your room.”

Tobias eyed his secretary wondering if the younger man would indeed get their resident vampire to do just that. Gil's gaze was steady and Tobias decided that yes, he probably would. “Thank you Gil.” He stood and felt his back pop as he stretched. “I'll see you in the morning.”

He got a victorious smile from Gil. “Good night Director.”

xxx

The kids were all asleep in their bunks upstairs, confirmed by Peter and Chris and their supernatural level of hearing. So the adults were in the kitchen sharing a bottle of whiskey, quality whiskey at Peter's insistence, despite his inability to get drunk.

Dean knocked back a shot. “So you really blew up your high school and shut down an unsanctioned government op?”

Buffy kept up, knocking back her own shot. “With a little help from my friends. “Awesome. And Bobby's really a dragon?”

Bobby nodded. “Yep.”

Buffy glanced at the older Hunter. “Was your dad a dragon?”

He shook his head. “My daddy was mean son-of-a-bitch.”

“So no?”

“Nope.” He confirmed.

Chris seemed to study the whiskey in his glass, as if it held some explanation. “Sometimes it skips a generation or two...I didn't know I was a dragon until I changed, and as far as I know my pop wasn't one.”

Buffy nodded, though she'd never met her father-in-law who was long passed. “I've spoken to Stiles and his dad on the subject, Stiles' grandfather isn't a dragon...and according to John Stilinski, his dad is still a mean son-of-a-bitch. But John's grandfather, he was a dragon. No one knows why its skips some men.”

“Could you see Dad as a dragon?” Sam asked Dean.

“Hell no. He'd probably freak out about all of this. And probably shoot Bobby on principle.”

“Not if I shot him first.” Bobby grumbled, which made Peter choke on his whiskey.
When the wolf could speak again he looked a bit perturbed. “You hunters are all a bit crazy aren't you?”

“Comes with the territory,” Bobby said.

“You really want us to be agents?” Dean asked, trying to steer away from the topic of crazy. “To help take care of your people?”

Chris nodded. “They'd be your people too, and the way you are with the kids, I think you'll be okay with that.”

“All of this sounds too good to be true.” Dean complained. “Any other catches I should know about? Besides the paperwork?”

“Has anyone told you about Chimera's yet?”

“That Cordy chick mentioned them...Sam didn't go into that though.”

Buffy nodded. “I've never seen one personally, but I can tell you what I know...and they'll definitely be covered in your training.”

“This is gonna be like school isn't it?”

“Kinda.”

“Ugh.” Dean groaned, but Sam looked absolutely thrilled.

xxx

The phone rang once, twice, three times before someone picked up, Jethro's frown deepened with each ring. Tim took the older man's hand in his as Spike's voice came over the speaker. “Gibbs? McGee?”

“We're both here Spike, we have a request to make...and I know there's a lot going on right now.”

“Xan, pick up in the bedroom would you? Our Eastern Pair is on the line.”

There was a click as another phone was picked up. “Hey Tim, hey Gibbs. What's up?”

“Tim wants to bring in a few people,” Jethro grumbled.

“And you don't?”

Tim frowned. “He does...it’s just a bit complicated.”

“Not that complicated.”

He rolled his eyes. “We want to bring in some of our family.”

“Your mom and sister?” Xander asked.

“And Jethro's father.”

There was a silence and then Spike let out surprised noise. “Didn't think you're old man was still around Gibbs.”

“I haven't seen him since Shannon and Kelly were alive. Tim thinks it's a good idea to tell him
about dragons.”

Tim gave his mate's hand a squeeze. “And to let him know he's going to be a grandfather again. We need to mend a few fences.”

“And what about your father?” Xander asked. “Do you want him in the know?”

“I'm sure my mom will want him to know they're going to have a grandson...If Mom comes. If I start talking about dragons she might not stick around.”

“You have your dragon blood through her family right?”

“Yeah, my grandmother told us all about them. Mom stopped believing in the stories before she turned 18 and didn't get the tattoo. Sarah doesn't believe either.”

“Well I'm okay with it, and I'm sure Buffy would be too.” Xander said. “Spike?”

“If my mum were alive I'd bring her in on all this in a heartbeat. She'd be ecstatic that I'd finally found what I'd been searching for.”

There was an embarrassed chuckle from Xander. “There you have it, two kings vote yes. Buffy and Chris shouldn't have a problem with it, and you can shoot a quick call to Fornell to let him know.”

“We'll do that.” Jethro nodded, finally agreeing.

“Thanks guys.” Tim said. “We appreciate it.”

“No prob, that's what we're here for. Have we congratulated you by the way? On the baby? There's been so much happening that I can't remember if we did that or not.”

“You did.” Jethro smirked. “So when are you two going to start a family?”

There was a click and Xander snickered. “Spike just hung up in the kitchen. I don't think he was ready for that question.”

“What about you Xander?” Tim asked.

“We're not ready yet. Also we're hoping Joe gets pregnant first.”

“They've been bonded since the late 80s.” Jethro said. “Shouldn't they have had kid or two by now?”

“Who knows, but I'm hoping. Later guys.”

“Good night Xander.” There was another click and Tim ended the call on their end. “So, are we calling your dad first? Or Sarah.”

“I suppose we can call Jack first.”

Tim grinned. “Or we could just fly up to Stillwater.”

Jethro made a face. “On second thought, Sarah is closer.”

xxx

Buffy and Chris headed back early in the morning when it was still dark, hours before the kids or
even Peter would be up. Bobby knew they were going to leave, but still they left a note repeating their goodbyes and locked the front door behind them.

They made good time and landed in their driveway just as the sun started over the eastern horizon. Everything was just as they left it, except for Raine's car parked beside the carport.

“Why do you think Raine is here?” Buffy asked, sliding down one of Chris' wings with a yawn. “And we should totally stay home today.”

“We'll see.”

The sound of the apartment door opening above the stable caught their attention and Chris changed to his human form. Nathan and Raine walked down the stairs with sleepy smiles.

“We took care of the Animals.” Raine told them.

“Thanks.” Buffy yawned again. “I'd forgotten about them, newest almost crisis and all.”

Raine continued on and looped her arm with Buffy's. “Hungry? I can whip up some quick breakfast.”

“I could eat, and then sack out.”

“We have some news first though.” Nathan grinned.

Buffy glanced at Chris and they shared a puzzled look. “What's up?”

Raine's smile lost the last of its sleepiness and became radiant. “We're going to be parents.”

“Raine that's great!” Buffy pulled the older woman into a hug, her eyes holding Chris' as he shook Nathan's hand. His eyes were as misty as Buffy's felt. The bond was wide open and they silently agreed that they needed to talk about kids soon.

xxx

Peter had just finished wrapping the last sandwich in foil when he heard an unfamiliar truck at the far end of the long driveway. He stepped out of the kitchen and made his way to the foyer to peek out the peep hole. A dust cloud was coming down the driveway and he frowned, not quite able to see the vehicle that was making the mess. He, however, wasn't so focused on the new arrival that he didn't hear Bobby come up behind him.

“What is it?”

“A reminder that I'm either going to order some gravel or have your entire driveway paved.”

Bobby huffed, probably in annoyance. “Anything else?”

Peter watched as the large vehicle, definitely a truck of some kind parked and the dust started to settle. “I think it’s a wrecker...covered in lady bugs.”

“What?”

“It has lady bugs resting on leaves painted all over it.”

“Okay then...A wrecker huh? Suppose that's the boys' ride to DC.”
Peter stepped back and looked at Bobby over his shoulder. “Probably, are you going to put your gun away?”

Bobby rolled his eyes, but put the shot gun on the nearest gun rack. “Open the door then, least we can do is offer them coffee.”

“Get a cup for yourself while you're at it old man.” Peter quipped and grinned as the Hunter stomped to the kitchen to do just that. Then he opened the door to reveal a young woman with red hair and hazel eyes. Hazel eyes that were wide in surprise and she had a fist up ready to knock on the door that was now open.

“Um, hi. Didn't expect the door to open before I even had a chance to knock. I'm Kaylee, from the Kimball Community. I'm supposed to pick up a battered 1967 Chevy Impala hardtop and two handsome fellas for a road trip to DC.” She batted her eyelashes and winked at him. “Are you one of those handsome fellas?”

“Sorry to disappoint you Kaylee, but I'm not one of the gentleman who will be accompanying you to DC.” Peter felt his grin get even bigger. “You're in the right place though. I'm Peter Hale, would you like some coffee?”

“Sounds good-” Her words were cut off by footsteps on the stairs and she grinned. “Hey Stiles.”

“Kaylee!” He launched himself at her for a hug and then promptly dragged her into the kitchen. “Come on, it smells like Peter made coffee and I bet there's already some breakfast.”

Peter chuckled and closed the door before following them, and he in turn was followed by the rest of the children who were wide eyed at Stiles’ behavior. “You two have met then?” Peter asked.

“At the DC Summit.” Stiles told him. “Kaylee is the Kimball Community Council Rep.”

“For now anyway.” Kaylee admitted as she sat at the table. “Lines get kinda blurred when it comes to titles.”

The kids moved around the kitchen and got Kaylee a cup of coffee and a plate full of food. Peter sat across from her. “How so?”

“At the first Summit in Chicago; Mal, our boss, didn't know he was a dragon and neither did Jayne.”

“Thought there weren't any girl dragons.” Dean muttered as he and Sam joined them.

“Jayne's a man.”

“So he didn't give himself that name?” He asked, eying Kaylee up and down.

“No his momma named him that. You the two fellas I'm takin' to DC?”

“Dean Winchester.”

“Hey I'm Sam.”

“Kaylee Fry from Kimball, Nebraska.”

“It’s nice to meet you Kaylee.” Sam said. “Now about the lines getting blurred?”

“Yeah,” Dean added. “I thought each Community had an Alpha Pair, a Beta Pair, Council Rep and
“Agent-on-Site.”

“We're not as organized as we'd like to be. We weren't a Community until after Mal and Jayne changed for River and Simon. By the time of the Summit in Vegas Mal and River were our Alpha Pair and Simon was our Council Rep…”

“Wouldn't Jayne and Simon be the Beta Pair?” Peter asked.

“That's where things get a bit blurry. Zoe has always been Mal's second in command; they served together in the Army. Jayne used to be a mercenary. Everyone decided I made a better Council Rep...But Mal doesn't consider Jayne and Simon to be a Beta Pair on account of Zoe is such a good second.”

Sam sat beside her, his own coffee in hand. “But things could change?”

“Sure...sometimes I think if he had to pick a Beta Pair, it wouldn't even be a dragon and mate. We also have Zoe's brother, Dorian, and his boyfriend John... both are cyborgs.”

“Get outta here.” Dean smirked, but Kaylee kept up her serious face. “Really?”

“They weren't always cyborgs. We rescued them and River from an Initiative Lab.”

“The Nazi wannabes?”

“That's them.”

“Damn.”

“You guys haven't chosen an agent yet either have you?” Stiles asked.

“Actually we have, Ellen Harvelle agreed to be our Agent on Site. When Jo is done with her training Ellen will head to DC to start hers. They didn't wanna be in the same class.”

Sam smiled. “That’s cool, Jo and Ellen both signing on I mean.”

“And what about you?” Dean asked. “What do you when you're not doin' your council thing?”

“I'm a mechanic.”

“Sweet. That's why you're our ride to DC then?”

“My wrecker is parked out front ready to take your baby all the way to HQ.”

“Speaking of, you kids better get ready to go.” Bobby said. “It’s a long drive to DC.”

“Oh we're gonna make at least one stop,” Kaylee assured him. “The Chicago Alphas are expecting us sometime tonight.”

“That's still quite a drive.” Peter told her. “I've got a cooler full of food and a thermos full of coffee for you three.”

“That is something I'm gonna miss.” Dean grinned and lifted his coffee in a toast to Peter. “Peter's cooking.”

xxx
All of the newly installed ceiling fans were turning slowly, circulating the gradually warming air of
the barn where they were working. Jo, Becky, and Lori had gotten to the safe house location early,
not long after first light. Derek Morgan had gotten there the night before. They’d let the FBI agent
take charge, as he had a knack for restoration. Buying houses that needed work and fixing them
was something he did in his off time. Harmony Kendall was there to do their heavy lifting and
between the four of them they had the framework done for one of the outer walls for the
apartment.

“So the apartment won't be as tall as the barn itself?” Becky asked. “Wouldn't it be helpful to add a
second floor?”

“Maybe not a whole floor,” Morgan said. “A small loft with more bunks might work with a set of
stairs out here leading up to it.”

“And the rest of all this space will be for Agent Gibbs to lay his egg?” Jo asked.

“Exactly. We're lucky he's about average for a dragon, Xander and his dad wouldn't fit in this
barn.”

“Will Hotch?” Lori asked. “I haven't seen his dragon form.”

“I barely got a glimpse, but he should fit.”

“How come you didn't get a good look?” Jo asked. “Since you were there.”

“A bomb went off. Hard to pay attention when you're taking cover and there was too much smoke
after the fact.”

“Good point.” She nodded. “So will the Winchesters be helping out here too when they get to
DC?”

“Probably, but I bet the older one, Dean will want to take some time and work on his car.”

Jo couldn't argue with that. “Hunters are pretty particular about their rides. Most are custom jobs
with hidden compartments for all their gear.”

“Classic cars?”

“A lot of them are.” She confirmed.

“At least they travel in style.” Morgan offered them a grin. “Hey Harmony, ready to raise that
wall?”

Harmony rolled her eyes but nodded. “Just so you know I'd rather be doing secretary work.
Working the front desk at HQ is so much better than this.”

xxx

Nathan waited until the rest of the team was settled at their desks with their coffee. Ezra, who was
normally the last one in, was there early - at least by his standards. Chris had called him to make
sure he'd be there for a special briefing. That didn't mean he was happy about it.

“Why on Earth did you gentleman insist I be here at this ungodly hour?” Ezra asked, flicking a
piece of imaginary debris from his suit jacket.

“Quit complaining, Nathan has a special announcement.” Chris ordered, making sure to glare at his
undercover specialist.

“What's up Pard?” Vin barely held back a yawn, another man who was used to coming in later. “Gotta be important.”

“It is...” Nathan gave them all a big grin. “Raine is pregnant.”

“Holy-” JD started. “For real? You're gonna be a dad?”

“For real JD.”

“Congratulations Brother, you and Raine were meant to be parents.” Josiah said; the first to shake his hand. “Both of you have the patience of saints, we should know.”

Buck was right behind him and clapped Nathan on the back. “I'm happy for ya Nate. Course you realize I'm gonna have ta call Inez and book the Saloon for a party.”

“Congratulations Mr. Jackson, that's quite the happy news you've shared.” Ezra said.

“Thank you; and I hope you'll accept the role of honorary uncles. All of you.”

There were a few teary eyes among the men, but no one mentioned it as they all agreed. They swore to be the best honorary uncles ever, despite the mischievous grin Buck had when he made the oath.

“All right you slackers, back to work.” Chris ignored the mutterings he heard and grinned as he shut himself in his office.

xxx

The realtor had shown them a variety of properties all over Sunnydale and none had 'fit the bill' until Spike had suggested a place outside of town. After that it was like a cartoon light bulb had lit up above her head and she had just the place. It was on the far side of town, not the most common entrance; where the welcome sign that Spike occasionally vandalized was. Not that their realtor needed to know about that bit of Spike's history.

She had shown them the place, a building that had been a carpet showroom and warehouse once upon a time, but had been empty since the eighties. The showroom part in the front had large display windows, most of which were intact. There was some spray paint on the walls, but not much and evidence of old blood, which probably meant the taggers got eaten by vamps before they could do much in the way of vandalism.

The warehouse part in back wasn't a particularly high ceiling, not in comparison to some of the other warehouses Xander had seen over the years, and he'd seen his fair share. It was a cliché that bad guys seemed to stick too, even Spike, though Spike denied that. After all he and Dru had taken over a factory, not a warehouse.

It was perfect, and they had signed the paperwork that day and Spike handed her the cash payment. Her eyes got a little wide at all that green, apparently she'd been expecting a check, but she accepted it happily and left them with the deed and the keys.

“We'll have to make sure it’s up to code.” Xander said, wiping a bit of dust off a window. “And we'll definitely need new windows, energy efficient ones.

“Going to put solar panels on the roof?” Spike asked.
“And probably in the lot behind us.”

“Following Buffy's example by going green then?”

He nodded. “It’s a good idea Spike, if something happens I'd rather have all of our places and safe houses off the grid.”

“One thing at a time Xan, we'll get there.” He moved into Xander's personal space and leaned in for a kiss. Their lips met and he resisted the urge to crowd his dragon up against the window.

Xander kissed him back, but broke away with a smile. “Spike I love you, but we're not having sex in here.”

“But we should celebrate, 'christen' your new workspace.”

“I'm not rolling around in twenty years worth of dust and debris.”

Spike sighed and kissed him again. “So we'll start with the office, get it cleaned up, and then 'christen' it.”

Xander laughed. “Sure. We can do that.”

xxx

Kaylee barely held back a moan as each bite of food practically burst with flavor on her tongue. It was only a sandwich, but she'd never had one quite this good before.

“You okay over there?” Dean asked.

She nodded and put her food down for a moment to get a sip of the soda she'd gotten from one of the machines at the rest stop where they were currently at. “I'm good.”

“You seemed to be having a moment.”

“Dean back off.” Sam elbowed his brother and the older Winchester shoved him back, nearly scattering their food all over the picnic table.

Kaylee rolled her eyes. “Behave yourselves, there are other people here.” She motioned with her head toward the family a few tables over, who like them were taking advantage of the rest stop.

“You were the one enjoying that sandwich a little too much.”

“It’s just so good. I may have to poach Peter Hale for our community.”

“No one there cooks?”

“Well Jayne's mom lives in the farmhouse above ground and she does a lot of cooking for us. She's good too, but this sandwich is something else.”

“Above ground? What kind of place do you live in?” Dean asked.

“Its sort of a compound...it used to be a missile silo. We've added the farmhouse and other buildings that are above ground...and a fence all the way around the property.”

“You're kidding.”
“Nope, it’s pretty cozy.”

“It sounds crazy.”

“Maybe you'll get to see it someday and you'll change your mind.”

“Maybe...I just don't think I could live underground.”

“It’s not bad at all. We all have our own rooms, well the couples share of course and I have my own room and workshop for my tinkering. There's more than one bathroom, a kitchen, a greenhouse, and a garage. Its kinda like having an underground mansion.”

“You the only single in the silo?”

“Yeah, Zoe and Wash are married, and the dragons, Mal and Jayne, have their soulmates, River and Simon.”

“Jayne the guy who used to be a mercenary.” Dean smirked. “What's he like?”

“If you make fun of his name he might shoot you.”

“Badass huh?”

“He's as tall as Sam there and has a gun he calls Vera.”

“He named his gun?” Sam asked.

Kaylee shrugged. “I never asked why...and I don't wanna know.”

They had decided to call Sarah first as she was closer than anyone else, the drive to Waverley College was quicker than a Dragon Flight to Stillwater. She had been surprised at Tim's call that morning, since they hadn't gotten together for quite some time. However she couldn't say no to a meal she didn't have to pay for and said she'd meet them at a family type restaurant just off campus.

Sarah had gotten there first and was waiting at a booth in the back, with three glasses of ice water, one which was halfway to her lips when they walked in. She continued to take a sip, though she was frowning at Jethro's presence at Tim's side. He raised a brow at her, pointedly took Jethro's hand in his and tugged his lover all the way to her table.

“Hey Sarah.”

“So this is going to be your coming out speech?” She asked.

“Don't be ridiculous. I've been out for quite a while. Remember Ash?”

“MIT Ash?”

Tim grinned. “Yeah.”

“You moving in with him after he got kicked out of MIT makes a lot more sense.” She wiped her hand on a napkin and stood up. “Sarah McGee.” She offered her hand. “It’s nice to meet you.”

“Leroy Jethro Gibbs, and likewise.” He shook her hand. “I've heard a lot about you.”
“Then you're ahead of the game, I don't know anything about you. What do I call you?”

“Jethro is fine.”

They released hands and she took a step back. “So what brought this on Tim, Jethro?”

“Let's sit.” Tim suggested, and they sat down in the booth. Sarah, back in her original seat, and the two of them across from her. “Do you remember those stories Grandma used to tell us?”

“I know you're not talking about Penny; she's never let us call her that.” Sarah replied. “Tim I barely remember Grandma Alana and Grandpa Paul...and what stories?”

“We were pretty young when they were killed in that car crash. Grandma used to tell us about Dragons.”

“Oh my god, not that again.” She rolled her eyes and gave Jethro an apologetic look. “Sometimes my brother lives in a fantasy world where dragons are real and he's an Elflord.”

“So your grandmother didn't have a lot old family journals passed down over generations about some of the men in her family turning into dragons for their soulmates?” Jethro asked, not giving her a chance to answer. “Because my family had similar journals.”

“What?”

“It’s all real Sarah. Dragons are real.”

“Tim...If you keep talking like that, you'll lose your job at NCIS.”

Jethro sighed and let his eyes glow, and Sarah froze. He could hear her heart speed up in surprise and fear. “I changed for Tim a year ago. I'm a dragon and he's my soulmate.” He let the glow fade. “Are you ready to listen now?”

“It's real?”

“All of it Sarah.”

“Holy shit. Does Mom know?”

“Not yet...we plan on telling Jethro's father next...but Sarah...there's more. Something that wasn't in any of our family journals.”

“What?”

“Dragons lay eggs.”

Sarah shook her head. “That doesn't make sense...if there's one thing I remember about those stories it’s that all dragons are male.”

“Yep.” Jethro confirmed.

“So...you can lay an egg?” She asked, a small smile starting on her face. “Really?”

“I'm going to lay an egg. In July.”

Her eyes got big and her jaw dropped. “What?”
“We're going to be parents Sarah. You're going to be an aunt.”

“In July?” She asked.

“Technically in August,” Tim said. “That's when the egg will hatch and our son will be born.”

“You already know it’s a boy?”

“It’s a long story, but yeah.”

She leaned back, looking thoughtful now. “I'm going to be an aunt...can I see your Dragon form?”

“Not here.” Jethro told her. “Come back with us to the house and tonight I can show you in our backyard.”

“What will we do until then, lunch will only last so long.”

“Jethro isn't the only dragon Sarah. There are others all over the country...and there's more than just dragons too. We can tell you all about it today.”

“I'd like that.” She grinned and reached for Tim's hand. “Congratulations Timmy. You'll be a great dad.”

“Thanks Sarah.”

Jethro’s stomach growled loudly and he grumbled right along with it. “I can't believe how hungry I am all the time.”

“Makes you grumpy huh?” Sarah asked.

“I'm always grumpy.”

“More so now since he can't have his coffee.” Tim told her.

She laughed. “So, how did you two meet?”

“We met on the job back at Norfolk.” Tim grinned at Jethro.

“Was it love at first sight?” She asked.

“Love happened over time Sarah...but it was definitely lust at first sight.”

“Tell me you two didn't jump in bed together the day you met.”

“More like the kitchen table.”

“Timmy!”

Tim kept grinning.

XXX
Chapter 12

Allies and Enemies
calikocat

Word count: 5934

A/N: I apologize for getting this out so late since I usually post at midnight (what's 19 hours though). There was/is an Internet outage in my area...and I literally just got off the phone with tech support who helped me reconfigure my modem.

XXX

“Oatmeal huh?”

Tim looked over his shoulder at Sarah with a smile. “Jethro's stomach is still too sensitive for anything really rich in the mornings. By lunch time he'll be able to handle pretty much anything. Except coffee.”

“It’s so weird.” She said, settling at the table. “To think that Grandma's stories were true. Mom is gonna freak.”

“If we tell her.”

She frowned and he turned back to the oatmeal, stirring it to keep it from sticking. “Timmy why wouldn't you tell Mom?”

“Because then she'd tell the Admiral, and the last time we talked he still hadn't forgiven me for not joining the Navy.”

“They're going to be grandparents.”

“Yes they are...but whether or not I tell them is my decision.”

He heard her sigh. “And you think telling Jethro's father will be easier?”

“Probably. He's not The Admiral.”

“Okay, you got me there. The Admiral can be...difficult.”

“Hah!” He turned the burner off and moved the pan over to the heat pad he had on the counter. “There's peanut butter in the pantry for yours.”

“You make enough for all of us?” He looked at her, brow raised and she shrugged. “I saw how much he ate yesterday and last night.”

He went to the fridge and pulled out a fruit platter, then set it on the table in front of her. “Oatmeal alone isn't a complete breakfast.”

“No bacon?” Jethro asked, as he rounded the corner and stepped into the kitchen. The sight of him, hair still sleep tousled and dressed in sleep clothes made Tim smile.

“Tim's MIT shirt suits you.” Sarah grinned.
His dragon managed a small smile and looked at Tim hopefully, he unfortunately dashed that hope.
“We can't have bacon every morning.” Jethro sighed in disappointment. “Maybe tomorrow.”

“I may just hold you to that.”

They settled around the table each with a bowl of oatmeal and the fruit platter within reach. Sarah added peanut butter to her oatmeal, which Tim had known she would, while Jethro cut up a banana for his.

“So you're sure it’s okay for me to stay at the DSO?” Sarah asked as she reached for a chunk of melon.

“It’s already been cleared.” Jethro nodded. “You said yesterday that you needed a place to stay during the summer and since finals are over you need to get out of your dorm room ASAP.”

“You saw how big the building is, and even with more people on the way there's plenty of room.” Tim told her.

“Okay. You're going to drop me off at Waverley this morning, and then what?”

“I guess you start packing, we need to make an appearance at work though. Our paternity leave won't start until Jethro gets close to laying his egg.”

“I'm sure we'll get you moved in by the end of the week and you can get some training in.”

“You think I'll be able to keep my part time job with all this?”

xxx

Sam came awake in an instant, reaching for the knife he kept under his pillow and whirled around to face whatever had been staring at him. It was that feeling of being watched that had awoken him. He froze, knife raised when he saw the white wolf. It was sitting beside the bed, head cocked as if puzzled by him.

“You alright there Sammy?” Dean asked from the other bed.

“Dean.”

“Yeah.”

“There's a wolf in our room.”

“His name's Diefenbaker.”

“You're on a first name basis with it?” Sam blinked and lowered the knife, just a little. “How do you know it’s a he?”

“Dude I know we got in late and we were wiped out, but tell me you at least remember getting here?”

Sam thought about that for a moment before nodding and finally putting the knife on the bedside table. “We got into Chicago late.”

“Yeah.”

“And we're not at a motel.”
“Nope.”

“There was a bar I think?”

“McGinty’s. The Alpha Pair of Chicago own it, run it and have a few apartments above it. We're in one of them. Kaylee decided she didn't want to bunk with us and she's next door.”

“Cool...but why is there a wolf?”

Dean grinned. “Apparently he belongs to the Beta Pair, who are in Canada right now. The Dragon is a Mounty and Dief here is only half wolf, he's too old to make the trip so he's staying with Marissa and Gary.”

“Okay...but why is he here, with us?”

“Hell if I know, when I woke up he was staring at you.”

There was a knock on the door and before they could utter an invitation Kaylee opened it and peeked in. ‘Gary and Marissa are cookin' breakfast so ya better get decent.” She smiled when she saw Diefenbaker. “There ya are handsome, come with me so the boys can get dressed.” Diefenbaker wagged his tail and followed her out the door, leaving them alone.

“At least its only one wolf.”

“Half wolf.” Dean corrected him. “And there's Spike. Marissa's seeing eye dog.”

“Huh. So, breakfast?”

“Dude yes I'm starving.”

xxx

After breakfast, instead of going over lore or cracking open a single book Bobby insisted they go outside to play catch. He even went so far as to drag Peter away from the sink of dishes that needed washing. Though it was obvious Peter let himself be dragged, hiding a smile as Bobby grumped at him the entire time.

And while it wasn't boring and even kind of fun Stiles had issues with the plan. “This isn't nearly as productive.” Stiles complained, watching as Bobby tossed the ball to Maddie.

“Sure it is; hand-eye coordination.” Bobby replied as Maddie threw the ball to Peter.

“We can do that with fireball.” He pointed out.

Peter threw it to Scott and Bobby shot him a look. “This way everyone gets to play.”

Okay, Bobby had a point. When they played fireball Derek and Cora could only watch. Case in point as he watched Scott throw the ball to Cora, who tossed it to RJ. “Okay, I get it.” RJ threw the ball to Derek and just as he was about to throw the ball to Stiles, the young dragon couldn't help himself and the words just spewed from his mouth. “But I can think of like six different fetch jokes right now.”

The wolves froze for a moment and Stiles instantly regretted his words. Then Derek smirked and dropped the ball before lunging his way. Stiles made an undignified squeak and turned to run, though he knew there was no way he could outrun a werewolf.
He got maybe four, maybe five, steps away before he felt arms wrap around him and pull him to the ground. Then Derek started to tickle him and there was no getting away. No matter which way he twisted or turned the older boy was like an octopus and he could only give up.

“Uncle! I give! You win! Help!”

“Yeah I win.” Derek flopped back with a laugh and Stiles was boneless on top of him trying to catch his breath.

He weakly smacked at Derek's side. “I never actually made the fetch jokes, I only thought of them.”

Derek snorted and shoved Stiles off of him, and he rolled to the grass so they could both take in the view of the others still playing catch. “Huh.”

Stiles frowned. “What?”

“Uncle Peter is smiling.”

Stiles looked closer and took note of the ease the entire group seemed to be feeling. “I think Bobby just wanted to play hooky today. What do you think?”

“Maybe.”

xxx

Sandra Maldonado looked across the waiting area of the Cascade International airport taking in the man she hadn't seen in eight years. Dorian Alleyne looked unchanged, like he hadn't even aged since the day he disappeared back in Boston on an undercover op. All they'd ever found of him was a pool of blood and a leather jacket filled with bullet holes. Dorian looked good for a dead man.

She gripped the handle of her rolling suitcase and strode across the waiting area, eager to get a closer look. His assumed death had been the straw that broke the camel's back for her career. Not that she cared if she never rose above the rank of Captain, and since then she'd made damn sure that Dorian was the last detective she lost.

He'd let her know he was alive four years ago back in 2002, rescued from some underground human trafficking type of facility. Details hadn't been forthcoming, until now. Now he wanted to tell her everything that had happened to him, and maybe even set her on a new path.

Her steps slowed as she reached him, taking in the one difference she could see. His eyes. Dorian's eyes were a bright blue. Contacts?

“Hey Captain.”

She let go of her suitcase and pulled him into a hug. “I haven't been your Captain for eight years. It’s Sandra.” His arms came around her and he returned the hug.

“It was a long eight years Sandra, especially the first four.”

She pulled away and looked up at him. “How bad?”

“Think Nazi Underground Lab.”

“My god. How did you get out?”
“Another victim was rescued by her brother, and a special ops team got us all out. It’s a long story, and you can’t share it with anyone.”

“Classified?”

“Very.”

She frowned. “Then why can you tell me?”

Dorian smiled. “Because we need you, and I trust you.”

“What do you need Dorian? Name it. If it’s in my power I’ll do it.”

“I know...first I need you to come with me somewhere a with a little less foot traffic. I have a rental parked in the attached garage.”

“Lead the way.”

Dorian smiled and took hold of her suitcase and she followed him. “My partner is also in the attached garage, he wanted to wait with the car.”

“What's his name?”

“John Kennex.”

“Is he cop?”

“No, John was an Army Ranger before he was taken.”

“Like you?” She asked.

“Just like me. We were cell mates in that place.”

“And what do you do now exactly Dorian?”

“We help shut down other sites like the one where we were held...but when I called John my partner, I meant domestic.”

Sandra smiled. “He makes you happy?”

“Despite his cynicism and general grumpiness he makes me very happy.”

She laughed and kept pace with him until they got to the elevator that led to the parking garage. As the doors closed she looked closely at him. “So? What couldn't you show me with the crowd?”

“Try not to freak out?”

“Okay.” He sighed, bit his lip and stared into her eyes. Her gaze jerked from his however when a pattern of blue lights graced the left side of his face. She blinked and reached up to touch his cheek and the lights flashed again, it looked like some kind of circuitry. “Dorian? What did they do to you?”

“I'm a cyborg now...I'm still human just with a lot of machinery added to me. And I don't age anymore.”

“What-”
“You looked surprised when you saw me; I figured it was because I didn't look any older.”

She nodded. “And this was done to you.”

“Not just me...John too. And others. It’s a long story, and more complex than you'd imagine.”

“I'm willing to listen.”

His smile was bright, just as she remembered it. “Good, now come on. I want to introduce you to my grumpy boyfriend.”

xxx

“You guys didn't have to do all this.” Sam said; eying the sheer amount of food that Patrick Quinn was packing into their cooler.

“It’s totally cool. I mean it’s not often that I get to help with Dragon Business. I mean there was the first Summit, but all I really did was serve drinks.”

“You're forgetting the time we hosted peace talks.” Marissa smiled.

“Peace talks?” Dean asked. “Here?”

“That's a long and complicated story.” Gary said.

“Not really, Henry got involved when he saw that the Peace Negotiation between Chechnya and Lavonia was going to break down in the paper.”

“The magic newspaper that comes a day early.” Dean said.

“Yeah, and believe me even after all these years sometimes I still don't believe it.”

“It’s still cool.” Patrick said, closing up the cooler. “Even if...”

“If?” Sam asked.

“The paper was late on 9/11.” Marissa told them. “Doyle in L.A. had the vision weeks before the attacks...but it was vague and no one knew exactly where the attacks would happen.”

“That sucks.”

“It’s the only time the paper was ever late.”

“But the Peace Talks...they went okay?” Dean asked.

“Thanks to Henry.”

“I didn't do much; I think it was the hot-wings.” Henry shrugged, modest for a teenager.

“Hot-wings?” Sam asked.

“They had a duel with spicy Buffalo wings; it really evened the playing field.”

“You did more than you think Henry.” Marissa told him, hand on his shoulder. “Not many eight year olds are asked by the State Department or the Vice President to consult on diplomatic matters.”
“You were eight, dude!” Dean was grinning. “That is awesome.”

Marissa's smile was bright and proud. “It’s also why I'm stepping down as Council Rep and nominating Henry to take my place.”

Henry's eyes got wide as he looked at her in surprise. “What?”

Marissa ruffled his hair. “I don't want all our eggs in one basket. It’s enough that I'm part of the Alpha Pair. I think you're old enough for the responsibility, besides Stiles represented Beacon Hills last October. I think you'll be fine at the 2007 Summit in Denver.”

“But-”

Kaylee grinned and shook Henry's hand. “From one Council Rep to another, you'll be fine.”

He nodded. “Okay.”

“Congratulations Henry.” Sam said.

“Thanks...I think.”

“Yeah kid congrats...so who's the Agent-on-Site?”

“We don't have one of those.” Gary said.

“Yet.” Marissa added. “We're hoping someone will come along. The world does work in mysterious ways.”

xxx

Elle was lounging in the lobby of the DSO building, waiting for her tour guide, a Raven St. Clair. She'd just gone through a physical and there wasn't much else to do. Her fellow trainees, Becky Dingle and Jo Harvelle, were working at the safe house. The Winchesters were probably still in Chicago, and she didn't even know what any of them looked like as she hadn't met them yet.

The double doors to the street opened and a young woman lugging a rather large suitcase struggled her way inside. Elle glanced at Beatrice Marsh, the day Secretary who seemed totally unconcerned, which meant the newcomer was possibly expected. Hmm.

Elle got up from her sofa and strode to the doors, holding one open. “Need any help?”

The young woman, and up close she was even younger than Elle had thought, looked up at her. “Yeah, just keep holding that open. I've got another case in the cab.”

“Has the fee been paid?” Beatrice asked, finally reacting to the newcomer.

“Yeah my brother got it.”

The secretary nodded. “Ms McGee, if you want any other belongings transferred we can rent a truck.”

“That would be helpful, maybe tomorrow? This is just what I'm going to need for a week or so.”

“I'll arrange it.” Beatrice said and Ms McGee ducked back outside to get other bag from the cabbie. He lifted it from the trunk and handed it off to her before going on his way, and she rolled it in the door.
“Glad that parts over.” She sighed and since she was clear of the door Elle let it close. “Thanks.”

“You're welcome.”

“Ms McGee?”

“Yeah...Beatrice right?”

“Correct, here are the keys to your apartment. I'll have a moving truck rented and brought to our garage tomorrow morning.”

“Thanks, it doesn't need to be huge one. Smaller is better actually.”

“Of course.”

She tossed the keys to Ms McGee, who caught them with a grin and glanced at the attached tag. “Seventh floor?”

“You'll have the apartment to yourself. We thought about putting you with Agent Baxter, but she'll be transferring to Cascade, Washington this summer to be their Agent-on-Site. Agents-in-training Dingle and Harvelle are at the safe house today with some other staff and community members.” Beatrice explained. “Agent-in-Training Greenaway can keep you company.”

“That would be me.” Elle held out her hand. “Elle Greenaway, formerly FBI.”

“Sarah McGee.” Sarah shook her hand. “College student and little sister of Tim McGee.”

“I wondered if there was a connection. Are you going to be an Agent?”

“No, I'm going to be a writer, but my brother just sort of brought me in since I'm going to be an aunt, so I thought I'd learn about this new world he lives in. What about you?”

“I've known about dragons for a while, I've worked with the Beta Pair Aaron Hotchner and Spencer Reid for almost a year. Before they even knew they were soulmates or Reid knew anything about dragons.”

“And you just decided to transfer from the FBI?

“I got a little burnt out on catching serial offenders, mostly serial killers.” Elle admitted.

“Wow.”

“You want some help getting those bags up to your room?”

“Sure. You're not busy then?”

“No, just hanging out in the lobby waiting for my tour guide.”

“I'll let Raven know you'll be on the seventh floor with Ms. McGee.” Beatrice offered.

“Thanks Beatrice. Shall we?”

“Lead the way.”

xxx

They'd exited the city limits of Cascade about forty minutes ago, and in that time Sandra had
listened to them describe the world they now lived in. Learning Dorian and John had been taken against their will and turned into something more than human; that had been world changing all on its own. They'd been called The Initiative and they'd had hidden labs all over the country where inhumane experiments had been the norm. The lab where they had been upgraded into cyborgs had been located in Northern Maine under the advisement of a Doctor Nigel Vaughn.

Nigel Vaughn was dead now as one of his victims had killed him before the other scientists and guards had gotten Danica under control. Sandra made a mental note to thank the woman who had killed the man responsible for what had happened to one of her best detectives. However their story didn't stop there...the lab where they'd been modified wasn't the first Initiative Lab...That had been in Sunnydale, California. At least it was the first known lab.

Their tale got even more unbelievable because it included vampires, demons and a young woman called the Vampire Slayer. If Sandra hadn't seen those circuitry lights on their faces she might not have believed any of it. And then...they told her about the Dragons and it was almost too much.

“Dragons? Dorian that's...really? Dragons?”

Dorian laughed. “Yeah Sandra, Dragons. We're taking you to meet two of them.”

“You live with them?”

“No these Dragons, but there are two back home.”

“We're just visiting. The Cascade Community, or rather one of the Dragons here has been working on our fellow bots. He's a hacker and it’s taken him some time to reactivate them.” John told her.

“A Dragon hacker.”

“Merton Dingle isn't just a dragon and a hacker. He's also a Dragon Mage.”

“What does that mean?” Sandra asked.

“It means the kid has beaucoup magic.” John said. “Which was lucky for all the bots because when the Doc made us the way we are he added some magic to the mix.”

“I'm glad that you and your friends are safe Dorian...but...what exactly am I doing here?”

“Look up ahead.” Dorian smiled and pointed and she unbuckled her seatbelt and scooted forward so she could see the large house they were approaching. “That's where two of the Dragons live with their mates.”

“This is a driveway?”

“Private road. No idea where Merton got the money for this place, but he's thinking about having a few more houses put on the property for guests.”

A large shadow rushed over them and Sandra felt her eyes widen when a dragon came into view. It had swooped low over them, beating them to the house and landed in the front yard. “Oh my god.”

“That's Tommy Dawkins.” Dorian grinned. “Guess he's the welcoming committee today.”

“Oh my god.”

“Think he broke her.” John commented.
There was a group of them gathered at the safe-house, from the DC Community and the DSO HQ. They were taking a break from working on the barn and had several mats set up on the grass for hand-to-hand combat training. Derek Morgan and Aaron Hotchner were playing instructor to the majority of them with Lori Baxter helping out. Further out on a separate mat Spencer was tutoring Haley in basic self-defense.

“As DSO Agents you'll come up against opponents stronger than you.” Derek told them. “I'm not just talking about men either.”

“He's right.” Lori added. “Harmony.”

“Yeah?”

“I want you to run at Hotch. He can't change at will yet but he'll have the super strength.”

Harmony nodded and ran at the DC Beta Dragon. They grappled and he threw her off the mats and into some nearby shrubbery. There was a disgusted sigh and she poked her head out of bushes.

“The only reason that happened is because I don't know how to fight.”

“Which is why I'm your sparring partner.” Hotch grinned and offered her a hand and helped her out of the shrubs. “Once you have an idea of what you're doing you can help with the others. You've already learned how to control your strength so you don't hurt anyone accidentally.”

“Thanks.” Harmony dusted herself off. “Right, so they'll have experience fighting someone with super strength.”

“Exactly.”

“I watched Jo spar with Lori before, she has some training.” Harmony said.

Jo protested. “Lori still kicked our butts, even when Becky and I both came at her.”

“But you've had training; I had nothing like that when I was human.”

“Neither has Haley.” Hotch gestured to where his mate was showing his wife how to escape various holds. “Spencer isn't much of a fighter either but practicing the basics with Haley is going to help them both.”

“Practice, practice, practice?” Harmony asked, brow raised in amusement.

“Yes.”

“Okay then...what's next?”

Hotch grinned. “This time I want you to run at Lori.”

She sighed and got ready to lunge at the Potential. “I'm so ending up in the bushes again.” And she wasn't wrong.

xxx

Once she'd gotten over her initial shock at Tommy's Dragon form Sandra had been absolutely fascinated with the dark brown dragon. His scales were the color of damp freshly turned earth and had tiny bumps that reminded her of Braille print. He was almost two stories tall and had ridiculous
bat-like ears on the sides of his head. His human form was just as impressive. He stood at 6'2 with light brown hair with a few blond highlights; his eyes, she noticed, were green in both forms.

Not a minute after he'd changed back to shake her hand and give her a warm smile, they were joined by a shorter and paler man. Merton Dingle was 5'7, with hair that was spiked and dyed black. His cheery smile and blue eyes were at odds with the dark hair and clothing, but matched the dragon form he showed her. As a dragon his scales were as black as his clothing, but they shined, almost like liquid latex. However the row of razor sharp spikes that protruded from the center of his forehead to the base of his scull didn't shine in the least. Like Tommy he shook her hand after shifting back to his human form.

“Are you the only Dragons in Cascade?” Sandra asked, as Merton led her inside, their arms linked.

“There are two more. Our Alpha, Simon Banks, and his son, Daryl. Simon changed for his soulmate the same time Tommy and I changed for ours. Daryl hasn't changed yet.” Merton told her.

“You'll meet them later. Simon is Captain of Major Crimes and David works in the crime lab.” Tommy said, following them and pulling her suitcase behind them. “And Daryl is a grad student at the University.”

Dorian and John had gone in ahead, possibly to give their fellow bots, as John had called them, a heads up. “Dorian and John never answered my question Merton.”

“What question was that Sandra?”

“Why am I here?”

By that point they had entered the living room where six out of seven people were waiting nervously. The seventh, an older woman with red hair just starting to go white, was the only calm stranger in the room. She stepped forward and held out her hand to Sandra. “The Dragon Nation wants to set up a second DSO HQ in Houston Texas. They want a capable Assistant Director, someone they can trust. Dorian has already vouched for you.”

Sandra glanced at Dorian who smiled at her. “And Dorian vouching for me is all I need?”

“No, Director Fornell has already done a background check and you'll have a formal interview with him in DC if you're interested in the job.” Merton told her.

“Hmm.” Sandra stepped forward and accepted the woman's handshake. “And you are?”

“Lorraine Martin. Merton and his mate Blair rescued me from a serial killer recently and we're exploring my abilities.”

“Are you one of the cyborgs?”

“No, I'm a Banshee apparently, but I am very fond of all the people here.”

They released hands and Sandra looked at her hosts, and then at Dorian who had dragged her into this possible madness. “So you want me to be an Assistant Director of the DSO.”

“According to Dorian and Fornell you're more than qualified.” Tommy told her.

“But why am I here? I'm glad to know the full story of what happened to Dorian...but what aren't you telling me?”
“All of our fellow bots have a specialty of some kind.” John said. “They were cops or bodyguards, military or private security.”

“Our friends would be the first of your staff.” Dorian smiled. “We’d leave the rest of the positions up to you to fill.”

She looked at the other six and their nervousness made sense. They were wary and hopeful at the same time because they wanted a place to belong. She was their chance at a new beginning. How could she turn them away?

“Lay it out for me gentlemen. How are the DSO and the Dragon Nation structured? I don't want to come into this blind in any way.”

xxx

Xander had gotten a text from Gil in DC, Fornell wanted to set up a video conference with him and Buffy. All he had to do was get the equipment in his basement on and the techs at HQ would connect him. They'd caught him at home, which was just as well since they didn't have the office set up on the new property yet.

He turned everything on and waited, then Fornell and Buffy appeared on the smaller separate screens. “Hey Buff, Tobias.”

“Xander. What's this about Fornell?”

“Mac Taylor gave me a call. It seems Gerard Argent has gone to ground, and Victoria Argent is also missing.”

“What did Chris Argent have to say?” Buffy asked.

“He's the one who contacted Taylor; he doesn't know where his wife has gone. Nor is he sure about reporting her as missing since she seemed to leave of her own free will. Mostly he's concerned with how to explain her disappearance to their daughter.”

Xander frowned. “Poor guy.”

“Alpha Taylor said he seemed very upset that his wife's hatred for non-humans was greater than the love she had for her family.”

“So he thinks she's hunting?” Buffy asked.

“He assumed that's what her disappearing act was all about, but she hasn't been seen anywhere.”

“She's off the grid.” Xander supplied. “Just like Gerard.”

“So it would seem.”

“Well that's just great.” Buffy grumbled. “Just what we need, more crazy enemies lying in wait.”

“It does turn an otherwise pleasant day to crap doesn't it?”

Neither disagreed with Xander.

xxx

Jethro dialed the familiar number, though he hadn't punched that particular sequence of buttons in
years and waited for the other end to pick up. Tim had all but given him a shove into the empty conference room to make the call, giving him ample privacy by going back to his desk in the bullpen.

“Hello?”

His voice caught in his throat and for a moment he was at a loss. What was he supposed to say to his father? They hadn't spoken since just after Shannon and Kelly's funeral.

“Hello?”

The repetition gave him a jump-start. “Hey Jack.”

There was silence, like the other man was holding his breath. “Leroy?”

“Yeah Dad, it’s me.”

“Are you okay?”

“I'm fine, just wanted to talk.”

Another pause. “Since when do you just want to talk Leroy?”

“Well I don't...I want to come up and see you. I have someone I want you to meet, and I wanted to give you a heads up.”

“You getting married again? I never met your ex-wives but I know you had a few. If you want me to meet her she must be special.”

“I'm not getting married again, it wouldn't hold up in court.”

“What are you talking about son?”

“His name is Tim.”

“Oh. So you're gay?”

“Bisexual Jack, I like women too. But Tim is-”

“Special.”

“Yeah, he is. We have a lot we want to tell you...do you mind if we come up next weekend?”

“Of course not... Leroy you never have to ask if you can come home. Just come. I look forward to meeting your...boyfriend?”

“Boyfriend, lover, everything.”

“I'll get your old room ready. I love you Leroy.”

“Love you too Dad, be seeing you.”

“Safe journey son.”

Jethro hung up and let out a shaky breath, that had been just as nerve wracking as he thought it would be. However he felt lighter for making the call...he just hoped they didn't give Jack a heart attack when he showed his father his dragon form.
Ryan looked around Horatio's office, noting the glass walls and utter lack of privacy. He was sitting in the chair, across from his Dragon's desk and quietly taking everything in. “I think I understand why you're never in here.”

“It is something of a fishbowl.”

“Good thing I never suggested a quickie in your office.”

“That most definitely would not have been a good idea. Unless you wanted to put on a show.”

“That would be a no H.” He leaned back and they smiled at one another. “So, any idea why Wally suddenly wanted to meet here?”

“No, but he did seem rather nervous over the phone.” Horatio's gaze broke away from Ryan's. “Here he comes.”

Ryan turned and looked at Wally as he came down the corridor and the younger man did indeed look nervous. However he didn't let that stop him as he got to the door. “Horatio, Ryan. Thanks for agreeing to meet me...has the office been swept for bugs?”

“It has.” Horatio told him.

“Can I close the door? Its Community business.”

“Sure Wally, go ahead.” Ryan smiled, trying to ease Wally's nerves. “You can come to us about anything.”

Wally nodded and closed the door. “Okay...” He started to pace then stopped himself. “Okay. I love being part of this Community and being the Beta Human to Speed's Beta Dragon.”

“And you do a good job Wally.” Horatio said. “Especially when we need outside help.”

“Right...but I have way too much responsibility. I don't want to be the Beta Human, Council Rep and Coven Head.”

“I've wondered about that.” Ryan said. “That is a bit much for anyone to handle.”

“Exactly!”

“So what do you want to do?” Horatio asked, head tilted, eyes kind and patient.

“I'd like to nominate Marisol for Council Rep. She has the temperament for it and she wants to help after everything we've done for her.”

“Can I second that nomination?” Ryan asked.

“You can.” Horatio smiled. “Marisol is a good choice; we'll bring it up at the next dinner and ask if she's interested.”

“Phew. Good. Now, about the position of Coven Head. I know Marisol, Maddie and I are the only ones with magic right now...and Maddie's really young but I think someday she should be Coven Head.”

“You want to groom her for the part.”
“I do...and we know she has boundless potential or it seems that way. I'll guide her and make any tough decisions until she's old enough...but she'd be a better fit.”

“Delegating at its finest.” Ryan grinned. “So what were you so nervous about?”

“It’s just been rolling around in my head...and I've talked to other council members about it...and as Marissa said...we don't want all our eggs in one basket.”

“No we don't,” Horatio agreed. “You've shown great wisdom today Wally.”

“Thank you...I haven't told Speed yet so don't say anything.”

“Okay.”

“Later Wally.”

Wally grinned and let himself out of the office, they watched him walk away before Horatio looked at Ryan. “What do you think?”

“I think we're lucky to have Wally as one of ours.”

“Agreed. Now, what are you doing for lunch?”

“Working through it,” Ryan grinned. “My boss is slave driver.”

“Perhaps we can do something about that? A compromise.”

“A working lunch?”

“As you can see my office has an interesting view.”

“You bring the paperwork I'll bring the food?”

“That will be fine Mr. Wolfe.”

XXX
Chapter 13

Allies and Enemies
calikocat

Word count: 4448

XXX

It had seemed strange to Mac that Chris Argent would seek them out when his wife had disappeared. She had left without a word, grabbing an overnight bag, while he and Allison had been looking at apartments in the city. Finding her absent from their hotel room had left the man at a loss; if she was gone he wasn't sure he wanted to stay in New York.

The confusion led the poor man to the crime lab where he and Allison were given visitor badges and led to Mac's office. Chris seemed devastated and in a daze, Allison quiet and withdrawn. With a quick thought in Adam's direction to alert his mate of their visitors, Mac led Chris to a chair in front of his desk and poured him a cup of coffee to combat what looked to be shock setting in.

Adam rounded a corner and let himself into Mac's office and immediately focused on Allison. He introduced himself and set her up at the small coffee table and couch with some coloring books Mac hadn't even known were stashed in a drawer. He raised a brow and Adam shrugged. “I thought it would be a good idea after the last kid you brought home.”

Fond thoughts of Sam drifted through both their minds before they focused on their current guests. Adam kept Allison occupied and Mac finally got Chris to start talking about why they were there. He spoke quietly trying not to upset his daughter anymore and Mac had to wonder about the sanity of a woman who would rather kill non-humans than take care of her family.

He called Fornell once he had the full story so the Director could alert the rest of the Dragon Nation, then he had to figure out what to do with the remaining Argents. Which started with a meal, it was lunch time anyway and food would help them get their bearings.

Mac called an order in to a nearby deli, and Stella went to pick it up, bringing back the sandwiches which were at least half-eaten. Neither Argent looked particularly interested in the food. At least he'd gotten them to eat something...and despite the somber mood Adam had gotten a smile or two out of Allison while the two of them colored.

“Mr. Argent...Chris?”

Chris raised tired blue eyes. “She left us because I cut all ties with the Hunting Community, not just my father.”

“What will you do now?”

“I can still sell weapons to law enforcement...”

“Is that what you want to do?” Mac asked.

“I don't know what I want to do. Selling weapons was the perfect cover for our Hunting...what else could I do?”

“We have Hunters joining the DSO as Agents-in-training.”
“What Hunters?”

“Jo and Ellen Harvelle. Dean and Sam Winchester.”

Chris looked surprised and thoughtful. “Ellen Harvelle runs a bar; it’s a decent place to get information. A lot of Hunters go through there...some specialize, some hunt a little of everything. Like the Winchesters.” Then he frowned. “I didn't think you trust me enough to be an Agent.”

“You're right I don't. I'm not offering you a position as an Agent-in-Training...that's not my call. It would need to be put before the Council, the Director and the Leading Pairs. I can put a good word in for you which might lead to a probationary period.”

“Which is a lot considering the lack of trust.”

“Trust should be earned in this situation.” Mac agreed.

Chris looked to Allison and Adam still coloring and grinning at one another. “I think that I could trust my daughter's safety with you and Adam.”

Mac smiled. “That's a start.”

xxx

Sandra was getting to know the cyborgs the easiest way she knew how, over food. She'd found, over the years, that you could learn a lot about someone over a meal. From its preparation to actually breaking bread together. Sharing a meal was a social and intimate act, a gentle way of breaking down barriers.

With food came conversation. She found out who they were, who they are now and who they wanted to be in the future. Just by talking to them she got a sense of who would make good field agents and who wouldn't.

Danica for example was responsible for Vaughn's death, the scientist who made them cyborgs. He'd experimented on them, treated them like objects, lab rats so in a way her actions were justified. She seemed stable enough now, but Sandra wouldn't want her out in the field. Maybe head of security of whatever base they set up because Danica seemed very loyal and protective of her fellow cyborgs.

Sam Synturion had been a personal assistant to a shady CEO who had gotten in too deep with some questionable individuals. He'd sold Sam to pay off his debts and Sam had ended up as an Initiative prisoner. Part of his conditioning had been weapons training and hand to hand combat. He'd still be the perfect personal assistant, but he could double as a bodyguard.

Daryn Escott was former CIA, his CO had gone rogue and was playing double agent, selling states secrets when Daryn had caught him at it. He'd then made Daryn disappear, and he'd ended up in an Initiative lab where Vaughn had modified him.

Anthony Kechner had been pre-med, supporting himself and putting himself through school as a stripper. Apparently Vaughn had an assistant who frequented the club he'd worked at and her obsession led to his kidnapping. Like Sam he'd been taught to fight before being altered.

Wilson Fielder and Joseph Selt had worked private security and were taken into custody after getting a client to safety. While their client was speeding away in a getaway car, they been shot and left for dead...they weren't sure how they ended up in the lab. Though they suspected their client had sold them out to save his own skin.
They were good people who deserved another chance and she was already looking forward to working with them, but for now lunch would be enough.

xxx

“You alright?” Alan nodded at her absently before going back to picking at his food. Anna huffed out a laugh and reached for his hand. “You want to try that response again? What's on your mind Alan?”

He squeezed her hand and smiled. “There's just a lot of changes going on.”

“You're not happy about the baby?”

“I'm thrilled about the baby. I've been ready for grandchildren for years. I'm just...sad that Margret will never get to see any of them.”

“Is that all? You know she'd be so happy for Charlie and Ian right? And that she'd have loved Ian like another son.”

“I know. Her heart was so big and full of love.”

“Are you missing her more now that Ian is expecting and the boys are getting the house ready for a baby?”

“I think I am. I know she'd want me to move on and be happy...she said so herself just before she died.”

“I know.” He looked at her, surprised and she smiled. “She was my best friend remember?”

“Sometimes I forget how much you miss her too.”

“That's okay; she was part of your life decades before I ever met her.”

Alan nodded. “Doesn't make your pain any less.” He sighed. “I've thought about moving out of the house.”

“Because that worked so well when you sold it.” She laughed.

“How was I supposed to know that Charlie was going to buy the house?” He shook his head but he was smiling now and laughing with her. “They should have the master bedroom, so the baby can have its own room.”

“You think you're ready?” Anna asked. “That invitation is still open.”

“I think so.” He brought their joined hands up so he could kiss her knuckles. “I think it’s time for me to move out and let the next generation fill that house with laughter and love.”

“My house could use a little of that.” She winked. “Even with the Sloan clan living next door my house has been pretty empty for a while.”

“I'm sorry. I should have made this decision sooner.”

“Alan, you needed time to mourn Margaret, we both did. No harm done. So, you ready?”

“What? Now?”
She laughed. “Well we can't spend the rest of the day here at the mall at a nearly empty food court. Or are you just trying to put off the rest of our shopping trip?”

“No, no. I'm ready to hit the stores again. Just let me take the trash away.” He kissed her knuckles again before standing up to take their tray to the nearest trash can.

It was late in the day for lunch and the balcony part of the food court was in fact almost empty. There was one other shopper a few tables away and the young man looked like he was getting ready to leave as well. Anna stretched and stood, gathering up her purse from underneath her chair. As she straightened back up she noticed the young man was closer and Alan was just starting back sans tray.

She wasn't expecting the man to grab her purse, and she held on. “Come on lady let go!” But Anna didn't, she hung on. There wasn't much cash in the purse and she could cancel the credit cards no problem...she wasn't sure why she hung on, but she did.

“Anna!” Alan was running towards them now and the young man shoved at her, the concrete of the balcony rushing up at her as she fell.

Suddenly the young man was gone, thrown away from her and her fall was broken by something large and warm. She looked up to see a dragon with familiar kind eyes looking down at her from a face covered in white and grey scales.

Anna looked around, the chairs and tables were scattered, the young man was unconscious on the floor and Alan...oh. Alan was the dragon. She reached up toward his face and he leaned down and her hand touched his cheek.

Then he was Alan again, her hand still on his cheek. “Well.” He murmured. “I wasn't expecting that, were you?”

She shook her head, smiling. “No, but I'm glad it did. No more excuses Alan.”

“No more excuses.” He kissed her forehead and they looked at the would-be purse snatcher. “Well...I suppose we should make some calls.”

“Starting with someone who can access the security camera.” Anna said.

“Right, good plan.”

xxx

There was a knock on his office door just before Gil let himself in. Fornell raised a brow at his secretary. “Yes Gil?”

“Alan Eppes just called with a request for assistance, he changed for Anna Hodges and they needed some security footage altered.”

“Who's on it?” He asked. “And who else knows?”

“Terri B, but she's calling Merton to back her up. Anna called David so the entire Cascade Community is the loop. I'm sure she'll call the Sloans next, but I'm going to prepare an email in the next few minutes to let everyone know.”

Tobias nodded. “Good...send a text out as well. Leave the more detailed explanation for the email, and send me a copy.”
“Yes Sir.”

“Was there anything else?”

“Sandra Maldonado may be getting in touch soon. She likes what she sees in her prospective employees.”

“Good. Get started on that text and email Gil, I'm still going to make a few calls.”

xxx

Peter answered the phone when it rang and promptly handed it to Stiles. “You've got a call from the DSO.”

Stiles frowned. “This is Stiles.”

“Stiles, its Kate Todd.”

“Hey Agent Todd, what's up?”

“We'll be sending out text messages and emails, but since cell signal is spotty out there and Mr. Singer has dial-up I wanted to call you to let know right away that Alan Eppes changed for Anna Hodges.”

“Oh, cool. Thanks Kate.”

“How's South Dakota?”

“Not bad. We're having a blast.”

“Just stay out of trouble.”

“Yeah yeah.” He said goodbye and hung up.

Bobby looked up from the book he was looking through. “Something wrong?”

“Nope, another dragon just changed for their soulmate. Alan Eppes is older than you and he made the change.”

Bobby rolled his eyes. “So it happened once, doesn't mean I'll change.”

“Twice. Mark Sloan was in his seventies when he changed for Sara.”

Bobby frowned. “He didn't he look that old.”


“Idgit.”

xxx

David bustled into Simon's office, not bothering to knock on the door, cell phone to his ear. Simon looked at him in amusement, smiling when he heard his mate say goodbye to Brenna and hang up.

“Everything okay? Is Brenna okay?”
“She's fine; I was just sharing a bit of good news with her.”

“It must be good news to get you out of your lab.”

“Alan changed for my mom.” David had a rare and full grin as he said it.

Simon grinned back and stood so he could take his mate into his arms. “David that's wonderful. That couldn't have happened to a more deserving couple.” He hugged the shorter man tight, not caring about anyone in the bullpen seeing them through the office windows. All of his people knew about David, they were only hiding the dragon bits.

He did catch Jim smiling at them, and knew the Sentinel was eavesdropping and would share the good news with Blair when the other man looked up from his paperwork.

“You realize what this means?” David asked, looking up at him.

Simon pulled back a little. “No, what?”

“Alan is officially my stepfather, and we're going to be uncles.”

It took a second for Simon to catch up to David's logic. “Right, because Ian and Charlie are gonna have a baby.”

“Yep.”

“You know kids are something we haven't talked about.” Simon said.

“That's a big step Simon, and we've been bonded less than a year...and you'd be the one to get pregnant.”

Simon nodded. “I know...we're still dealing with the last of Daryl's college tuition...and Brenna starts in the fall. Having the DSO help with school fees relieves some of the burden. But raising kids is expensive.”

“So we can wait a couple of years.” David smirked. “We have plenty of years left after all.”

“That we do.”

“Oh.” David snapped his fingers. “Brenna and Lindsey Willows are heading out to L.A. today to visit Mom and Alan and, well, everyone.”

“Are they going to cramp your mom's style?” Simon teased.

“Probably not, the girls are planning on staying at the Hyperion. They'll be in L.A. for a week and then they're going to drive up to Cascade.”

“They're driving all that way? Not flying?”

“They'll be fine Simon. Brenna's been practicing protection charms and wards, and she's teaching Lindsey the bit of magic she knows. Maybe Merton can expand their magical education when they get here.”

“Hmm. I guess we can't dump all the kids on Bobby Singer.”

“I'd rather not; he's only just joined the Dragon Nation. We don't want him to hate us.”
They were at a gas station when Sam and Kaylee got the text, it made both smile. Dean looked up from his burrito with a frown, especially when Sam dug out his laptop.

“What's goin' on?” He asked. Kaylee held her phone out to him and he read the text. **Alan Eppes changed for Anna Hodges.** If anything it made him frown harder. “What does that mean?”

“Alan Eppes was an unchanged dragon in L.A. He just changed for his girlfriend Anna, which means they're soulmates.”

“The message is a little skimpy on the details.” Dean commented.

Kaylee looked at Sam. “They send an email too?”

Sam nodded. “Yeah I just got it open...they were eating lunch at a mall...some guy tried to grab Anna's purse. Alan changed when the guy shoved her, and he caught her before she hit the ground.”

“A purse snatching? Really?” Dean asked. “That's all it takes?”

“Yep.” Kaylee confirmed with grin. “Sometimes it's somethin' as serious as an explosion or a shootout. Sometimes it's a mugging or speeding bus, I think one dragon even changed when his soulmate was thrown from a horse.”

“Anything that puts the soulmate in danger can do it.” Sam added. “When Mark Sloan changed for Sara, we were getting ambushed by demonic vampires.”

“Huh. So is this another old guy making the change like Doc Sloan?”

“Yeah, Alan's not as old though...mid sixties maybe?”

“No wife and kids?”

Sam rolled his eyes. “You met Alan at Jessica's funeral. You met his sons too, Don and Charlie. Don's unchanged and an FBI Agent. Charlie is a Professor and Mathematician at CalSci.” His face turned sad. “I met Margaret Eppes Thanksgiving 2001, she was a nice woman.”

“What'd she die of?”

“Cancer. Anna Hodges was her best friend.”

Dean nodded. “Hey, that Charlie guy, he has a dragon right? They have a kid on the way?”

“Yep.” Kaylee said. “Guess Alan has really good excuse to move in with Anna now so Ian and Charlie have more room for the baby.”

“Cool. Glad things are working out for some of your people.” Both Kaylee and Sam gave him a look. “What?”

“They're your people now too Dean.” Sam said.

“Huh...guess I'm still adjusting to that.”

xxx
“Just a second Danny.” John picked up his phone to read the alert he’d gotten. **Alan Eppes changed for Anna Hodges.** He smiled at the good news and texted a quick congratulations to Alan’s phone, then he put his own cell back down and redirected his attention to the boy sitting in front of his desk. Danny Mahealani.

Danny looked hopeful. “Good news?”

“For some friends in L.A., don't change the subject.”

He sighed. “Am I under arrest?”

John shook his head. “No, but this incident will go on your record.”

“So my parents will know?”

“They already know Danny, they're on their way. I can't officially question you without your parents or a child advocate...but unofficially...what were you thinking?”

Danny winced and folded his arms, as if trying to separate himself from the conversation. “Jackson found out that he's adopted, and it’s really messing with his head. I was trying to find out who his parents were.”

That made John smile. “At least you had noble intentions...but hacking is against the law. You know that.”

“I'm so grounded.” Danny grumbled.

John laughed. “Probably.” He opened his desk drawer and dug around under the false bottom for a couple of candy bars. One he kept for himself, the other he tossed to Danny. “One last hurrah before your parents get here.”

“Thanks Deputy Stilinski.”

“You can thank me by never telling my son about my candy stash.”

Danny finally smiled. “Deal.”

xxx

Speed watched Wally as he puttered around the house, straightening things when he wasn't dashing back to the kitchen to check on dinner. Something was up with his soulmate but he wasn't sure what. He knew that Wally had gone to the crime lab for a private meeting with Horatio and Ryan but no one had said anything about what the meeting was about.

When Marisol and Suzie showed up Speed let them in, shrugging at their questions and curiosity. He was as in the dark about why Wally had suddenly invited them to dinner as they were.

Wally kept quiet on the subject all through dinner and waited until they had cleared the food away. “So I guess everyone is a bit curious.”

“You can say that again Wally.” Marisol smiled. “I don't think I've ever been so curious.”

“You're actually making me a little nervous with all this.” Suzie told him. “It doesn't help that Speed has no idea what's going on.”
“Well, I had meeting with Horatio and Ryan...because I think I have too many mantels. I love being the Beta human and part of the Beta pair...but I don't think I should be Council Rep and Coven Head.”

Speed hadn't thought of that. It hadn't occurred to him that Wally was carrying too much responsibility. Wally hadn't complained once and seemed to handle everything their Community faced with little difficulty. He eased opened the bond and sent a wave of love and affection to Wally who smiled at him.

Oblivious to the unspoken interactions the woman seemed to agree with Wally. “That makes sense.” Suzie said. “But why bring us...oh.”

Wally grinned. “Marisol, how would you feel about being our Council Rep?”

Marisol blinked. “Me?”

Speed nodded. “That's not a bad idea. What do you think Marisol?”

“I'd be honored...Horatio approves?”

“He does.” Wally told her. “Ryan too.”

“Then I accept.”

“Congratulations Marisol.”

“Thank you Suzie. I guess I'll need the contact information of the other Council Reps? And the DSO?”

“We'll go over that in a bit...Suzie.”

“Yeah Wally?”

“I'd like to start training Maddie to be our Coven Head. I don't mind shoudering the responsibility for now...but Maddie already has a lot of power. I think she'd be a wonderful Coven leader when she's older.”

Speed watched Suzie bite her lip, worrying at it. Maddie was so young, but Wally was right, the little girl had a lot of power. After a moment of thinking, Suzie nodded. “I have a feeling she'll say yes and I won't keep her from doing something that important. I want her to at least be sixteen before you hand over that responsibility though.”

“Agreed. Thank you Suzie.”

Speed nodded. “Yeah, thanks Suzie.” He was going to have to have a little talk with Wally later after their guests had gone home. It bothered him a little that Wally hadn't come to him first...but then he couldn't expect his lover to bring up every little thing that bothered him. So Speed was just going to let him know that he could talk to him about anything at all.

“So about my new responsibilities?” Marisol asked.

“Hang on, I'll get the paperwork.” Wally grinned and Marisol pouted a little. Apparently she hadn't thought about the paperwork.

xxx
It was after dark when Spencer, Haley and Aaron picked up Jack and took him home. However instead of having a late dinner with his lovers Spencer went back out, he had something to do, something important. He needed to have a little talk with Gideon.

His mentor looked surprised when he opened his door to find Spencer outside his apartment. “Reid?”

“Can we talk?”

Gideon nodded and let him in. He offered Spencer some tea and they settled in the kitchen. Spencer declined his offer of a late dinner and got to the reason of his visit once the hot tea was in front of him.

“Spencer?”

“I think you need to consider forgiving Garcia for what happened.”

Gideon shook his head. “What she did-”

“It wasn't just her. Randal Garner spent a lot of time in the hospital with my mother. It was through their conversations that we became his obsession, with a medieval twist. She had a lot of influence over him, even though she had no idea that he'd construct a fantasy around their conversations.”

Gideon was quiet for a moment before he nodded and met Spencer's eyes. “I'll consider it.”

“That's all I ask.”

“Okay...now do you want to eat something?”

He nodded. “I wouldn't mind a bite to eat before I go home, nothing elaborate though. Aaron and Haley are waiting.”

“I've got just the thing.”

xxx

It was 2am when Kaylee pulled her rig into the basement parking entrance. Dean looked around as she navigated her way and parked the wrecker. There was plenty of parking, not many cars at all.

“There anyone even here?” Dean asked.

She shut off the engine. “It’s late, but there's always someone on site, oh look.” A compact car, an eye catching red had pulled in behind them. A woman, young and blond, waved at them and parked nearby before getting out. “Come on boys.” Kaylee got out and waved back at the blond. “Hey there. Kaylee Frye; got a special delivery.”

The blond reached out and they shook hands. “Harmony Kendall, I'm the night secretary and first line of defense.” She shot a worried look at Sam and Dean as they came up behind Kaylee. “They're like totally in the know right? They're gonna be DSO agents and not hunters anymore.”

“Why, you not human or somethin’?” Dean asked.

“Vampire actually, a living vamp like Spike.”

“It's okay Dean. I've met Spike. Hey, Sam Winchester. This is my brother Dean.”
“Nice to meet you guys. If you'll follow me one of our security guys will check you in and we'll get you settled.” She started walking and they followed with bags in their hands. She looked to Kaylee who was walking beside her. “How long you staying Kaylee? I'm sure Kimball doesn't want to be without their Council Rep for too long.”

“I thought a week of R&R might be nice before I make the trip back. You always get in so late? I know the sun doesn't burn you anymore.”

“I'm usually here way earlier, but I was at the DC Community Safe House getting some training in...and doing the heavy lifting.”

“Heavy lifting?” Dean asked.

“Can you pick up a car?”

“No I cannot.” He said.

Harmony shot him a grin. “I can.”

XXX
Chapter 14

Allies and Enemies

Word count: 4619

XXX

Sam and Dean had been given an apartment the night before on the eighth floor, and, like in Chicago, Kaylee was given the one beside them. It had two bedrooms a single bathroom, and the rest of the space was an open floor plan the counter separating the kitchen from the living room. It was classier than any hotel or motel they’d ever staid at, though the fridge was totally empty.

So it was no surprise that Kaylee knocked on their door about nine in the morning to head to breakfast. She smiled at them. “No food in the fridge?”

“Nope.” Sam answered. “We're kinda hoping you know where the food is.”

“The main kitchen is on the first floor.”

Dean shouldered his way past Sam so he could greet Kaylee. “Morning beautiful. You say something about a kitchen?”

She laughed and nodded. “Come on boys.”

It was more of a cafeteria set up and there was a small breakfast buffet that Dean made a speedy approach to. Sam rolled his eyes but he and Kaylee followed anyway, they were after all hungry.

They filled their plates and joined the group that was sitting at one of the large round tables that filled the cafeteria. Of the ten chairs only three were filled, two men probably Bobby's age or older, and a woman who was younger, but older than Dean. The oldest man who was balding was sitting between the woman and the skinny guy who looked a bit nervous.

Dean sat in the empty chair beside the woman and offered his hand. “Hey, Dean Winchester.”

She shook his hand. “Agent Kate Todd, DSO.”

They let go and he grinned. “Not a recruit then.”

“Agent Todd was our first DSO Agent and is the official Agent on Site for the DC Community.”

Balding guy told him. “Glad you could join us Dean. I'm Tobias Fornell, your new boss.”

“Hey Boss.”

Sam rolled his eyes as he sat beside Dean and Kaylee sat beside him. “It’s nice to meet you Director Fornell, I'm Sam Winchester.”

“Good to meet you Sam. Kaylee, nice to see you again.”

“You too Fornell.”
“So that's your official title?” Dean asked. “Director?”

“It is.”

“So Director, where is everyone?”

“If you're wondering about Jo Harvelle she's working on the safe house so Jethro Gibbs, the Alpha Dragon of DC will have a place to lay his egg in July.”

Sam winced when Dean made a face, knowing a rude comment was going to come out of his brother's mouth. “That's still freaky, can't imagine getting knocked up and squirting out an egg.”

Agent Todd's hand shot out and smacked the back of Dean's head. “Jethro Gibbs first wife and daughter were murdered in 1991, he's ecstatic to be a parent again.”

Dean ducked his head. “Sorry.”

“Just keep that in mind the next time you decide to be an ass about Dragons and eggs.”

“Yes Ma'am.”

“Did you lot have any trouble on the way here?” Skinny guy asked, his British accent surprising them. “I'm Rudy Lom by the way, tech support.”

“No, no issues.” Sam told him.

“Well you almost had, we cleared your records just in time. Your Sheriff Mills was getting nosy. I had to call in another hacker to help but Merton and I took care of it.”

“Thanks for that.” Dean said. “Not sure how I'd explain being alive when a shapeshifter died wearing my body.”

“That would be awkward.” A new voice said.

They all turned to see two women enter the cafeteria and head straight for the buffet.

“Hey Elle, Sarah.” Kate greeted them; she waited until they brought their plates over, to join them. “Elle just transferred in from the FBI.” She nodded toward the older of the two women as she sat beside Kaylee. “And Sarah is here for the summer.”

“Like an intern?” Dean asked.

“Like my brother Tim is the mate of DC's Alpha Dragon, Jethro, and I'm going through the training so I won't be a sitting duck.”

“Good plan.” Kaylee told her. “A little self defense can go a long way.”

“Well we have that down.” Dean told them. “It’s the whole not all non-humans are people eating monsters that we need to work on.”

“Not all monsters are non-humans.” Elle added. “There are plenty of monsters that are human.”

“What did you do with the FBI?” Dean asked.

“I was part of the BAU, we dealt with serial offenders.”

“Like serial killers?”
“Killers, arsonists, rapists and everything in between.”

Dean made a face. “Ever come across people who hunt other people for fun?”

“No, have you?” She asked.

Sam nodded. “We thought we were dealing with the usual monsters. It was a family of humans that kidnapped people, tortured them and set them free so they could hunt them down.”

“How did that end?”

“Local cop helped us take them down; they'd killed her brother a few years before.” Dean told her.

“And you think being a DSO Agent will be better?” Sam asked her.

“I think it will be more interesting.” She grinned at them. “I already have a position waiting for me. I'm going to be the Beacon Hills Agent on Site.”

“So you'll be looking after Stiles and Scott?”

“I will.”

“Good, I think those kids need a keeper.”

“From what I've heard you're not wrong.”

Harmony entered the cafeteria then with a man they hadn't met yet. He was sort of short, 5'9 maybe, his hair was dark brown with some length to it as it had wave and curled around his ears. Harmony waved at Kaylee, then gestured to the man beside her. “Hey guys, this Lindsey McDonald. Our Head Lawyer.”

Lindsey rolled his blue eyes. “I'm your only lawyer.”

“How long have you worked with the DSO?” Sam asked, ever the polite brother.

“A few months.” They waited for Harmony and Lindsey to grab some food and join them at the table before asking any more questions.

“So how'd a lawyer get mixed up with this?” Dean asked.

“I worked for an evil law firm in L.A. before a crisis of conscience made me resign.”

“Aren't all lawyers evil?”

“Lindsey means like way evil...like they eventually have plans to end the world and stuff...and a lot of their clients are demons,” Harmony told them.

“Shouldn't Buffy and Xander have taken them out by now?”

Lindsey shook his head. “Wolfram and Hart have been keeping a low profile since the Dragon Nation was formed. Lucky me, otherwise I'd still be in hiding and looking over my shoulder.”

“How bad is this law firm?” Sarah asked.

“Kid, the less you know the better.”

xxx
Xander peeked into what was going to be his new office, watching Willow, Oz and Jonathan set up the new computer and plasma screens on the wall. His office was going to be yet another hub that he could address Dragon Business in. And, of course, where he and Spike would be doing paperwork for the new shop.

They were busy and Xander didn't want to interrupt so he went back to his own work, polishing the solid wood counter top that the register would be resting on. Everything was already gleaming and bright as they'd had the building professionally cleaned and the display windows had been replaced. The building inspector had already been out and told them that not much needed to be updated. Which was extremely lucky.

Soon he'd be getting the furniture and sculptures he'd made over the years out of storage and fill up the front room with them. He wasn't sure who was more excited about the new business venture, him or Spike. Xander was glad to have something to do when he wasn't doing King type stuff...but Spike was thrilled to give up bar-tending at the Bronze. Not that they needed the money...but being idle kinda drove them both crazy.

Day jobs were a must...but day jobs where they controlled their schedules.

He looked over at Spike who had brought in a white board. They still hadn't figured out a name for the shop yet and his mate had been brainstorming all morning with Xander calling out ridiculous suggestions to break the monotony.

Spike growled and glared at the board. “Coming up with a name for this place shouldn't be that hard.”

“Stakes R Us?”

That icy blue glare landed on him and Xander ducked his head with a grin. “I'll stake you later pet, just you watch.”

“Splinters and Things?”

Spike snorted. “You're not helping at all.”

“Well what kind of message do we want to send?”

“Message? Love we'll be selling custom wood workings. What sort of message could that possibly have? Your work is gorgeous no doubt, the nature carvings look real and...I don't know. Maybe your name should be part of it.”

“Xander's Woody Things?”

“You're ridiculous.”

“I try.”

Spike stared at the White Board a bit more and started scribbling again. Xander watched in interest. Huh. He looked at Xander in triumph. “Well?”

“LaVelle's Forest?”

“Yeah, folks walk in and it’s like a forest of wood carvings and custom wood furniture. Like a wonderland...only forest sounds better.”
“Huh. I like it. Put it on the paperwork.”

xxx

After a physical from the doctors on site Sam and Dean had to sit through a seminar with Elle and Sarah. Their instructor, Hilary Choate, went over the different parts of the Dragon Nation. She explained the Communities, the Council, the Alpha and Beta pairs and who they all were. There was even a slide show to accompany the lecture.

She covered why Tobias Fornell was the Director, and that they were expanding. That part was new to the four of them. There was going to be a second office in Houston, not to mention that Colby Granger another former FBI agent was setting up a field office in Sunnydale.

Sam of course was the first to ask a question. “So how did you get into all this?”

“I went to high school with Tommy Dawkins, Merton Dingle and Lori Baxter. Lori is a potential slayer that was never called and she's past the age limit. Tommy and Merton are Dragons and part of the Cascade Community in Washington State. You'll meet Becky Dingle, Merton's younger sister soon, she's in this class. Lori you'll meet just in time to wish her luck on her new assignment as Cascade's Agent-on-Site.”

“Cool.”

“But how did you find out about all this stuff?” Dean asked.

“Merton's family has a history, journals and all that. He's also a Dragon Mage and has always been able to do magic. He and Alistair Black, who you'll meet this week, had a bit of a rivalry back in high school. They're on good terms now and Alistair is our head witch. Also...” Hilary hesitated.

“What is it?” Elle asked.

“Merton threw a party in high school...and the main event was a bit too freaky to ignore. A demon crashed the party and possessed Becky. Merton freed her from the demon. Most of our classmates thought he was going all out with special effects...”

“But not you.” Sarah said.

“Some of us stayed behind to help clean up...and Merton told us everything.” Hilary shrugged. “A lot of secrets came out that night. Alistair and Merton already knew about each other’s magic. Hyacinth, Violet and Raven are witches. Terry B has telekinesis; she can pick up a car and throw it about a block with her mind. So we all just kinda stuck together.”

“Dude, where are you guys from?” Dean asked. “I thought Sunnydale was supposed to be weird central.”

“Like you two have never exorcised a demon.” Hilary rolled her eyes. “We're from Cleveland, Ohio.”

“The other Hellmouth.” Sam said.

“Yep...it’s not as active as the one in Sunnydale, but we've had some interesting times on it.”

“And you just left if unprotected?” Elle asked.

“We have informants there who keep us in the loop. Like I said, its nowhere near as active...it’s a
baby compared to the Hellmouth in Sunnydale. We're getting off topic though.”

“Sorry.” Sam said. “About Becky Dingle's possession...do you know why she was targeted?”

“Not entirely...it won't happen again though. Since then Merton gave her a tattoo that prevents possession.” She rolled up her sleeve to show them a design that looked like a dressed up pentacle. “Every Agent gets one of these when they complete their training...obviously everyone who went to school with Merton and Tommy already had one.”

“Oh we so need those.” Dean said. “Last thing I want is some demon wearing my body like a meat suit.”

“Great.” Sarah grumbled. “Now I have two tats I need to get.”

“What do you mean?” Elle asked the younger woman.

“You mind explaining Lara to them?” Sarah asked Hilary. “I know you covered the whole Dragons have had human form for thousands of years now...but you know the reason why they did it.”

“I can cover that.”

Sarah nodded. “I barely remember the stories Grandma told me and Tim when we were little. Hilary will be able to explain Lara and the ink a lot of her descendants have.”

Hilary grinned. “So Lara was one of the first human hatchlings...and the only female.”

xxx

Peter looked up from the book he was reading on the porch swing. He could see the cloud of dust announcing an incoming visitor and decided he was going to hire a local company to pave the driveway sooner rather than later. Otherwise they'd never get the outside of the house painted because of the dust threat.

Bobby and the kids looked up from the old school bus they were working on. It had still run when Bobby had gotten it a year ago, or so the scrap man had claimed and they had moved it to the front yard to work on it.

“Anyone we know?” Bobby asked him.

Peter nodded. “Sounds like Jodie's squad car.”

The hunter grumbled. “Damn it.”

“Keep your cap on old man, I'll distract her.” Peter waved at Jodie as she pulled up and parked a little ways from the small bus. She ruffled Maddie's hair as she walked past and joined Peter on the porch swing.

“How ya doin' Peter?”

“Can't complain. How are you today Jodie?”

“Well I'll be honest; curiosity got the better of me. I wanted to talk to the Winchesters more.”

“They left town with a friend. Kaylee Frye, she lives in Kimball, Nebraska. She brought her wrecker up and they took Dean's Impala East.”
“Anything wrong?” She asked.

“No, they just got a job offer and fixing that car is going to cost quite a bit of money.”

“Hmm, too bad. They looked like they'd be interesting to get to know. So what are you guys up to without them?”

Peter rolled his eyes. “Well Robert wanted a working vehicle that we could fit all six kids into. I offered to just buy a van...but the kids are having so much fun working on that old bus I held off.”

“And when I turn sixteen I get my mom's old jeep!” Stiles called to them. “I need to know how to fix her!”

Peter smiled sadly. “I’d forgotten John still had Claudia's jeep.”

“She was a friend?” Jodie asked.

“She and my sister Talia were friends...” His words trailed off and they watched Bobby and the kids work on the bus for a while.

Finally Jodie smiled and laughed a little. “I’ve never seen Singer like this...I’ve never seen him with kids. Kinda hard to make this fit into what I know about him.”

“Bobby practically raised the Winchester boys when he could, when their father dumped them on him.”

She nodded. “It’s just gonna take some getting used to, that the old drunk I've known for years has layers.

“But don't we all Jodie?”

She nodded. “We do.”

xxx

Sandra was going through the emails again that had been sent back and forth between the DC office and the rest of the Dragon Nation about a second HQ being set up. When she had first came across the picture for the location that had been bought she fell in love just a little with the historic building. The Old Houston Light Guard Armory.

Sam Synturion peered over her shoulder. “Is that going to be ours?”

She nodded. “It is...if things go well.”

“Are you going straight to DC?”

“No, I'm going to Houston first. I want to meet the Community there.”

“May I go with you?”

Sandra turned to look at him. “Why would you want to?”

“I've been studying the positions of the DC office...and Director Fornell has an assistant that does a little bit of everything.”

“You want to be my assistant Sam?”
“And your bodyguard...you'll need one as Assistant Director.”

She thought about that for a moment and nodded. “I guess I will. You have ID?”

“All my papers are in order Ma'am.”

“Then I'll book that flight for two.”

xxx

Dean was lying on a mat, staring up at the ceiling again. Sam's heavy body smacked down not far from his. He looked over at his little brother, who looked as winded and surprised as he felt. This ass kicking was almost making him long for the morning lecture Hilary Choate had given them. Sam groaned and sat up. “You okay Sammy?”

“I'll live.”

Dean sat up as well and glared at Kate Todd. “What did you do before you joined the DSO?”

“I was an NCIS agent, and before that I was Secret Service.”

Well that explained why he was getting his ass kicked. He looked over at Terry Lake, or Terry L as everyone called her, not to be confused with Terry B who was the telekinetic. “What about you Agent Lake?”

“I was FBI, I transferred to DC for personal reasons that blew up in my face and then I joined the DSO.”

“Come on Dean, get up and try again.” Kate told him.

“Whatever you say beautiful.”

She rolled her eyes. “Do me a favor too, dial back the flirting. It’s weird.”

He stood up and helped Sam to his feet. “What's weird about it?”

“It reminds me of a NCIS colleague...you're like a younger version of him.”

He grinned. “Then I look forward to meeting the handsome devil.”

Kate made a face. “Actually the thought of you meeting Tony scares me a little.”

“Me too.” Sam grinned. “I don't think I want to meet someone who's like Dean.”

“Bitch.”

“Jerk.”

“Come on boys, one more go around.” Terry laughed and nodded to Elle and Sarah who were observing. “You're next and later on you'll all get the chance to spar with my partner, Agent Stacy Hanson.”

Dean and Sam got into position, knowing the women were probably going to kick their asses again.

xxx
Bobby's home line rang and he picked it up in the kitchen, walking around Peter who was fixing lunch. “Singer.” He listened for a moment. “Maddie! Phone!”

Maddie trotted into the kitchen and accepted the receiver. “Hello? Hi Mommy.”

“Hey sweetie, are you having fun at Mr. Singer's?”

“Yep, we're learning how to work on cars...well...a bus. It’s an old school bus that we can all fit in.”

“Sounds fun...listen, Wally and I had a talk. You know how he and Speed are the Beta Pair, and Wally was our Council Rep and the Coven Head?”

“Yeah. Is he not all those things now?”

“He decided it was too much responsibility...so Marisol agreed to be our Council Rep.”

“Cool!”

“Yes, very cool...and Wally wants you to be Coven Head when you're older.”

“Um...”

“He only wants you to train for it now. When you're sixteen, if you think you're ready by then, you'll be the Coven Head. It’s up to you though Madison. I don't want you to do anything you don't want to do, or aren't ready to do.”

“Wow.”

“You okay Maddie?”

“Yeah...that's really cool...I gotta tell RJ and Stiles!”

“That can wait; I want to talk to you for a while longer. Okay?”

“Sure Mommy. Are you okay?”

“I'm fine sweetheart.”

xxx

Buffy stepped out of the elevator and waved at the office staff before heading into the by now very familiar bull pen. For a second she flashed back to the first time she'd visited Chris at work...the office girls had been beside themselves at the arrival of Agent Chris Larabee's very young girlfriend. Five years made a lot of difference...for one they were married now, and the creeps who thought young and blond equaled bimbo had learned just how well she could take care of herself.

None of them hit on her anymore.

The guys waved at her, their greetings warm and familiar like a band of older brothers that she'd never asked for but loved. She kissed Josiah on the cheek as she passed his desk, from him she'd gotten a father's love and he was more of a father than Hank had ever been. He and Giles filled the role with flying colors.

Chris looked up from whatever paperwork was on his desk, the commotion of the men catching his attention. His eyes fell on her and he blinked in surprise, she grinned, glad she managed to do just
that. It was hard to surprise someone you were mentally linked to, that she'd been able to was pretty awesome.

She stepped into his office and closed the door behind her with a smile. “Hey Buffy.” He greeted her with open arms, pushing his chair away from his desk in invitation.

The bag of food she'd been carrying went on his desk and she sat in his lap for the hello kiss he'd offered. “Hey yourself.”

Chris leaned back in his chair, blue eyes happy and lighter than they'd been when she'd first met him. She'd done that. Brought happiness back into his life. “So what brings you Mrs. Larabee?” He glanced at the food. “Not that I'm complaining.”

“Oh, I just thought I'd bring my husband some lunch...and have that talk with him that we've been putting off.”

His smiled slipped a bit, but didn't go away completely. “Because of Nathan and Raine?”

“Everyone seems to be having babies. Book and Inara, Ian and Charlie, Gibbs and McGee.” She shrugged. “I just didn't know if you were ready.”

“It’s a big step Buffy, and you'd be the one doing most of the work, at first. You'd be pretty inconvenienced, especially with that new job waiting for you in the fall. We have time sweetheart.”

“I'm not worried about the job.”

“The high school you'll be working at is in Purgatorio.”

She rolled her eyes. “The Community Center I'm interning at now is in Purgatorio. Everyone in that area knows who I am; I haven't had any problems since the beginning. The gangs stay out of my way, and the kids and parents love me.”

“That's true.” He smiled and she caught a flash of memory through the bond of the time one of the local gangs tried to shut down the Community Center. They hadn't been ready for a Vampire Slayer.

“So...”

“I'm the last obstacle huh?”

Buffy grinned. “I wouldn't call you an obstacle...in fact I kinda need your help for the getting pregnant part.” He snorted, but the amusement faded and an old sadness filled his eyes and she felt like a heel. “Chris if you're not ready...”

He moved in to kiss her, and opened the bond up fully. The sadness of losing Sarah and Adam was there, though it had lessened over the years. Something new was there too, hope for better things, a need to hear children laughing. Chris pulled back again. “I'm ready.”

“Okay.” She nodded and stood, grabbing the food from the desk and tossing it in the mini fridge in the corner.

“We aren't going to eat?”

“Cold sandwiches, they'll be fine.” Then she went to the inner windows of his office and started closing the blinds. She saw Buck give her two thumbs up and rolled her eyes, happy he hadn't wolf
whistled at them. Once the blinds were closed and the door locked she stalked toward her prey. Chris grinned at her, perfectly happy to be in her cross-hairs.

xxx

It was late, already dark when they arrived in Houston. Sandra and Sam each had a rolling suitcase as they looked for the Alpha Pair of the Texas City. When she laid eyes on them, Sandra thought the two men couldn't be more different and still be white.

The taller of the two, was blond, blue eyed and wore cowboy boots, tight jeans and a button up shirt with a jean jacket thrown over one shoulder...and of course a cowboy hat was the perfect final touch.

The other man, holding the card with their names on it was just a bit shorter with dark hair his eyes just as blue as the blongs. However he wore an expensive suit...and were those shoes really Italian leather?

“That's the Alpha Pair?” Sam whispered. His grey eyes were wide in surprise, though his matching grey hair hid his expression a bit.

“I think so.”

They got to the men and the blond offered his hand to her first. “Levon Lundy. Welcome to Houston.”

“Sandra Maldonado. This is Sam Synturion. If this all works out he'll be my assistant.”

“Nice to meet the both of ya. This is Joey LaFiamma.” He took the card with their names on it so Joey could shake their hands.

“So how was your flight? No troubles?”

“It was fine...we didn't make any reservations, but if you can recommend a hotel that would be appreciated.” She told them.

“What kinda hosts would we be if we didn't open our home to you?” Levon grinned. “Come on, there's plenty of room at our ranch.”

“We wouldn't want to be any trouble.” Sam tried to protest.

“Kid if you're gonna be part of the Community we wanna get to know ya.” Joey told him. “Come on, the jeep's in short term parking.”

“By the time we get home Chicken will have dinner ready and you'll get to meet the entire Houston community.”

Sandra smiled as she and Sam followed them to the parking garage. “Sounds good.”

XXX
Chapter 15

Allies and Enemies

calikocat

Word count: 8084

A/N: :Grumbles: This chapter exploded and nearly spiraled out of control on me.

XXX

They had packed for the weekend leaving their bags tucked behind their desks until they left work. When they clocked out both men made sure to let Jenny know they'd be completely unavailable. The Director had given them a knowing look, though she was completely off base. Jenny and the team assumed they were going away for a romantic weekend. Only Ducky knew the truth.

Jethro drove his old pick-up away from the Navy Yard and headed to 1440 N Street NW, the HQ of the DSO. There were new Agents-in-Training in residence, but they didn't have time to meet them. He and Tim had plans in Stillwater, Pennsylvania. So they left the truck in the underground parking and left the keys with Groo, who was part of the building's security and a half demon immigrant from a dimension called Pylea.

No one would ask questions if they left from the roof of the DSO building, if they'd left from the roof of the Navy Yard all sorts of red flags would have gone up. Jethro went to the area reserved for helicopters and dragons and shifted, stretching his wings. He'd recently shown Sarah his dragon form, but he hadn't flown in a while, he was looking forward to it.

Tim looped the straps around Jethro's neck so the packs would be on his chest and wouldn't hinder his wing movement and then climbed on. Then they were airborne and Jethro activated the charm that would hide them while they flew in the twilight sky.

The flight was shorter than either realized it would be, and all too soon Jethro was landing behind an older two story house in the small town of Stillwater. The back porch light flicked on, and his silver scales shone brightly like a beacon, and an older man with a cane stepped outside.

"Who's out there?"

"Just me and Tim, Jack."

"Leroy?"

Tim slid off his back and stepped away so Jethro could get a bit closer. "Hey Dad."

"What in the world?"

"Remember those old journals I found in the attic?"

Jackson Gibbs stepped down from the porch, steadying himself with his cane. "I remember; works of fiction...or so I thought."

"Not so much. Tim?" Tim nodded and got the packs from the harness around his neck and put the straps away. Jethro shifted back and held out his hand to his father. "You okay?"
“I'll manage.” Instead of shaking his son's hand he pulled Jethro into a hug for a long moment. When he pulled back he shook Tim's hand. “So you're Tim. You seem to be handling this pretty well.”

Tim smiled at the older man, his eyes so similar to Jethro's it was almost eerie. “I've known about Dragons all my life...I was thrilled when he changed for me.”

“You brought that on? How? I don't quite remember how Dragons got their form.”

“Dragons change for their soulmates Dad. Tim is mine.”

He stepped back from them and looked at Jethro. “How do you feel about that?”

“For a long time I thought Shannon was my soulmate...but I'm glad it's Tim.”

“Well, you look good, happy.” Jack grinned. “You two hungry?” He frowned when Tim laughed and Jethro rolled his eyes.

“Starving.”


xxx

Morgan looked on in approval. The barn was coming along nicely, thanks to Xander getting in touch with a contractor that was willing to do the work off the books. Most of the crew were non-humans or had mixed backgrounds. They were above reproach and wouldn't give away the secrets of the Dragon Nation, and in return they would definitely get more work from them in the future.

The wiring was done and the plumbing was installed, the water from the old wells on the property had been tested and passed. It was still mostly a big empty building, but the corner apartment was almost finished. All it lacked was the flooring and wall paper. The crew had worked fast and Morgan was beyond impressed.

“What'cha think Agent Morgan?” The foreman asked.

“I think your crew put us to shame. It took us quite a while to get the framework for the walls done, not to mention getting them raised and put in place.”

“Well your people were training too, and you guys got the solar panels and what not in place. Don't sell yourself short; you were workin' with a skeleton crew. My lot was working round the clock and there are a lot more of us.”

“It looks good.”

“You headed back to civilization tonight?”

Morgan nodded. “I need to, my vacation time is up. Your wages will be at the DSO HQ in DC when you finish. You know where that is?”

“We do; no worries Agent.”

Morgan shook the demon's hand, the pale orange and clawed hand a stark contrast to his human brown. “Good luck then.”

xxx

Groo greeted the women when they checked the company car in and left the keys with him.
Lori grinned at him. “Hey Groo, anything new happen while we were gone?”

“Our Alpha Pair dropped their truck off and left from the roof for a weekend trip up to Stillwater, Pennsylvania.” He replied as he made a note on his clipboard and handed it to her for her signature.


“I think that's were Gibbs' father lives.” Groo told them. “There was a memo regarding bringing in Gibbs' and McGee's family so they could tell them about the baby.”

“Not a bad idea.” Becky said. “So has Agent McGee told anyone in his family yet?”

He nodded. “His sister Sarah is on the premises. She'll be part of your training class.”

“Ah, another trainee.” Lori's grin was bright and eager and maybe a little bit evil. “Can't wait.”

“Speaking of trainees, are the Winchesters here?” Jo asked.

“You just missed them; they got invited to dinner by the Beta Pair and Council Rep.”

“You could just say Hotch, Haley and Reid invited them to dinner.” Lori said.

“I did.” He grinned as all three women rolled their eyes at him. “Sarah McGee and Elle Greenaway are still on site if you want to join them for dinner in the cafeteria.”

“Thanks Groo.”

“Have a good night Agents.”

xxx

Jackson had a pot of stew keeping warm on the stove top for them and a pan of biscuits in the oven doing the same. He'd ushered them in and got them situated at the kitchen table, despite Tim's protests and offers to help.

“Now Tim, you're a guest, let me be the host.”

“Tim's used to doing the cooking.” Jethro offered. “Unless we're having steak.”

“I'll keep that in mind; you, however, know where everything is.” Jack's eyes were lit with amusement.

Tim protested again. “Since I'm technically family you can't treat me as a guest Mr.-”

“Please, it’s Jack.”

Tim nodded. “Just show me where the bowls are.” He got up from the table and Jethro started to as well but Tim put a hand on his shoulder. “Stay.”

He complied without resistance and watched his father and mate fill three bowls of stew and place them on the table. A heat pad and the pan of biscuits followed. The meal was good and familiar and Jethro watched Tim's reaction as he ate, ignoring the incredulous look Jack gave him for behaving so well.

“Not that I'm one to complain about company, but I have to ask why you two decided to come up so suddenly. Leroy said there were things he wanted to tell me.”
“We met on the job,” Tim started. “I was stationed at Norfolk when a body was found and I secured the crime scene and called in the MCRT...Major Crime Response Team.”

“My team took over the scene and Tim helped us, getting us the information we needed and warning us about a particularly nasty Admiral.”

“That's it?”

“No, then this adorable green agent drove down to DC to hand me his report...and followed me home.”

“Love at first sight huh?” Jack grinned. “It was like that with Shannon too wasn't it...though you two didn't move quite so fast.”

“More like lust at first site Jack...the love came later.” Tim told him.

“And the dragon part?”

“I'd known about dragons all my life, my grandmother told me stories as a child and I found other Dragon Kin on my own. People in my line, a lot of us have tattoos that mark us as descendants of Lara. The only female hatchling.”

“Leroy?”

“Dragons first started organizing after 9/11, and because we're so organized now, we had to get permission to bring you and Tim's sister in.”

“She didn't know?”

“Sarah stopped believing in the stories when we were still kids.”

Jack sat back and looked at them. “I have a feeling you two are leading up to something with all this.”

Jethro nodded. “We'll get there.”

xxx

They'd signed out a company car, one with a GPS. Dean had no idea how to use the thing but Sam had typed in the address and had them on their way in no time. The invite to dinner had come as a surprise and neither of them knew why Aaron Hotchner had extended the invitation.

When they pulled into the drive there were already several other cars parked ahead of them. Maybe they'd been invited to a party? His eyes landed on the only classic car in the drive and he raised a brow.

“Dude, is that a hearse?”

Sam nodded. “Looks like.”

They got out of the car and Dean moved to get a closer look at the one that had caught his eye. “1959 Cadillac Hearse.”

His little brother gave him an odd look. “I don't even wanna know how you know that.”

“The paint job is definitely custom...they didn't paint them like this in the fifties.” Dean said with a
little smile admiring the black backdrop with silver and red flames adorning the hood."

“Really, I never would have guessed. Come on, stop drooling, or I’ll tell Baby.”

“Dude don't even joke about that, Baby's in a bad way and can't take that.”

Sam sighed into his hand. “Dean, it’s a car.”

He gave Sam a shove as he passed him. “Don't talk about her like that.”

“Jerk.”

“Bitch.”

The front door opened before they could knock on it revealing a man with black hair and piercing dark brown eyes. He was Dean's height so those could look directly into his; there was a presence to him that Dean had never encountered before. Was it because he was a dragon? Impossible, Gary Hobson hadn’t had that kind of presence. Maybe it was because this guy was some sort of bad ass?

Suddenly those piercing eyes were friendly and welcoming and the man, dragon, stepped aside to let them in. Dean stared back in confusion. Sam, however, gave him a little shove.

“Sunnydale protocol, never verbally invite anyone into your home. Demonic vampires need an invitation to cross a threshold.”

“Kinda like the rakshasa we took out a while ago.”

“Yep.”

They entered and the man closed the door behind him before finally offering his hand. “Aaron Hotchner, Beta Dragon of the DC Community. Elle told us a little bit about you.”

“Elle Greenaway?” Dean asked. “How do you know her?”

“I was her supervisor before she transferred to the DSO.”

Sam offered his hand and they shook. “Sam Winchester. This is Dean.”

“Oh we know all about you boys.” Another voice said and suddenly they were confronted with voluptuous blond who practically sparkled with all her bright clothing and shiny jewelry. “Penelope Garcia. I'm a data analyst for the FBI and a member of the DragKin.”

Dean shook her hand, and Sam did the same. “DragKin?” Dean asked.

“Hackers who work for the Dragon Nation, you can call me Garcia, everyone does.” She replied.

“And you know all about us?”

“Well the LA Community kinda worries about you guys so we keep tabs...and one of our cases made us look at one of your jobs a little closer.” She grinned. “But enough about that. Haley and Abby have dinner ready in the dining room.” Garcia gestured to the dining area in full view from the door.

There at the table another blond, taller and a bit thinner was setting places at the table. Not far from her was an even taller woman dressed all in black, in fact she was full on goth, walking in platform shoes as she set a bowl of steaming mashed potatoes on the table. A young man, maybe about
Sam's age, was settling a baby into a high chair.

Aaron introduced them; the other blond was his wife Haley and the DC Community's Council Rep. The goth was Abby Sciuto, a forensic scientist for NCIS. The young man who was somehow thinner than Haley was Doctor Spencer Reid, Aaron's soulmate and the little boy was Jack, Aaron and Haley's son.

Dean shook hands and smiled at Abby. “I'm guessing the hearse outside is yours?”

“Yes, but I'm thinking about trading it in, there's a 1931 Ford Coupe Hot Rod that I've had my eye on for a while.”

“Nice.”

“I heard you have a classic car.”

“1967 Chevy Impala Hardtop.”

Her eyes widened; like the make of Baby was familiar, but she grinned and the moment was forgotten. “Nice.”

“Alright kids, you can talk cars later.” Haley laughed. “We don't want dinner to get cold.”

xxx

They'd helped clean up and put the leftovers in the fridge before moving to the living room. Jack offered them some bourbon and both declined. Tim because bourbon wasn't his drink of choice and Jethro because of the baby.

Jack settled in an old recliner while they cuddled on the sofa. He'd poured himself a bit of the bourbon and Tim tried not to squirm under those intense blue eyes. “I think you two have told me just about everything...except the reason you're here.”

Jethro cleared his throat a little. “We both had family journals that talked about dragons...but none of our books mentioned one little important detail. One that Mark Sloan a dragon from L.A. shared with everyone at the last Summit.”

“Which you two hosted back in October.”

“Yeah. Like we said, since bonding with his soulmate Mark started to recover memories that had been blocked somehow. One of those memories was the location of a journal that had belonged to his late wife, Katherine, who was also Dragon Kin. Her great grandparents were Hannibal Heyes and Kid Curry, Curry was the Dragon.”

Jack stared at them a long moment. “Both men?”

“That's why we're here Dad. Dragons lay eggs.”

“But all Dragons are male, men. How...”

“Don't ask me, I don't understand the magic behind it.” Jethro said.

“No one does, just that it's been this way for thousands of years.”

“Huh. So Dragons lay...Leroy?”
“Once we found that out, and it was the biggest bombshell Mark could have dropped at the Summit, we started actively trying to get pregnant.” Jethro said, face flushing. “I'm going to lay an egg in July...and it will hatch in August. You're going to have a grandson.”

Jack stared at them, eyes wide and he threw back the bourbon. “I'm going to be a grandpa again.”

“Yeah Jack, you are.” Tim said. “Is that okay?”

He reached out to Jethro and they clasped hands tightly. “Oh Tim, that is more than okay.”

xxx

Haley, Abby and Garcia were all good cooks, and would have tied with Peter if he'd been in the kitchen as well. It made them a little homesick for the home-cooked meals they'd gotten at Bobby's this summer. Conversation was light during the meal and when they were done Spencer was the one who got Jack ready for bed, completely at ease with taking care of the kid.

Sam seemed to be in awe of Spencer, who had, as crazy as it sounded, graduated high school at the age of twelve. Now at twenty-four he had a whole bunch of degrees and Dean knew Sam was more than a bit envious. He knew his little brother was smart and wondered what kind of life Sam could have had if not for the Hunting. Sam wasn't Spencer Reid levels of smart, he didn't think anyone else could be, but he had gone to Stanford.

He must have said some of those thoughts out loud because Haley, who seemed really proud of her husband's soulmate, replied that there were several people in the Dragon Nation who were very smart. Garcia in fact had taught herself coding as a teenager.

They'd looked at the outgoing blond and she blushed a little. “It's not that special, a lot people can teach themselves to code.”

“How did you end up working for the FBI?” Sam asked.

“I got caught hacking things I shouldn't and the CIA has me on a list that prevents me from ever setting foot in Langley.”

“She let the FBI catch her.” Aaron corrected. “Trust me if she hadn't wanted to be caught we wouldn't have got her.”

Garcia shrugged. “I got tired of being out in the cold.” She pointed at Abby. “Abby is wicked smart too.”

Sam smiled at Abby. “What are your degrees?”

“Oh I graduated with full honors from Louisiana State with a triple major in sociology, criminology and psychology. And I earned my Masters degree from Georgia State in criminology and forensic science.”

“Well I feel outgunned.” Dean muttered.

Sam laughed a little. “Yeah, I dropped out just before my interview to get into Stanford Law.”

“Not everyone can do what you guys do.” Garcia told them. “I can't imagine doing any of that. The Hunting, the monsters.” She shuddered. “I see enough horrors on my screens at work when we're tracking serial killers.”
“I guess so...but you all know at least some basics right? Besides not inviting anyone in.” Dean said. “Like lining windows and doors with salt to keep demons out...ghosts are weak against salt too...and iron.” At that point Abby's eyes had narrowed, intense in a way that seemed out of character for her.

Spencer rejoined them, coming down the stairs. “We actually had to call Cordelia Chase about job you guys did.”

Aaron nodded. “There were some brutal killings on sacred Apache land. We assumed the killings were done by humans, but because of the curse you dealt with in Oasis Plains, Oklahoma we wanted to cover all possibilities.”

“Was it a curse then, on the Apache land?”

“No, just a racist white guy who wanted to start a race war,” Spencer said.

“I'm glad Cordy kept you in the loop then, you never when you might actually stumble across real monsters.” Sam grinned.

Abby snapped her fingers. “I knew it!

Everyone jumped and Haley frowned. “Knew what Abby?”

Abby reached for her purse on the coffee table and pulled out a book. “Everything you two have talked about was like super familiar. The past year or so I started reading this book series about two brothers who hunt monsters. The series is called Supernatural...the brothers names are Sam and Dean.”

“Say what?” Dean asked. “What do you mean there's a book series?” He shot a look at Sam who seemed to be just as surprised.

“The first book is about you two hunting a Woman in White...” Abby's smile was suddenly gone. “And it covers Jessica's death.”

“You've read them?” Sam asked. “All of them?”

She handed him the book, its title was Salvation. “This is number sixteen. There's...I'm sorry about your dad.”

“How did you put all this together?” Dean asked. “Did you know we were-?”

“Throughout the books Sam keeps in touch with a PI, a woman named Cordy...but it’s not until Salvation that new characters appear...and dragons are mentioned.”

“What new characters?” Aaron asked. “Should we consider this a security breach?”

“Oh!” Garcia's hands flew to her mouth.

Spencer stared at her. “Garcia?”

“One of my programs picked something up just before the Fisher King crashed my systems. I was running several programs that searched for certain terms and names of our people. But he crashed my entire system before I could do more than glance at the Supernatural message boards. I kinda forgot about it what with Elle getting arrested in Jamaica and Gideon getting a head in the mail.”

“And I thought our lives were weird...at least we've never gotten a head in a box.”
“What new characters?” Aaron repeated. “Which of our people have been compromised?”

“Sara Sidle and Mark Sloan... and Stiles. I'd just gotten to the part where Stiles was talking to Tessa the Grim Reaper.” Abby told them.

“And Dragons are mentioned?” Haley asked.

“They are...I'm sorry. I was still trying to put things together. I wasn't expecting people I knew to show up in these books.”

Sam shook his head. “That's okay...but I think we need to find the author...” He glanced at the book. “Carver Edland.”

“I'll get the DragKin on it first thing in the morning, I promise.” Garcia said. “Unless you want me start now?” She looked at Aaron, then Sam and Dean.

Aaron sighed. “I doubt a night will change anything, but I'll call Fornell tonight so he'll be prepared to spread the word. I suspect we'll need to get everyone in on this.”

xxx

Tobias frowned when his cell phone rang and rushed to answer it. He'd just gotten Emily to sleep and he wondered who he was going to be whispering at harshly. When he saw 'Hotch' on the caller ID he swore quietly and answered. “Aaron, I'm assuming this is important, at this hour small children, including both of ours are sleeping.”

“Sorry about that Fornell, but something's come up.”

“What?”

“Apparently someone has been writing books about the hunting that Sam and Dean Winchester have been doing.”

“What?” He repeated.

“Abby Scuito just put all the pieces together tonight, but so far there are sixteen books detailing the boys’ 'adventures' for almost a year.”

“Books? As in novels.”

“The series is called Supernatural...they're written by a man called Carver Edland. Garcia offered to alert the DragKin about this in the morning, but I thought you should know tonight.”

“Thanks for that. How are your dinner guests?”

“Oh I think they're having a minor freakout...and I have no doubt that they're going to want their own copies to see just what details are in the books.”

“That's not a bad idea. Tell Garcia to wait until after I've told the monarchs so they can tell the Alpha Pairs in their areas.”

“Will do, good night Director.”

“Good night.” Tobias hung up and went straight to his computer, he was going to order a set of Supernatural books for his own collection...and then order a few sets for the library at HQ.
Jethro groaned when he heard a phone ring somewhere in the house, wondering just who would be calling Jack so early in the morning. A knock on the bedroom door had him sitting up. “Yeah?”

Jack opened the door and peered cautiously into the room. “You've got a call from Director Fornell, it's sounds pretty important.” He walked he cordless receiver to him and Jethro accepted it.

“Thanks Dad.”

“I'll get breakfast started...you still drink coffee?”

He shook his head. “Can't have caffeine while I'm pregnant, the kid won't even let me drink decaf without making me sick. Tim drinks coffee though.”

“And Jethro hovers so he can steal kisses in between my sips of coffee.” Tim grumbled rolling over to look at them. “Better not keep Fornell waiting.”

Jack was grinning at them as he headed back out the door. “I'll get breakfast started then.”

“We'll be down soon.” Jethro told him before putting the phone to his ear. “Tobias?”

“We may have a situation.”

“Good morning to you too, hang on, let me put this thing on speaker so Tim can hear.” He held up the phone and Tim grinned before he pushed the button. “Go ahead.”

“Turns out there's a series of books about the Winchesters. Someone who knows their entire life stories and knows about dragons and everything else has been writing books about their hunts.”

“How did you find out?”

“They had dinner with our Beta Pair and Council Rep, Abby and Garcia were in attendance. Abby's a fan of the books...and she put it together last night during their conversation.”

“Who else knows?” Tim asked. “Besides the dinner party last night, you, and now us.”

“Garcia's waiting to bring the DragKin in on my say. You're the first I've called. I'll leave informing Mac and Horatio to you and I'll call Denver and Sunnydale.”

“Delegation at its finest.” Jethro muttered.

“Garcia did do a bit of digging on her own...she can't find anything about the author Carver Edlund...it's like other than the books he doesn't exist.”

“He or she could be using a pen name. I had to for Deep Six because of my work as an NCIS Agent. The publisher will know his real name if you can get them to part with it.”

“I hadn't thought of that...I was too busy ordering my own copies of the Supernatural books.”

“How many are there?” Jethro asked.

“Book sixteen, Salvation, just came out. It covers John Winchester's death...Mark Sloan, Sara Sidle and Stiles are in that book. Cordelia Chase is mentioned throughout the series due to her phone calls with Sam.”
“That's not good at all.” Tim said.

“No its not.” Tobias sighed. “I have more calls to make; once I'm done I'll give Garcia the all clear to unleash your fellow DragKin McGee.”

“I'll get started while Jethro calls New York and Miami. Goodbye Fornell.”

“Good luck.”

Jethro hung up the phone. “Wonder if book seventeen will cover the summer camp, or other things.” His hand rested on his growing stomach.

“God I hope not.”

xxx

Buffy hung up the phone with a sigh and looked at Chris beside her, his head propped up on one hand. “You hear all that?”

“Yes.”

She huffed and grumbled. “I can't believe some idiot is out there writing about Sam and Dean's lives.”

“It could be worse.”

“How?”

“He could be writing about Vampire Slayers.”

She nearly shoved him off the bed. “Don't even joke about that.”

Chris grinned and pulled her close. “So what's the plan?”

“I'll call Houston and Sioux Falls, you call Kimball and Chicago.”

He nodded. “By the time we're done, Fornell will be too and the hackers will be pulled in.”

“Sounds about right.” She looked up at him. “Think we made a mistake, deciding to try for a baby now?”

“No. There's always going to be something Buffy. We can't let that stop us from living our lives.”

“Sounds smart.”

He grinned and leaned in for a kiss. “I learned from the smartest.”

xxx

“Oh for the love of cheese puffs!” Xander tossed his phone on the bedside table and curled around Spike. “Stupid interruption of sexy times.”

Spike laughed. “Not in the mood anymore then?”

“Nooo.” He whined. “How can I be in the mood when some creep is out there writing about all of the Winchesters' secrets...and some of ours too!”
“Oh I'm sure I could change your mind.”

Xander sighed and kissed his shoulder. “I'm sure you could too...but we have to do monarchy things like call LA, Beacon Hills and Las Vegas.”

“You do that; I'll start the coffee and breakfast.”

“Ugh.”

Spike gave him a poke. “You don't like that plan?”

“I like that plan just fine...it's just...right now Dad and Levon are hosting the prospective DSO Assistant Director, Sandra Maldonado. He texted last night and said she and her possible secretary/bodyguard arrived in Houston. That's pretty big.”

“Worried she'll be scared off by the weirdness of it all?”

“Maybe.” Xander shrugged. “So, breakfast?”

xxx

They ate breakfast in the kitchen, but left the coffee for the store. Tim hadn't been kidding when he told Jack that Jethro liked to steal kisses between his sips of coffee. Jack in fact seemed astounded by the way his son was acting, huddling into Tim to steal those coffee kisses.

“Got something to say Jack?”

“Nope, just appreciating the morning's entertainment.”

Jethro rolled his eyes, waited for Tim to drink the last of his coffee and stole one more kiss before taking the empty coffee cup to the sink in the back. “When he can actually drink coffee he's not this grumpy.”

“He doesn't seem grumpy now. I think that has more to do with you than any amount of coffee.”

Tim ducked his head a little, blushing, and got back to his web surfing. All of the DragKin were needed for this particular operation. But first, he was ordering a couple of sets of books...one for home and one for Jack.

“Tim, are you doing what I think you're doing?” Jethro asked, rejoining them, broom in hand.

“I thought it would be good to know just what’s in those books.”

“What books?” Jackson asked.

“Our two newest Agents-in-Training started out as Hunters...Hunting the Supernatural.” Tim told him.

“Thought some Hunters killed Dragons.”

“Most Hunters think Dragons are extinct...” Jethro said. “Dean and Sam Winchester know differently...and the only non-humans they've killed went after humans first.”

“Someone,” Tim started, “has been writing about their hunts. There's a series and book sixteen just came out a few weeks ago. Some of our people are in it...a bonded pair from LA...and one of our youngest unchanged Dragons. Stiles is eleven I think?”
“The last thing we need is people, Hunters, knowing about us.”

“So Tim is ordering a copy of those books so you can read them and find out what's going on.”

“Yep.”

“I don't suppose you'd get me a copy of them?” Jack asked.

“They'll be here on Monday; ours will be delivered to our home in Virginia.”

Jethro smirked and started sweeping. “Might as well order him an advanced copy of your book, Tim.”

Tim blushed again and Jack grinned. “You're a writer too Tim?”

“Its my first book...its loosely based on our team and how we solve cases...but the case I wrote about wasn't one of ours.”

“What's it called?”

“Deep Six.”

“Go ahead and get me a copy of that too.”

xxx

By midday everyone knew about the Supernatural books, but no one had any answers. The DragKin, like Garcia, had hit a wall with the publisher. So at Tim McGee's suggestion they hacked the publisher and tracked royalty payments. It was a small company so not many checks were going out. They hit pay dirt when they found corresponding manuscript records and back tracked them to a man named Chuck Shurley living in a midsize town in Indiana.

That meant Chicago was closest and it just so happened that Fraser and Ray were already on their way back from Canada so they made the detour over into Indiana.

They parked the rental on the street outside the modest two story dwelling and looked at the building. “What do ya think Fraser?”

“I don't hear any movement inside. Shall we go investigate?”

“Pitter patter let's get at er.” Ray said, and then looked at the grey wolf mix in the back seat. “Stay here Kimmy.” She whined at him but made no move to get out with them.

They walked up the steps to the small porch side by side and Ray knocked on the door. There was no movement inside, no sounds of life. Fraser moved to peek in a window. “The house is empty.”

“Like no one's here empty or-”

“Its unfurnished Ray.”

Ray frowned and tried the door, it was unlocked. “Fraser.”

Fraser went inside first, Ray close behind. They went from room to room but found nothing. The entire house was empty, vacant. Fraser could smell a single man, and there was something unusual about the scent. It was unlike anything he had ever come across.
“That's it? Just a whiff of the guy's after shave?”

“There's something else too. Something else has been in this house. Ray it’s entirely possible that Chuck Shurley was abducted, spirited away.”

“By what?”

“I don't know.”

xxx

Tobias had left Emily in Gil's capable hands so he could get some work done in the office. That worked out well because he got a call from Ray Kowalski about one Chuck Shurley's house.

“What's the situation Kowalski?” He asked.

“It’s weird Fornell. There's not even any trash or dust or anything left behind. Fraser was crawling around looking for fibers or even hair so we could send it to the lab for DNA. There's nothing. He picked up the guy's scent and said it was strange, not like any other human he's ever smelled.”

“That's not promising.”

“Oh it gets weirder. Fraser said he can feel like a...left over presence in the house. Like something not human was here... something that didn't have a smell.”

“That is weird.”

“He wants Gary to come check things out. He's a Celestial Dragon and might pick up something that Fraser missed. It wasn't easy for him to admit that.”

“Go ahead and call your Alpha in then...anything else?”

“The house...it reminds us of what Mark Sloan said. Gary told us all about how the original LA Community went missing. Being completely empty and all. Fraser is canvassing the neighborhood now to see if anyone remembers Shurley.”

“Damn. Keep me posted, get Gary there fast as you can.”

“You bet.”

xxx

The door opened with a jingle and Jethro looked up, not surprised to see Ed Gantry. A bully from his childhood, now a local cop. Honestly he expected Ed to show up sooner.

“Hello there Leroy. Been a while.”

“Hello Ed.”

“Heard you was a Fed now.”

“NCIS.”

“Anything I can help you with?”

He laughed and shook his head. “Not here on official business Ed, just here to see Jack.”
“Really?” Ed asked, obviously not buying it. “Why now? What's so special about now?”

“Well Ed, that's sort of personal and you and I have never been that close.”

Ed stepped closer, away from door and Jethro wondered why he'd left his gun at home. “How about you try again Leroy.”

“Hey Ed.” Jack said as he and Tim came out from the back room. “You're just in time for lunch. Care to join us.”

“Already ate Jack, appreciate the offer though.”

“Somethin' wrong Ed?”

“No, just heard a rumor that Leroy here was back in town...kinda odd though. Didn't see any vehicles out there with out of state plates. Just wondered what was going on and how he got here.”

“And I told you it was personal Ed. Quit making this an issue, there's no problem here.”

Ed stepped a bit closer. “I think there might be a problem.”

Tim frowned and strode over to them, nearly putting himself between Ed and Jethro. It was enough to make Ed step back and reevaluate the situation. His mate kept up the frown. “Do you always treat visitors to your town with this much hostility?”

“And who the hell are you?”

“Tim McGee.”

“He your boy Leroy?”

Jethro couldn't help the laugh. “Not hardly Ed.”

“Now Ed. I'd appreciate it if you didn't treat my son-in-law like that.”

Ed blinked, frowned and looked over at Jack. “Son-in-law? Jack you don't have a daughter.”

“No, but Tim here is Leroy's significant other. That's the right term these days right? It’s hard to keep up with all that sometimes.”

His eyes got wide and he looked at Jethro and Tim anew, taking a step back and reaching for his night stick. This time Jethro was the one to pull Tim away from Ed. “That a problem Ed? You gonna run me out of town for being with another man?”

“That would be a hate crime, officer.” Tim told him, not budging when Jethro tried to make him move away. “It wouldn't look good for a picturesque small town like this to turn on two federal agents who happen to be men and in a relationship.”

“Ed.” Jack said his name louder to get his attention. “Leroy came all this way so I could meet Tim. Don't do anything stupid.”

He nodded. “When you leavin’?”

“Sunday night.”

“That'll be fine.” He turned and walked back out the door, the merry jingle at odds with the tense
set of his shoulders.

“That could have gone better.” Jack commented.


xxx

Mark was waiting for Sara at a small cafe across the street from the precinct that Mike Stone, Steve Keller, and Dan Robbins used to work out of. They had gotten into San Francisco the night before, flying there himself had been a thrilling experience. Not to mention it was cheaper than taking a plane, and faster than driving. He'd landed in a dark alley where they caught a cab to the hotel where they'd made reservations.

That morning after breakfast they went to visit Sara's mother, Laura, in the facility she'd been in for more than a decade. Laura had seemed at ease, happy even, which made them happy. Mark was especially impressed with the staff of the home; they were cordial and treated the residents as friends not clients. It was a good facility.

The only problem was that when questioned, Laura didn't remember Lieutenant Mike Stone or Inspector Dan Robbins. She had never remembered the night she killed her husband...but Stone and Robbins had talked to her more than once during their investigation and she had no memory of them.

So after lunch they headed to the precinct. Sara still had friends in the department and wanted to look through a few records. So Mark was waiting at the cafe with a local paper when his phone rang. He nearly dropped it in his overpriced coffee before he managed to flip it open.

“Hello?”

“Hello Doctor Sloan, this is Director Fornell.”

“Tobias, how can I help you?”

“I'm hoping you've been briefed on recent developments regarding the Winchesters.”

“Yes, we got a call this morning just after breakfast. Kinda crazy huh?”

“It gets crazier Mark. Fraser and Kowalski are at Chuck Shurley's home right now...it’s completely empty. Very much like what you and Katherine found when your original Community went missing.”

“Oh dear.”

“I don't suppose you picked up any strange smells or feelings back then?”

“Sorry Tobias. I've always been able to sense other dragons...but that day when we were in Johnny and Kel's home...there was nothing. Or if there was my senses were human then and I didn't pick anything up.”

“Just thought I'd ask. Gary Hobson is going to join them and see if he can find anything. Try and enjoy your vacation.”

“Keep me in the loop if you would.”

“I will. Goodbye Mark.”
“Bye.” Mark shut his phone and looked up in time to watch Sara dodge the local traffic as she made her way to him. “Hey honey, find anything?”

Sara leaned down to kiss him and sat across from him at the small table. “Nothing.”

“Nothing?”

“The department has no record of any of them.”

He sighed and ran his hands down his face. “Oh boy.”

“Mark?”

“You aren't going to like this, but Tobias Fornell just called.”

Sara frowned and flagged down a barista. “Let me order a coffee and then you can tell me everything.”

xxx

Gary didn't like flying during the day, there was too much chance of being seen even with the hide-away charms the Sunnydale coven had created. However things were getting serious with Chuck Shurley missing, they needed to find him and find out why and how he knew the things that he knew.

The street was empty in the fast approaching twilight and he landed in the back yard where Fraser and Ray were waiting for him. He crouched down and waited for them to help Marissa down from his back. She'd insisted on coming with him and he hadn't fought her on it...not that he'd win anyway.

Once her feet were on the ground and her collapsible cane was extended Gary shifted back to human form. “Looks pretty normal out here.”

“Looks normal and empty on the inside.” Ray said.

“But there's...” Fraser hesitated and seemed a little lost, unusual for his Beta. “I'd feel better if you took a look around. It’s hard to explain what it feels like in there.”

“That's why we're here.” Marissa assured him.

“Allright.” Gary took Marissa's hand and led her to the back porch and they carefully made their way up the steps. The back door was unlocked and according to the other pair the front door had been as well.

They stepped inside, Fraser and Ray flanking them...and Gary shivered. For a long moment he couldn't speak, there was a feeling; he'd never experienced anything like it. Marissa gripped his hand and he felt her mind in his so she could see what he saw and feel what he felt.

“Gary? What was here?”

“I don't know.”

“It's never good when a Dragon admits that.” Ray muttered.

“Were you two here the entire time waiting for us?” Marissa asked them.
“I waited out front and called Fornell. Fraser talked to people around the neighborhood.”

“Did they remember Shurley?” Gary asked as he and Marissa walked further into the house.

“They did. He was a quiet man who kept to himself...a bit of a drinker but never caused anyone any trouble.” Fraser said. “No one had seen him in a couple of weeks.”

“So no one’s memories were altered.” Marissa said. “I guess that means that whatever happened to him isn't what happened in LA before.”

“I think that would be a safe assumption.”

Gary paused as they reached the living room. “I thought you said there was nothing in here.”

“There isn't.” Fraser said, eyes widening as he watched Gary crouch to pick up a white feather.

“That wasn't.”

“That was not there before.” Ray declared.

They looked on in fascination as the feather started to shine, kind of the way Gary did in his Dragon form. In fact that shine spread to Gary's skin and he cried out in shock or pain, they weren't sure which. Marissa, still holding his hand, reached for the other to take the feather so it wouldn't hurt him anymore. The moment she touched it there was a bright flash of light that blinded them, but at least Gary stopped screaming.

When they could see again Gary and Marissa were both on the floor staring at each other...and Marissa was crying. They rushed to their Alpha Pair to help them up and check them over for injuries.

Gary was pale and his gaze didn't waver from hers. “Marissa?”

She was still crying and nodded. Fraser and Ray looked at her face closely, something was different but...

“I can see.” Marissa sobbed, happiness choking her words.

“You've seen though your bond with Gary before-” Ray said.

Gary shook his head and cupped her face. “No...She can see. I've got nothing to do with this.”

“How?” Ray asked.

“The feather.” They all looked at Fraser. “It's gone...”

“How could a feather be responsible for this miracle?” Ray's question nearly made them freeze, blood going cold. “Oh hell.”

“Heaven more like.” Fraser said. “I suggest you head to DC so the witches there can run some tests.”

Gary nodded. “In a minute.” He smiled and held Marissa close, just needing a moment to bask in the miracle.

xxx

Wally answered the phone on the first ring, glad they had a cordless for the kitchen so he could
keep an eye on dinner. “Hello?”

“Wally you aren't gonna believe what's happened!”

He paused, surprised by the voice. “Becky?”

She sighed harshly. “Yes, Becky. Your cousin, who you haven't talked to in forEVER!”

“It’s not like I forgot about you Becks. I've been busy.”

“I heard, got a hot boyfriend and everything. Not that you called to tell me. I got to hear it from my parents...who were as unimpressed as yours.”

“Yeah, me being with Speed is just one more disappointment for them.”

“At least you have someone...my parents’ think I'm hopeless doing secretary work and obsessing over fictional characters.”

“Well...”

“Shut up. But Wally that's why I called. This book series, it’s like my favorite series ever...anyway I just finished the newest addition and it mentioned Dragons! The kind of Dragons that GranGran talked about when we were kids.”

Wally froze. “The Supernatural series?”

“Yeah! Have you read them?”

“No...but I have a set ordered. Becky it’s all real.”

She sighed heavily. “Look I know I'm obsessed but you don't have to humor me Walls.”

“Becky Rosen you listen to me...It’s all real. The Dragons...Mark Sloan and Sara Sidle are real people. The kid Stiles? Magic, everything.”

There was a high pitched and incomprehensible squeal that nearly made his ear bleed. When she could speak again her voice was still on the high side. “Sam and Dean are real? Really real?”

“Yeah Becks...but so are Dragons and Chimeras and other Hunters.”

“Oh...poop. Wally how do you know all this?”

“Speed and I are the Beta Pair of the Miami Community. The day we met he changed to save me.”

“So all that training we went through and the tattoos GranGran gave us...it wasn't for nothing...I mean besides pissing off our parents. Mom and Uncle Arthur always thought she was nuts and never believed in Dragons.”

“Its all real, it wasn't for nothing. Come to Miami Becky and I'll introduce you to my Community.”

“I'll pack my bags...and my books and be there as fast as I can. Love you Walls.”

“Be careful Becks. The world is a lot scarier than you realize.” He hung up and sighed. He was going to have to make a few calls about bringing in his cousin.

XXX
“You've gotta be kidding!” Stiles grumbled at the screen.

Peter walked into the living room so he could look over his shoulder. “Summer vacation or not I'm pretty sure you should be in bed by now.”

He nodded. “Yeah, I was just checking for updates from the DSO.”

The werewolf frowned. “What's happened now?”

“More like what's not happening.” Stiles pointed at the email. “Wally Shmagin's cousin is DragonKin and a fan of the Supernatural books so she's going to be brought in. Some cops Sara Sidle knew back in the eighties apparently never existed and Marissa Clark, part of the Chicago Alpha Pair, can suddenly see.” He looked up at Peter. “She's been blind all her life.” He frowned. “Or at least since she was a baby…”

“What happened?”

“She touched a feather that was at Chuck Shurley's house.”

“A feather?”

“It’s crazy! I thought things were calming down because we haven't gotten shot at in a while but…” He waved at the computer, “all that's been happening.”

“You can't do anything about it tonight Stiles, sign off and head upstairs.”

“Kay, you gonna check the status of the next delivery?”

“Those books will get here soon enough, but yes I'll check.”

“Cool.” Stiles signed out of his email and stood with a yawn. “Night Peter.”

“Good night Stiles.”

xxx

It was late when the Chicago Alphas arrived in D.C., landing on the roof where Butch Jenkins was waiting for them. The head of security escorted them directly to the clinic in the subbasement where Doctor Jack Stewart gave Marissa and Gary a checkup. He concluded that both were perfectly healthy. Even Marissa's eyesight was perfect. Something that shouldn't be possible.

The next step was to escort them to the third floor where Alistair Black was waiting in one of the casting rooms. He ran test after test on Marissa as well as a few on Gary since he'd held the feather while she had barely touched it. Tobias joined Butch as they watched the head of their local coven as he worked. No one said anything, not wanting to break his concentration, he seemed frustrated.
After a while he grabbed his cell phone and texted someone, and less than ten minutes later the rest of the DSO coven entered the casting room. Violet Thorne, Raven St. Clair, Hyacinth Thistlethorpe, and Alistair formed a circle around Marissa and Gary, hands clasped. For five minutes they stood like that, silent, before breaking away to whisper among themselves. Only Gary could hear them and whatever they were saying made him grow very pale.

“Would you like to share?” Tobias asked his employees. “Gary looks like he might need to sit down.”

Alistair made a sympathetic sound. “There's a powerful otherworldly...” He hesitated so Hyacinth elbowed him. “They're covered in holy residue. I'm not a hundred percent sure...but Marissa's eyesight might be the result of something heavenly.”

Marissa smiled. “So it’s a miracle? Fraser was right about heaven being involved?”

“Maybe...we don't know if it was God or an angel. Since there was a feather left behind and it disappeared when you touched it we're leaning more toward an angel than actual divine intervention.”

“And it’s permanent?” Gary asked.

“As far as we can tell. Though there's no way of knowing if the healing was on purpose or an accident.”

“We'd like you to stay the night in one of the apartments here behind our wards...” Violet suggested, “Just in case.”

“Thank you, as fun as flying with Gary is, I'm not sure we have it in us to make the flight home tonight.”

“Harmony can get you a room key down in the lobby.” Tobias told them. “Butch?”

“I'll get them settled sir.” Everyone said goodnight and after they were out of earshot Tobias looked at the coven.

“Anything else?”

Raven shrugged. “We're pretty clueless. This is the first evidence we've seen of a power this high up.”

“What she means,” Hyacinth started, “Is there are different levels of higher powers. Like who decides which potential becomes a Slayer...or what being decides the fate of a soul...but this...”

“Is beyond us,” Alistair finished.

Tobias sighed. “Perfect.”

xxx

“Are you sure you boys can't stay?” Jack asked. “You didn't even have breakfast, it's barely even dawn.” He looked up at the sky just starting to become a light grey.

“If Jethro eats this early he'd probably throw up mid-flight.” Tim commented, while Jethro glared at him a little.
Jack grinned, amused. “You two will let me know when...when you lay an egg?” He laughed. “Never thought I’d say something like that, but I’d like to come down and visit.”

“You sure?” Jethro asked.

“Of course Leroy, there's a young man who helps out in the store who can look after things for a couple of weeks.”

“We’ll let you know when Jethro lays our egg, but it'll take about a month to hatch...there won't be much to do while Jethro is keeping it warm and I'm looking after him.”

“We'll be at the safe house then, probably under guard just in case.”

“Will there be room for me at this safe house?” Jack shook his head. “Aren't you being too cautious? It almost sounds paranoid to have your own safe house.”

“Not really Jack, some of the kids our Nation is responsible for were attacked not long ago. One of them was grazed by a bullet.”

“If they hadn't had magic, they could have been captured or killed.” Tim finished.

“Besides,” Jethro said. “The safe house is for our entire community.” He grinned. “I have no doubt that our Beta Pair and Council Rep will be using the safe house when Agent Hotchner is ready to start laying eggs.”

“That won't be any time soon?” Jack asked.

“No, Aaron and Haley Hotchner have a son who's less than a year old. I don't think Aaron and Spencer are ready to start expanding their family.” Tim told him, Jack gave him a confused look which made them both laugh.

Jethro was even grinning. “Aaron and Haley are married, they were high school sweethearts...but Doctor Spencer Reid is Aaron's soulmate.”

“And they all live together?”

“They invited Spencer into the relationship before Aaron even changed...” Tim shrugged. “They made it work and are very happy together. Aaron and Spencer are our Beta Pair and Haley is our Council Rep.”

“Well I look forward to meeting all of your people when I come visit.” He hugged Tim and then Jethro. “And you don't have to wait until you lay that egg to give me a call.

Jethro nodded and stepped back so he could shift form. “I'll remember Dad.”

xxx

Despite the urgency they felt over the books Dean and Sam slept in. It was Sunday so any bookstores that would be open wouldn't unlock their doors until at least ten. So they missed seeing Gary and Marissa who had come in the night before, though Fornell filled them in on the latest happenings. Marissa and Gary had possibly touched an angel feather and now she could see.

The DSO coven had run a few tests on the bonded pair but whatever had caused the 'miracle' as Marissa had insisted on calling it was beyond them. All they could tell was that a higher power had interfered, something holy and on high...and probably an angel because of the feather. The
The possibility of angels actually existing wasn't something Dean wanted to think about. So he was going to ignore it, he felt there were more pressing matters...like finding out just how much detail was in the Supernatural books.

They were at breakfast when Jo joined them in the cafeteria with two other women. She greeted both Winchesters warmly and joined them at the table before she introduced her companions. “Guys this Agent Lori Baxter and Agent-in-Training Becky Dingle.”

“Nice to meet you.” Sam said.

Dean grunted around his coffee. “Same.”

“Heard you boys got a shock.” Lori grinned.

“Or somethin’.” Dean grumbled. “Since Agent Todd isn't kicking our asses today we're checking out all the local bookstores for copies of Supernatural.”

“I can help with that.” Becky offered. “I've been here in DC since the DSO was founded and we bought the building. I know my way around.”

“We'd appreciate that.” Sam said, offering her a smile.

“You could always wait.” Lori suggested. “I'm pretty sure Director Fornell ordered a few copies of the entire series. One set for his personal reference and few copies for our library here.”

“Oh god.” Dean groaned.

“Is that a problem?” Jo asked, grinning.

Sam snickered. “Dean tends to hook up a lot...and according to Abby Scuito everything is in there.”

Becky's eyes got a little wide. “Wow.”

“Maybe the kids don't need to read them then.” Kate Todd said, as she entered the cafeteria.

“What do you mean?” Sam asked her.

“I'm pretty sure Peter Hale ordered a copy of the set too and Stiles plans to read them.”

“Dear god, no. Don't let the kids read them!” Dean actually blushed, a little. “Especially Maddie!”

“I think the books are safe from Maddie.” Kate grinned at him. “She just turned eight right? Despite her growing skills in magic, I think novels like that are a bit beyond her. I can't guarantee that RJ Caine and Derek Hale won't read them though.”

“We ever find Chuck Shurley I'm gonna shoot him.” Dean declared much to everyone but Sam's amusement. Instead his brother grumbled his agreement.

xxx

Gary landed gently on the roof of their building, and Marissa slid down and landed on her feet easily before he could kneel like he usually did. She grinned up at him as he shifted to human form and he couldn't help but grin back. “That's going to take some getting used to.”

“It will, but it’s amazing. I've loved being able to see the world through your eyes Gary, but to see it through my own?” Her smile was so bright that he couldn't help but kiss her, lips melding to
hers, the joy a nearly physical thing between them.

He pulled away reluctantly. “We better go inside.”

“I like that idea.”

“Not for that Marissa. Our entire Community is downstairs in the pub waiting for us.” He cocked his head a bit and listen a bit closer. “They're throwing us a party.”

“For breakfast?”

He shrugged. “Why not?”

“Then let’s not keep them waiting.”

They climbed through the window and made their way downstairs where their Community timed their cheers perfectly with their entrance to the pub thanks to Fraser's own dragon hearing. The pub itself was a kaleidoscope of colors. There were balloons and streamers in every imaginable shade all around the room and two tables were pushed together with places set for all of them. The plates were paper, but covered in gold and silver confetti designs, even the plastic cutlery shined in various colors. It was gaudy, but their family and friends had tried to put as much color into a single space as they could. All for Marissa.

Marissa was laughing and crying and looking each of their people in the eyes as she went up to them and hugged them. She knew what they looked like; she'd seen them through Gary's eyes and their bond a hundred times. This was different. This was the beginning of a new phase in their lives and Gary's heart swelled, the joy overflowing and mingling with Marissa's.

Diefenbaker and Kimmy weaved their way through the group, sensing everyone's excitement since emotions were on overload. Though Diefenbaker kept eying the food on the table when he thought no one (Fraser) was looking. Spike was watching Marissa in confusion and she kneeled in front of him.

“Hello Spike.” He whined and wagged his tail, confused that she'd made eye contact with him.

“Are you going to keep him?” Henry asked.

“Yes I am; he's too old to go to someone else.” She smiled at her seeing-eye dog; Spike had been with her for years. “Besides, he's family and deserves to enjoy his retirement.”

Henry nodded; his own eyes had watered a bit. He like everyone was attached to the three dogs that were as much a part of their Community as any of them. His bond with Spike, however, was deeper than with Diefenbaker or Kimmy. Years ago Spike had saved his life, keeping him from eating a candy apple that had accidentally been poisoned. They'd nearly lost Spike then, but the German shepherd had pulled through with a little help.

That had been their first miracle...and now they had another.

“Okay folks, it’s getting a little too sad now. Let’s have those pancakes.” Ray declared. “I'm starving.”

“I'm all for that.” Patrick agreed. “Hey, did you two see the Winchesters while you were in DC?”

“No.” Gary said. “We left before they woke up.”
“They know about the books right?” Patrick asked. “I mean that's how all this happened.”

“They know, and I got the impression that no one is happy about the books, especially Sam and Dean.” Marissa said, getting to her feet.

“Well...I went out and got a set of them so we can read them. I mean we know about all the stuff the Sunnydale Natives have gone up against...but I figured we should read them.”

“How far have you gotten in them?” Erica asked.

Patrick looked a little sheepish. “I've already read the first one, Supernatural...and I'm halfway through the second...Wendigo.” He shrugged. “They're pretty good. Fraser is already ahead of me though.”

All eyes turned to the Mountie and he nodded. “I'm on book three, Phantom Traveler.”

“Where are the books?” Henry asked.

“I'm not sure you should read them.” Erica said.

“Mom! If I'm old enough to be Council Rep, I'm old enough to read those books.”

“Kid's got ya there Erica.” Ray grinned.

Erica sighed but nodded. “As soon as you're done with the first one I want to read it.” She looked to Gary and Marissa. “What about you two?”

“They can wait.” Marissa said. “I want to see Chicago. All of Chicago.” She looked at Gary and smiled, “and other things.”

Before Gary could reply Fraser asked an important question. “Do we have a cover story for this miracle?”

Gary nodded and Marissa pulled a folder out of her bag and handed it to Fraser. “The techs at the DSO created it. Officially we went to a private clinic for an experimental treatment. I'm the first clinical trial...and I'll probably be the only one. The clinic is going to lose its funding in the next few months and shut down before the attending physician goes missing.”

“Very clever.”

“Yeah clever.” Ray repeated. “Can we eat now?”

Marissa laughed. “Don't let us stop you Ray.”

xxx

Sam climbed out of the passenger seat of the company car before Sandra so he could open the backdoor for her. She slid out of the backseat, thanking their driver, Butch Jenkins, as she did.

“No problem ma'am.” He popped the trunk so they could get their bags. “Someone will be in the lobby to meet you.”

Sam got their bags, handing Sandra's rolling suitcase off to her so he could close the trunk and gave it a pat signaling the head of security. Jenkins pulled away to head for the back entrance to the underground parking, leaving them alone in front of the ten story building. They gazed up at it for a moment and Sandra looked over at the man who was probably going to be her right hand.
“Ready?”

“As I’ll ever be.”

He walked ahead of her to open the door and they stepped into the Head Quarters of the Dragon Security Office. The first person they saw was a woman at the front desk, a brunette that had a no-nonsense feeling to her. She looked up from her computer and nodded at them.

“Sandra Maldonado, Sam Synturion?”

“That's us.” Sandra confirmed.

“Welcome to the DSO HQ, I'm Beatrice Marsh. If you'll approach the desk I'll assign you room keys, do you want to share an apartment?”

Sandra glanced at Sam who nodded. “I wouldn't be much of a bodyguard if I wasn't close.”

“That will be fine.” Sandra told her, looking back at Beatrice.

Beatrice did something on her computer, probably putting them in to the system in some way and then retrieved two sets of keys, one for each of them. “Please have a seat and I'll let the Director know you're here.” She gestured to the waiting area filled with plush sofas and chairs.

“Thank you.”

They settled themselves on a couple of chairs that were just as comfy as they looked which was nice after the plane ride from Houston. Beatrice made a call, doing as she said she would, talking to someone named Gil to inform the Director that he had visitors.

Barely five minutes later there was a ding from one of the elevators and two men stepped into the lobby. The older one who was balding walked with a purposeful stride toward them; his companion who had auburn hair leaning towards red was just behind him. Sandra and Sam stood to meet them and the older man held his hand out to her.

“Tobias Fornell, Director of the DSO.” They shook hands. “It’s wonderful to have you Ms. Maldonado.”

“Sandra, please.” She corrected him.

“Then you can call me Tobias.” He offered his hand to Sam next. “You too Mr. Synturion.”

Her companion grinned. “Sam is fine, Tobias. At least until the interviews are over.”

“Alright, that's fine. This is my assistant, Gil Wilde.”

Gil shook each of their hands with a smile. “Pleasure to meet you both. Sam if you would come with me I'll start your interview.”

Sam hesitated. “I'm already taking my job as Sandra's bodyguard very seriously...”

“That's fine. We'll be just outside the Director's office.” Gil told him.

“That is where Sandra will be going through her own interview. There will be a single unlocked door between you. If you'd both come with us?”

“It’s okay Sam.” She nodded at Tobias. “Lead the way.”
After some negotiating during a Community meeting it was decided that Chris and Allison Argent couldn't stay in New York. Laura Hale was sympathetic to their situation but she didn't think it would be a good idea to have them so close, much less in the same city as her pack. Their proximity to Derek after summer vacation was over might be a problem.

So after the meeting the night before, Mac reached out to the other Alphas to see if anyone would mind hosting the Argents. They were still unclear as to what position Chris might eventually hold in the Dragon Nation; however supplying their DSO officers with weapons was a possibility. Perhaps even someday he could be an Agent-on-Site, for now though he was in a sort of probationary situation.

Xander and Spike were the first to respond. They had two spare rooms in their home and the Argents would have a variety of individuals to get used to. Witches, dragons, and neutral demons as well as a living vampire. From there they'd see.

Mac and Adam had driven them to the airport to wait with them. Allison wasn't happy about leaving; she'd grown fond of Adam quickly and clung to his hand while they waited for the flight to be called. They hadn't had much to pack as they'd been staying in a hotel; most of their belongings were in storage somewhere in Montana, in a small town where they'd lived for a while before heading to New York after Kate had attacked the Hales again.

“Will I ever see you again?” Allison asked, looking up at Adam, still clutching his hand. She was sitting beside him in the waiting area, eyes filled with tears.

“Will I ever see you again?” She asked.

Adam looked at Mac who shook his head and Adam sighed. “Not for a while, maybe if I can pull Mac away for some vacation time.”

She nodded, still sad; Chris kneeled in front of her. “I know it’s going to be different Allison, but you still have me, and I have you. Okay?”

“Okay.”

After breakfast Becky Dingle had made a list of all the bookstores she was familiar with in D.C. and the surrounding areas. They divided into teams to cover more ground and each pair signed out a company car to go on what was basically a scavenger hunt. There were sixteen books to find and that was divided up as well. Dean and Sam were looking for books one through four, while Jo and Becky searched for five through eight. Elle and Sarah teamed up for nine through twelve and Lori and Lindsey looked for the last four books.

They kept in touch over the next few hours, letting the others know what they'd found and how many copies they were getting of each book. Eventually they had a set for each of them. Kate declined their offer of getting her a set before they left, she'd just read one of the sets that Fornell had ordered for their library.

Kate did, however, order lunch for the hungry horde so they could dive in once they returned to HQ. They took two elevators up from parking and headed straight to one of the conference rooms. Lori had called ahead and Kate let them know where she'd be with their food.
She watched in amusement as most of them did indeed dive into their meal...Dean, however, grabbed a copy of one of the books. Route 666. “Anything special about that book Dean?”

“Just a racist truck.” He muttered, and then he blushed. “The kids definitely don't need to read these.”

“How bad is it?” Sam asked.

“I'm full frontal in here dude.”

Sam made face. “You and Cassie... when you two, uh ... reconnected?”

“Yeah.”

Jo snickered. “You realize that everyone in the Dragon Nation is going to be buying these books right?”

Dean made face and tossed the book down. “Son-of-a-bitch!”

Stiles was sitting in the backyard, his back to the house, under a shade tree that somehow managed to thrive in all the junk that used to be there. He was staring straight ahead, watching a hubcap that was floating in front of him. It was twirling slowly, all of his concentration making it spin in mid-air. He never heard the footsteps that signaled he was no longer alone.

“Stiles.”

Stiles jerked in surprise and flailed a bit, his concentration completely broken and the hubcap clattered to the ground. In his flailing he'd bumped into Derek's legs, but hadn't knocked the werewolf down. He blinked and looked up. “Hi.”

Derek rolled his eyes but crouched down beside him. “Working hard?”

“I was, until someone scared the crap out of me. What's up?”

“Uncle Peter invited Sheriff Mills and her family to dinner tonight.”

Stiles groaned and leaned against the other boy in mock despair. “Seriously?”

“Yeah.”

“Hanging out with local law enforcement is not how you keep a low profile.”

Derek laughed a little and shoved Stiles off of him. “So, you can do more than throw fire.”

“Dude I can do all kinds of stuff.”

“Show me?” Derek asked, as if he needed a distraction from their upcoming dinner party.

“Well not everything...but I can show you a few things...give us something to do while we wait.”

“Thanks Stiles.”

They were sitting at the table in Director Fornell's office where they'd been for a few hours. The
Director and Gil had conducted the first part of their interviews separately as they had said they would. Then they all gathered in Fornell's office and talked as a group, an agent had come in around noon to take their orders for lunch. When the food arrived they took a break and the conversation was more relaxed and off the books.

After lunch it was back to work, and Agent Wilde had other duties to tend to but both the Director and Agent Wilde seemed more than satisfied with the way things were going.

“Tobias?”

He nodded and slid the paperwork toward her. “The moment Dorian Alleyne suggested you for the position we ran a background check. From those two points alone you are more than qualified for this job.”

“And me?” Sam asked.

“Your skills speak for themselves Sam, both before and after the Initiative. You and your friends are a welcome addition to the DSO. If you're ready you can sign the paperwork now or wait until the others are here.”

“Would they need to come here?” Sandra asked.

“Anyone who wants to be a DSO Agent needs some training. There's a lot to cover besides our organization's brief history, or the slightly longer story of how the Dragon Nation came to be.”

“Such as the history of Dragons themselves and other non-humans,” Sam said.

“Exactly. You've heard about the most recent developments? These Supernatural books? And the miracle that happened to the Alpha Pair of Chicago?”

“Joe and Levon kept us in the loop.” Sandra confirmed.

“There's a lot to cover, so the sooner the rest of your staff get here the sooner you can all join the current class.” Tobias smiled. “It’s growing at an alarming rate.”

Sandra and Sam shared a look and Sam shrugged at her, leaving the decision to speak up to her. She sighed and shook her head. “There's at least one member of my potential staff that may need a little more time before we throw her into training.”

“Danica Kimbal?” He asked.

“Yes...I don't think she'd be suitable for fieldwork...Head of Security certainly, but I don't want her in the field.”

“We could ask for half of them to come now and join the class.” Sam suggested. “And Danica can come with the second half for the next class.”

“I like that.” Tobias agreed. “Then the first 'graduates' can get to work on what will be your office in Houston.”

“Sounds good...” Sandra hesitated. “But I need to make a few calls...and I need to head back to Boston and give my two weeks’ notice before I sign anything.”

“I'll be going with her.” Sam stated.

Tobias grinned. “Alright. The paperwork will be waiting for you when you're ready.”
“Two weeks to quit and put my home on the market and I'll start packing right away.”

“I look forward to working with you in future then Sandra.” He grinned. “Assistant Director Maldonado. Agent Synturion.”

She and Sam smiled back and Sandra nodded. “Same here, Director Fornell.”

xxx

When they had gotten the invitation to dinner via the front desk and Harmony, Dean practically jumped at it. Not because he was especially excited about meeting the Alpha Pair of D.C., but because he wanted a break from the crappy madness that their life had become. In other words he wanted to get as far from the books they’d bought that day as he could.

Both of them were tired of hearing and reading about their lives in the words of Chuck Shurley. That was why they were now hanging out with Jethro Gibbs and Tim McGee. It was peaceful, just hanging out, drinking beer and waiting for steaks and baked potatoes. Well, Jethro wasn't drinking any beer because of the baby and while that still weirded Dean out a bit he kept any comments on it to himself.

Sam was talking to Tim about being an NCIS Agent when Jethro pointed to a book on the coffee table. “That will give you an idea of what our jobs are like.”

Dean leaned forward from the couch and picked up the hard back. “Deep Six?” He opened it up to read the blurb and his brows raised. “You really handle cases like this? Where did Gemcity get this idea?” He opened it up and read a few paragraphs.

Sam frowned at him. “Dean?”

“I can already tell you this is better than Chuck Shurley's writing.” He handed the book to Sam.

Sam stared at the author's name. “Tim...Did you write this?”

“Wait, what?” Dean asked.

“Thom E. Gemcity.” Sam said. “It’s an anagram for Timothy McGee. Right?”

Tim nodded from the arm of the stuffed chair where he was sitting. Jethro was in the actual seat, his arm around Tim's waist. “It is.”

“You wrote this?” Dean asked, taking the book back from Sam and looking at it anew. “RC Higgins?” He grinned. “Is that supposed to be Jethro?”

Jethro laughed and nodded. “The original names he came up with were a lot worse.”

Tim groaned. “I was calling him LJ Tibbs.”

“You're right,” Sam agreed. “That is worse.”

“Jethro helped change the names; and I didn't write about one of our actual cases.”

“You mind if we borrow it?” Dean asked. “I'd like to read something else.”

“Go ahead.” Tim stood and disappeared into the foyer and the office on the other side of it. When he returned he had another copy of Deep Six and handed it to Sam. “It’s not actually in stores yet, but as the author I got a few advanced copies.”
“Thanks.” Sam grinned. “Maybe we should order one for Ash and Ellen, distract them from the stories of our lives.”

“Jesus, did Jo tell her mom and Ash about those things?”

“Yes.”

Tim took a swallow of his beer. “Ash has a copy.”

Dean blinked and then narrowed his eyes. “How? You don't even know Ash.”

“Oh Timmy knows Ash.” Jethro laughed.

Sam frowned, puzzled. “How?”

Tim grinned. “I've known Ash since MIT.”

“Oh yeah?” Dean grinned back. “You know why he got kicked out?”

Tim nodded, and his grin faded. “Saving me from a bunch of rich brats who didn't like kid geniuses.”

“Genius huh?”

“I started at MIT when I was 15. Trust me; I was a prime target for bullying. If Ash hadn't...” Tim shuddered. “He saved me, let's leave it at that.”

Sam was still frowning. “And he got kicked out?”

“The only reason he stayed out of jail was because my father pulled some strings. It was bad enough his only son got beaten up, if those guys had gone as far as they were willing to go...well he'd consider his name and the family reputation shamed for all time.”

Now Dean looked angry. “The guys who... attacked you. They were rich? And your dad still made it all go away?”

“He did, they had money, but their fathers weren't Admirals. Mine is.”

“Daddy issues McGee?”

“Like you two don't?” Tim countered.

“Touché.”

Sam elbowed him. “So he kept Ash out of jail and kept everything quiet?”

“Yes.”

Dean nodded. “And you and Ash have been friends ever since?”

Tim grinned again. “We were friends before the attack.”

Jethro shared that grin. “They were a lot more than friends after the attack.”

Dean's jaw dropped. “No way, you and Ash...were...”

“Lovers,” Tim confirmed.
Sam seemed equally as surprised. “You and Ash...really?”

Dean snorted. “I gotta ask - did he have the mullet then?”

Tim shook his head. “No, short hair all the way around, other than that he hasn't really changed much. And he's still a good kisser.”

Jethro was still grinning. “Yes he is.” Dean and Sam just stared.

xxx

Instead of making Peter cook, Jodie and her husband Sean brought a veritable mountain of pizza that they picked up on their way through town. They decided that since Peter was always cooking for Bobby and the kids that he needed a break instead of more work. The kids were ecstatic, because who doesn't love pizza, while Peter was simply amused...and glad that there was enough there, even with three werewolves on site.

After the kids ate their fill they trooped out to the backyard, with Jodie's son Owen in tow, so, as Stiles said, the adults could talk or whatever. Sean and Bobby were in the kitchen, putting leftovers away, wrapping the remaining slices in foil so they'd fit in the fridge.

That left Jodie and Peter sitting on the back porch each with a beer, watching the kids blow bubbles in the well lit backyard. The old Christmas lights were still strung up so everyone could see just fine.

Jodie sipped at her beer and glanced at Peter who looked at peace. “How long you and the kids gonna be stayin’?”

“They want to stay all summer.” Peter answered, gesturing to the kids with his own beer.

“And you?”

“I don't exactly have anywhere to go...I'm not happy with my niece Laura for leaving me alone in a hospital in California while she took Derek and Cora to New York.” He shrugged. “I'll stay until I've worn out my welcome.”

“I knew Bobby's wife Karen.” Jodie said, not sure why she mentioned it, and wondering if she'd said something wrong because Peter's breathing seemed to become labored when she said the name. “You okay?”

“I'm fine.”

She didn't quite believe him, but kept going. “Karen was a sweet lady, had a mischievous streak.” Jodie frowned at the memory. “That ended though, just before she died. They had a fight about something...and the next thing I know there's a call out to this address and Karen was dead...and Bobby was bleeding from knife wounds.”

“Wasn't his fault. There was even a witness I believe.”

“Yeah, a passerby heard screaming and witnessed her attacking Bobby.” Jodie tilted her head and looked closer at Peter. “What was your wife's name?”

His smile was bitter, sorrowful. “Karen.”

“I'm sorry.”
“So am I.”

XXX
Chapter 17

Allies and Enemies

calikocat

Word count: 4925

XXX

Speed woke at the sound of an unfamiliar car pulling into their driveway. He sat up and moved away from Wally to switch on a lamp, which woke his mate up. “Speed?”

“Someone’s outside. Just heard a car door close.”

Wally yawned and crawled out of their bed. “It’s probably Becky.”

Speed frowned and glanced at the digital clock. “It’s two-thirty in the morning.”

His mate shrugged and headed for the bedroom doorway, but Speed got out of bed and beat him to it. He got his gun out of the locked drawer in the living room, put the clip in and made sure there was a round in the chamber before he approached their front door.

Just as he approached it there was a knock and he peered out...not seeing anyone. Wally rolled his eyes.

“She’s short Speed, like me.”

Speed rolled his eyes and unlocked the deadbolt and knob but left the chain hooked as he peered outside. There on their front stoop was a short blond girl who looked like she was barely standing on her feet. When she noticed him she gave a little wave and her eyes widened just a bit. “Hi.”

“Becky Rosen?”

She nodded. “Yup.”

He closed the door, undid the chain, and opened it back up. Wally squeezed past him so he could hug his cousin. “Hey Becks.”

“Hey Wal.” She yawned and nearly fell asleep mid hug. “Tell me you have a couch.”

Wally laughed and practically walked her over to said couch where she collapsed and fell asleep. Speed shook his head and locked the door back while Wally got a pillow and blanket from the linen closet. Together they lifted her head up and put the pillow under it and spread the blanket over her. Becky slept through the whole thing.

“So I guess I won't actually get to 'meet' her until morning.”

His soulmate grinned and nodded. “Becky must have driven all the way down. No wonder she’s tired. Come on, let’s go back to bed. We have hours left before you have to get up for work.”

Speed smirked at the smaller man. “Maybe I’m not sleepy anymore.”

“It's too early for breakfast Speed-” Wally’s eyes widened then he smirked back. “Oh.”

“Yeah, kinda depends on what I'm having for breakfast, doesn't it.” He picked Wally up and tossed him over his shoulder before carrying him back into their bedroom. Wally did his best to stay quiet,
though he doubted Becky would hear them once the door was closed.

xxx

Sam was already up when Dean stumbled out of his room. His little brother was sitting in the small living room in the recliner, a copy of Deep Six in his hands and cup of coffee beside him on the end table.

“Dude how long you been up?”

Sam glanced at the wall clock. “An hour.”

“I know it’s better than Chuck’s crap, but is it really that good?” Dean asked, heading toward the coffee pot.

“Yeah it is. Tim worked his and Gibbs relationship into the book. That took a lot of guts...I bet he had to fight the publisher to keep it in the story.”

“You mean the relationship between Special Agents Rory Conway Higgins and Theodore McKinny.” Dean corrected him.

“Yeah, you know what I mean. If the book makes it into main stream fiction it'll be a big deal.”

“Any mention of Dragons or the Supernatural in it yet?”

“No, I don't think Tim would add those particular secrets to his book Dean.”

Dean grunted, possibly in agreement. “When do our 'classes' start?”

“Couple of hours.”

“Awesome. Time for breakfast then.”

xxx

Bobby got up early, before Peter even and had the coffee ready by the time the younger man came downstairs. Peter had entered the kitchen with wide and curious eyes his expression switching to a smirk as he poured himself a cup of coffee. “I’d heard that people need less sleep as they get older.”

The Hunter rolled his eyes. “Just drink your coffee.”

Peter outright grinned and took his first sip before starting on breakfast, recruiting Bobby's help whether the older man wanted to help or not. Bobby didn't fight it though and cracked the eggs into a mixing bowl before taking a whisk to them.

Peter added a bit of milk to the eggs and Bobby kept stirring. “You call your friend Ellen last night?”

Bobby nodded and handed the bowl to Peter who had a skillet ready for them. “I did. She said to come on down to the Roadhouse. It’s quiet there during the day with just her and Ash. She can't wait to meet the kids.”

“Good. Start cutting up some ham would you? I want to add it to the eggs once they're scrambled.”

“Sure.” He got the ham out of the fridge, the cutting board out of a cabinet and started cutting the slices small enough to be mixed in with the eggs. “What did you and the good Sheriff talk about
last night while Sean and I put the pizza away?”

“Karen... well... both Karens.”

Bobby froze and looked up at him. “Your wife was named Karen too?”

Peter nodded. “Yeah.”

He reached up and clasped Peter's shoulder and Peter's hand rested on it for a moment. Neither said a word, just stood in silence for a bit before the moment was over and Peter went back to the eggs and Bobby the ham. No words were needed right then and they worked in easy silence until the eggs and ham were done and they could hear the kids moving around upstairs.

“There's homemade bread in fridge.” Peter told him. “We'll have that with the eggs, and you know who wants juice and who wants milk by now.”

“And even which kind of juice.” Bobby said. “I figure after breakfast we'll finish gettin' the bus ready for the trip.”

“Sounds good.”

They heard the kids tromping down the stairs then and grinned at one another as they zombie walked into the room and toward the food. Derek and Cora, however, shook off enough sleep to notice the looks the men were giving one another and shared one of their own. They hadn't expected their uncle to heal this much this soon emotionally...but they weren't going to complain about it.

xxx

Tobias had just walked into his office, saying hello to Gil as he passed him, when his phone rang. They both stared at Gil's phone in surprise, not expecting anyone to call that early. He motioned Gil to answer and continued into his office.

“You've reached the DSO, Gil Wilde speaking.” He glanced at Tobias. “Good morning Mr. Travers. How may I direct your call?” Tobias gave him a thumb up. “Director Fornell is indeed in. Would you like to speak to him? One moment please.” He pressed a button on his phone. “Line one sir.”

“Thank you Gil, close the door please.” He waited for Gil to close the door and settled at his desk before picking up the phone. “Mr. Travers.”

“Director Fornell.”

“I'm guessing this isn't a social call, or you wouldn't have contacted me so early.”

“...that blasted time difference. It’s hard to keep track of it.”

“Agreed. What's happened?”

“My contacts in France have informed me that Victoria Argent was spotted entering the country. Gerard met her at the airport before both vanished in a crowd.”

“Thank you, I'll pass word along to Chris Argent and let him deal with the information as he sees fit.”

“You're quite welcome.”
“Since I have you on the phone, we've had a few developments.”

“Oh?” Travers asked.

“Somehow, a man named Chuck Shurley managed to write a series of books based off the lives of Dean and Sam Winchester.”

“The Hunters you've adopted?”

“Yeah. The boys have never met him...but he's chronicled their activities since Sam started hunting again.”

“Hmm. Very curious.” Travers murmured. “Have you contacted the man yet to find out how he's managed this?”

“We sent the Chicago Beta and Alpha pairs... but Chuck Shurley is nowhere to be found. The Alpha Pair of Chicago did find a feather...and when they both touched it Marissa Clark regained her eyesight.”

“A miracle?”

“My coven ran a few tests...all they can tell us is that some sort of holy magic was involved.”

“So you have no idea what's happened to the man?”

“No Travers, no clue. We’ve speculated that he might be some kind of seer. But to have all those details...when Doyle in L.A. strictly gets visions of people in trouble...”

“Not all seers’ abilities are identical Director.” Travers hesitated. “In fact...since there was a feather at the scene that could indicate an angel was involved.”

“We've decided that was the likely explanation. What are you leading up to?”

“I only know of one reason why a person would be whisked away by an angel...Prophets are protected by archangels. If the angels thought dragons were getting too close to the prophet they would indeed have made the man disappear so he could continue writing the current gospel.”

Tobias sighed. “A prophet named Chuck?”

“Why not? Is there not a slayer named Buffy?”

“Well...I guess that does make sense. Thank you for your time Mr. Travers.”

“Indeed. Good day.” There was a click and Tobias hung up as well. He dreaded the next mass email he was going to send. Chuck Shurley being a prophet was a little hard to swallow...but if the shoe fit, what other explanation was there?

xxx

Spike grumbled when Xander got up at daylight, but slipped back into sleep before his dragon even left their bedroom to go for a morning run. He drifted in and out for a while half listening to the sounds inside the house, familiar and unfamiliar. The unfamiliar included their two current house guests, Chris and Allison Argent.

They had gone to L.A. the night before in the Desoto, to meet the Argents at the airport and then driven them back to Sunnydale for their stay. Xander would have preferred to fly there and back
himself but both had luggage so Spike's car had been the better choice.

He opened his eyes and listened to the little girl wake up and tiptoe to her father's room. Chris Argent was awake in an instant and let Allison cuddle with him as the first rays of light came in the windows. Spike sighed and knew he couldn't put it off any longer...soon his guests would be hungry and if there was anything at all he couldn't stand it was a sad girl.

By the time Chris and Allison headed downstairs he had breakfast ready in the form of chocolate chip pancakes. And even if they didn't put a smile on the girl's face, Xander would certainly thank him.

The pancakes, as it turned out, did get a smile from Allison as she sat at the dining room table and forked a couple onto her plate. “Thank you Mr. Blake.”

“None of that Mr. Blake stuff Princess, Spike is fine.”

“Thank you Spike.”

Chris was eying the pancakes with less enthusiasm than his daughter. “Did you make anything that isn't so high in sugar?”

“Made a few regular pancakes but if you want something blander there are eggs in the fridge; just help yourself mate.”

“Plain pancakes will be fine. Is there any sort of itinerary today?”

“You two are supposed to acclimate to non-humans right?”

“Yes.”

“Then today you'll get to meet the entire Community. Dragons, a werewolf, not the kind you're used to, witches and even a demon.”

“You let one of your community members stay possessed?”

Spike rolled his eyes. “Demons on the Hellmouth aren't the kind from Christian lore. Clem's a good bloke, just looks like someone made him out of excess baby elephant skin.” At the face Chris made he laughed. “He's gray and his skin hangs off him in rolls, but he's a total pacifist and he's good with kids. Just keep any remarks to yourself yeah?”

“Alright. Where is your, uh, soulmate?”

“You mean the High King of the Dragon Nation?” Spike grinned and listened. “He went for a run...should be coming through the front door right about...now.”

The front door opened and Xander tromped in. “I swear I could smell the chocolate a block away.”

“Hop in the shower love and you can have your chocolate and your coffee.” Xander blew him a kiss from the doorway before heading upstairs to take a shower. “Sometimes I think you love chocolate more than me!”

“Never happen!” Xander called back. “Spike kisses are a thousand times better than chocolate kisses!”

Spike laughed and ignored the strange look Chris was giving him. Allison, however, was giggling so he winked at her before heading back into the kitchen.
They had the bus on the road within a couple of hours, which was good because they were looking at, at least an eight hour trip one way. Bobby figured they'd drive about four hours before stopping for lunch. Peter had packed sandwiches and drinks in a couple of coolers and stashed them in the back of the small bus.

He was sitting directly behind Bobby who was driving and the kids were spread out as much as they could among the limited seats. There was no radio so neither adult was surprised when Stiles started up a rendition of one hundred bottles of juice on the wall. Before they were halfway through, though, the younger kids had all drifted off to sleep, still full from breakfast.

Only Derek and RJ remained awake, no longer singing and talking about what sports they might play when school started back. Derek had always been into basketball, while RJ was more into soccer. RJ asked Peter and Bobby if they'd played sports in school.

Bobby scoffed. “I was too busy workin' part time help support my mom. My dad took off when I was just a kid and she needed help.”

Peter heard the change in Bobby's heartbeat, it was barely there, the other man was so used to telling the lie that it was almost like the truth to him. He let it go, everyone had their secrets. Bobby had said his father had been a mean son-of-a-bitch, so whatever the truth was, he'd tell Peter when and if he was ready.

“What about you Peter?”

“Baseball for a while. After high school though it’s hard to keep up appearances and college teams have to go through random drug tests.”

“Why is it hard to keep up appearances?” RJ asked.

Derek was the one who answered. “Because we're not human.”

“We have to downplay our abilities.” Peter added. “And any tests done would reveal what we are.”

“That sucks. Means werewolves can't play professionally either huh?”

“Nope.” Derek said.

“That's why Derek better enjoy playing basketball in school while he can.”

Derek shot him a rare smile. “I will.”

xxx

Cordelia was in her office on the second floor of the Hyperion wrapping up some paperwork on a case that had come to them through David Nabitt. An acquaintance of his had gotten into some trouble and needed help getting out from under a blackmailer. It wasn't world ending or life threatening, but it paid well and the CEO they were helping wasn't too corrupt. In fact, now that he didn’t have to pay off the blackmailer, he wouldn't have to lay off any employees. So it was a win all the way around in Cordelia's book.

“Working hard?” Doyle asked from the doorway, two cups of coffee in his hands.

“You know it, is one of those for me?”
“Would I interrupt paperwork without an offering for Queen C?”

She grinned at him. “No, because you know better. Gimme.”

He laughed and handed over one of the mugs before sitting in one of the chairs across from her. She sipped at the coffee and sighed in pleasure. “What's the word then? Any trouble with the wrap-up?”

“Nope, pretty standard case. Anything new on the street?”

“All's quiet, but then summer usually is.”

Cordelia snorted. “Usually.”

Doyle shrugged. “Anything new on your side then?”

“Kate's thinking of quitting the force.”

He raised a brow in surprise. “Now why would Detective Lockley do a thing like that?”

She grinned at him. “Because she's considering a new position, like as our Community's Agent-on-Site.”

“Huh.” He nodded as if it made sense. “Not a bad idea really.”

“Except then Steve will have to break in a new partner, one who doesn't know everything that's going on.” Cordelia said.

“True...but he's not aging and in fact looks younger than he did when we first met him. How much longer will he be able to do police work before people, his fellow cops for example, start noticing that?”

She frowned. “Doesn't like ambient Dragon Magic keep people from noticing the age thing? I mean no one blinked an eye when Mark started getting younger before he leveled off at about mid-forty something.”

“Seems to...but there are always records and official documents that might make someone curious for a closer look.”

Cordelia grimaced. “Like if he has to testify on a case and someone asks him how long he's been a cop...And he looks more than twenty years younger than he is.” She sighed and put her coffee on the desk. “That could really suck.”

He nodded. “Makes working at Barbeque Bob's full time the safer option.”

“I'm sure he's thought about that.”

“I hope so.” Doyle winced and his hand shook a bit as he put his own coffee on the desk. “Damn.”

She sat up in her chair, alert. “Doyle?”

“Vision,” He muttered, rubbing at his forehead. Quickly she grabbed a fresh pad of paper and got ready to write. “Gunfire...a lot of it...”

“Machine guns?” She asked.
“I think so. It’s on a back road...scenic route maybe.” He grit his teeth at the pain. “I haven't had one this bad in a while.”

“Still not as painful as they used to be right?”

“Not since I went all dragon for you Cordy.” He shuddered a bit. “There's an old yellow school bus. A short one...name and county has been painted over.”

“Which means it was sold or auctioned off when whatever school had it upgraded to a newer one.” Doyle nodded. “Something... some of the attackers... not human... Chimeras!” His eyes widened as they met hers. “Haven't had any of those since-”

“Tony Harris went nuts and tried to kill Xander's mom. Doyle did you see anything else? We can't do anything without a location.”

He closed his eyes, trying to recall the vision. “The license plate on the bus... South Dakota.” He sighed and sat back in his chair. “That's all I got Cordy, I'm sorry, I didn't even see who they were attacking.” He looked up at her to see her face pale and worried. “Cordelia?”

“The summer camp kids are in South Dakota.”

“Shit. Who's closest?”

“Kimball and Denver.”

“I'll call Kimball, you call Denver. Do any of the kids have phones?”

“I don't know.” Cordelia grabbed the landline from her desk and hit the speed dial for D.C. and put it on speaker.

“You've reached the DSO, Gil Wilde speaking.”

“This is Cordelia Chase; Doyle had vision about the summer camp kids getting attacked by Chimeras with guns. They're traveling in an old school bus, yellow, small variety. I don't have numbers for any of the kids.”

“Oh dear...I think only RJ Caine has a cell phone.” Gil said.

“Alright. Doyle and I are going to call Kimball and Denver, they're closest, and you spread the word.”

“Will do Ms. Chase. Thank you.” He hung up and Cordy did the same.

They shared a look for just a moment before Cordy picked up her phone again and hit her speed dial for Denver. Doyle got up, cell phone in hand to make his own call. Malcolm Reynolds answered right away.

“Not sure which of you L.A. crew this is, but I'm sure it’s important.”

“It’s Doyle; I had vision of a group of Chimeras attacking an old school bus with South Dakota plates. We think it's the summer camp kids.”

“Fuck! They're supposed to be on their way to Harvelle's Roadhouse to meet Ellen and Ash. I think Ellen said that Singer had an old bus runnin' that he could fit all the kids in. Any other information you can give me Doyle?”
“Yeah, they're not on a main highway...scenic route or something. I didn't see any other traffic. I didn't actually see anyone but the Chimeras in the vision...it was a weird one.”

“Ain't they all?”

“We've already alerted the DSO and Cordy's talking to Denver now...I'm sure they'll send some of their own to help you out.”

“Roger that. We'll let you know what's what once we're on site.” He hung up without a goodbye, and Doyle was okay with that. The kids' safety was more important than manners.

He stepped back into Cordelia's office, her call finished as well. “Cor?”

“Since they don't have an exact location Dawn can't open a portal to them. So they're gonna fly and hope they catch sight of the action.”

He frowned. “Can't one of the witches do a locator spell?”

“I'm not sure we have any of the kids' blood or hair stored for that kinda thing.” She picked up the phone again. “I'm gonna call D.C. and suggest that everyone send a sample in for future spells needed in emergencies.”

“Good idea, too bad none of us thought of it before now.” Cordelia grimaced but didn't disagree.

xxx

Mal stepped into the small office that they all used for one reason or another in the farmhouse where Jayne's mother and youngest sister lived on their compound. He popped a section of wooden paneling off the wall, revealing the hidden control panel. With a press of a button all the emergency lights throughout the grounds would start flashing red. He pressed the button and waited for everyone to gather in the den.

Radiant Cobb, Jayne's mother, peeked into the den. “What in the world?”

“L.A. Dragon had a vision of a Chimera attack, possibly on the summer camp kids. We're closest.”

“Oh no, those kids have already been attacked once this year.”

“That they have.”

The basement door slammed opened then and Radiant ducked back out of the den so she wouldn't be in the way. Jayne greeted his mother briskly before he and Simon joined Mal in the den. They had to have already been in the tunnel connecting the farmhouse to the silo to make such good time.

River came through the front door, followed by Wash and Zoe. Kaylee was still in D.C., but she probably wouldn't be needed for this emergency mission.

“Captain? What's happened?” Zoe asked.

“Doyle had a vision, Chimera attack on a bus with South Dakota plates. I need you to hold down the fort here while River, Jayne, Simon and I try to find that bus. The summer camp kids may be on it.”

“I'll get my spare medical bag out of the office.” Simon said.
“Turn the alarm light off while you're in there Doc, then be ready to go.” He looked at Zoe again. “Call Ellen and let her know what's goin' on. We're not sure if the attack has already happened or not so we gotta go.”

Zoe nodded and pulled out her cell phone just as the security lights stopped flashing red. Simon re-appeared black doctor's bag in hand. “Ready.”

Mal headed out the front door, Jayne, Simon and River right behind him. River only stopped to grab a couple of swords. He and Jayne shifted and let their soulmates climb aboard and then they took to sky, hoping they'd get to the kids in time.

xxx

Kate Todd looked up, startled when the intercom system crackled to life. “This is Director Fornell, we have a Code Vision. Doyle in L.A. saw Chimeras attacking a school bus with South Dakota plates. We think the summer camp kids are on that bus with Peter Hale and Bobby Singer. They were in route to Harvelle's Roadhouse. Kimball and Denver are responding. Agent Todd please call Singer's Salvage in case they haven't left yet. The tech team will try to contact and track them via RJ Caine's cell phone. We'll keep you updated, that's all.”

“Damn it.” Kate grabbed her phone and dialed Bobby Singer's home line; she practically had it memorized by now. It rang four times before the machine picked up and Bobby's gruff message played out, she gritted her teeth and left her own message. “This is Kate Todd, if someone is there then pick up. Stiles! Doyle in L.A. has a message for you. Chimeras.” She hung up just as another call came in to her phone. “Agent Todd.”

“This is Gil, any news?”

“I got the machine at Singer's Salvage. No one's home. Anything on the tech end?”

“Cell signal is less than stellar. We have no idea what time they left Sioux Falls; just that it’s an eight hour drive to Harvelle's Roadhouse.”

“I have a feeling quite a few adults will be making sure their kids have cell phones after this.”

“Cordelia called again and suggested we get blood samples from everyone so we can track them during emergencies from now on. The Director is going to order everyone in the building to the clinic in shifts so Doctor Stewart can get those samples.”

“And the other Communities will be sending theirs in when they get the chance?”

“That's the plan. The Director is calling the Alphas now to let everyone know what’s happening. We're all on standby, even though South Dakota is too far away for most of us to help.”

“Got it. Thanks Gil.” She hung up and rubbed at her temple, glad that none of summer camp kids were strictly normal. Two were werewolves and the rest had magic or could call fire. The Chimeras would be lucky if they survived their encounter with the kids.

xxx

Buffy and Dawn had been at the community center in Purgatorio when Cordelia called, they left from Buffy's office via portal and stepped through into Chris' office. From there they'd all been briefed on the situation. Buck, Ezra, and JD were going to stay behind while the rest of Team 7 went with Buffy and Dawn to the ranch, again via portal.
They stepped through the green circle of energy, Nathan shuddered a bit, pack over his shoulder. “That will never not be weird.”

He got a few brief smiles and then they were all business. Buffy nodded at him. “You mind if Josiah carries you? I'll be with Chris and Dawn will be with Vin.”

“That'll be fine.”

All three dragons shifted; slate grey, sand, and shining emerald crouched so their passengers could climb on. Buffy gave Chris' grey scaled neck a pat. “Let's roll.”

xxx

There was a beeping noise that snapped Stiles awake from his nap. He blinked around blearily wondering who had set an alarm. RJ was frowning at his phone. “RJ?”

“I got a text from the DSO...something about Chimeras attacking us?”

Stiles shared a look with Derek. “Did I sleep through a Chimera attack?”

Derek shook his head. “Nothing's happened.”

The bus started to slow down and Stiles stood up to look ahead. “Bobby?”

“Some idiot is standin' in the middle of the road.” The Hunter grumbled.

Peter peered over his shoulder. “An idiot with machine gun and glowing red eyes.”

“You don't suppose he'd be your kind of werewolf?” Bobby asked.

“Not with solid red eyes like that, there's a distinct lack of pupil going on with him.”

“Balls.” Before Stiles could comment the sound of gunfire filled the air and Bobby hit the gas, charging straight at the human form Chimera ahead of them. More gunfire, possibly from multiple guns, sounded around them and the bus jerked as if the tires had been shot out.

The windows were next and Maddie screamed, the next thing Stiles was aware of, was Derek tackling him to the floor and Bobby yelling at them to hang on.

Worst summer ever.

XXX
Chapter 18

Allies and Enemies
calikocat

Word count: 4837

A/N: It’s about an 8 hour (rounding up) drive between Sioux Falls, South Dakota and Kimball, Nebraska. Havelle’s Roadhouse is somewhere in between...maybe a 30 minute drive from Kimball. The drive from Denver, Colorado to Sioux Falls, South Dakota is about 10 hours (rounding up). However the drive between Denver and Kimball is about 2 hours and 22 minutes. Obviously Dragons fly faster than cars drive...and I like to think they can fly faster than planes too.

XXX

They were staying down, out of the line of sight, even though their attackers had stopped shooting for the moment. He could just hear Peter and Bobby whispering to one another but he couldn’t make out what they were saying. The fact that they were talking was a good sign though. It meant that their adult supervision was alive and well. As far as Stiles knew no one was hurt, at least he hadn’t heard anyone scream since Maddie. Damn. Maddie.

“Maddie?”

“I’m fine...” Her voice was shaky. “I just d-don’t like all the shooting.”

“She and her mom witnessed an armored car robbery back in Miami, one of the guards died at the scene. Uncle Horatio was involved in the shooting; he took out one of the gunmen.”

“Miami sounds violent.” Scott whispered.

“We just got shot at Scott.” Cora growled, her eyes flashing gold. “Everywhere is violent.”

He was inclined to agree with her and was pretty sure he heard Peter snort at her words. “I can’t believe this is happening again.” Stiles grumbled from beneath Derek.

“It was humans last time.” RJ reminded him, he was crouched over Maddie and Scott. “Bobby and Peter said the guy's eyes were glowing red.”

“I vote...Stiles and Maddie...set them on fire.” Scott said, his voice changing becoming breathy.

“Fire is good.” Maddie whispered.

“Scott? What's wrong?” Cora asked.

“Asthma,” Scott grumbled, he dug out his inhaler and took a puff. “Why did... they stop… shooting?”

“Probably waiting for us to peek out the windows and get a headshot.” Bobby grumbled from the front of the bus where he and Peter were crouched down. “You kids okay?”

“Never better.” Stiles sighed. “So now what-?”

He barely got the question out before the shooting started again; definitely from multiple guns though Stiles couldn't tell how many. The last of the windows were taken out and one must have
ricocheeted because there was a clang of metal and then Peter cried out in pain.

Then there was a roar that shook the bus and they all covered their ears when it was followed by the sound of screaming metal. Just as bad were the screams of the bad guys as something attacked them, the smell of burned flesh wasn't exactly nice either.

Stiles wiggled out from under Derek to peek out the windows, figuring the Chimeras were too busy fighting for their lives to take a shot at him. His eyes widened because of what he saw...and because Derek nearly scared the crap out of him when he grabbed him by the back of his jeans to pull him back down.

He glared at Derek and grabbed back, pulling him toward the window so he could see outside. “Look!”

Derek stared for a moment, transfixed. There was a dragon they had never seen before, laying waste to the Chimeras, setting them on fire, ripping them apart with claws and teeth. It didn't matter if they came at him in full form, in the middle of changing, or still trying to shoot at him in their human forms. Most were dead or dying. It was a massacre, and the Chimeras were on the losing side because the newly changed dragon was on a rampage.

Suddenly two huge monstrous faces blocked their view, trying to come through the broken window. The horns on the Chimera's goat head broke the remaining glass as it came for them. Derek yanked Stiles back and Stiles yelled in surprise his hands out in front of him and just managed to blast the Chimera with fire. It fell back from the window, away from the bus, dead, both heads charred nearly beyond recognition.

Another tried to come through after them, tearing through the metal of the bus. Derek snarled in full wolfy game face as he kept Stiles behind him and punched the lion face in. It stunned the Chimera for a moment, long enough for Peter to swoop in and rip the other head off.

“Everybody out!” He ushered all of them toward the backdoor of the bus, and Stiles let Derek drag him along. Cora had Scott by the hand and RJ had Maddie in his arms. RJ got to the door first and opened it. They scrambled out, just as another chimera came at them in full form, Peter howled in warning.

The dragon turned at Peter's howl and blasted the Chimera with fire from behind, Stiles and the others blasted it with fire from the front. The beast didn't even have time to scream before it was incinerated, it was the last one. The sudden quiet was startling and they all looked around just to be sure that no more attacks were coming.

Most of the guns had been melted by fire, or had exploded when the ammunition in them had gotten too hot from the heat. The bodies of the Chimeras had all shifted back to human form, some were smashed, but most were burned the ones that had shifted back were covered in some sort slime. It looked like the last scene of a horror movie.

Except for the dragon that was staring down at them. It was several times bigger than the bus, what was left of the bus anyway. Its scaled body was brown and offset by the bright blue mane. Stiles had never seen a dragon like it...but...there was something familiar about it...

“Holy crap!” He exclaimed.

“What?” Derek asked, looking around for more Chimeras.

He pointed at the dragon in surprise. “Bobby changed. That's Bobby! He changed!”
Peter rolled his eyes. “Really, I hadn't noticed.” He reached up to the Dragon, his sleeve bloody, probably from the ricochet that had grazed him...which was probably what brought on Bobby's change. Peter gave the Dragon's mane a tug.

Bobby shifted back to human form, staring at Peter in shock. “Son-of-a-bitch.”

“You could be a little more enthusiastic.” Peter commented. “After all I'm quite the catch.”

Bobby frowned, but he was fighting a smile. “You're somethin' alright.”

“So, congratulations and everything, but we're not done.” Stiles told them.

Cora looked around at all the bodies. “How? They're dead.”

RJ sighed. “Because of the text I got from the DSO, they knew about the attack.” He put Maddie down and pulled out his cell phone. “No signal right now, but it looks like I have a lot of missed calls and more text messages.”

“From the DSO?” Maddie asked.

“And our parents,” He told her.

“How did they know about the attack before it happened?” Derek asked.

“A Dragon in L.A. is a seer.” Stiles told them. “He gets visions, usually of people in trouble.”

“Of Chimera attacks?”

“I don't know.” Stiles frowned. “He got a vision of an attack on the D.C. Alpha Pair...that attack is what brought the D.C. Alpha online. Doyle's visions of 9/11 were always vague.”

Peter held out his hand for RJ's phone. “Let me try from higher ground.” RJ handed the cell phone over and Peter hopped up on top of the bus. “Better.” Before he could make any calls though the phone started ringing, he answered it and put it on speaker. “RJ's phone, Peter Hale speaking.”

“This is Agent Todd from the DSO, is everyone okay?”

“The kids are fine...I was grazed by a bullet but I've healed. All of our attackers are dead.”

“Glad to hear it Mr. Hale.”

“Oh, and Bobby Singer changed for me when I was grazed by that bullet.”

“Congratulations and welcome to the Dragon Nation Mr. Hale. You should know that Dragons from Kimball and Denver are headed your way. Now that our techs can ping RJ's cell phone we can give them a definitive location.”

“Yeah, after all the excitement is over.” Bobby grumbled.

“Kate we need panic buttons and cell phones.” Stiles yelled up at the phone.

“You're all also going to give us blood and hair samples for future locator spells for the next time this happens.” Kate told him. “Cordelia Chase's idea.”

“I'm okay with that. You guys?” He asked the others.
“No arguments here.” RJ said and the others nodded.

“So now we just wait for the cavalry we don't need?” Bobby asked.

Peter shrugged. “It’s not like we don't need them. Our transportation isn't going anywhere.”

Kate laughed a little. “Just wait and they'll be there. Dawn Summers is with the Denver group; she can open a portal once she's with you and get you safely to Harvelle's Road House.”

“A portal?” Bobby asked.

“That's a long story that Denver should share with you.”

xxx

Kate breathed a happy sigh once she hung up with Peter Hale and his group, glad that they were all okay. Then she accessed the intercom on her desk to alert everyone in the building. “This is Agent Todd. I made contact with Peter Hale via RJ Caine's cell phone. Everyone is alive, and unharmed. Mr. Hale was grazed by a bullet but has already healed. When he was injured Bobby Singer made the change for him and killed the chimera's attacking them. Kimball and Denver are still en-route.”

She released the button and slouched in her chair for a moment, letting the tension roll off her.

A few minutes later Dean Winchester stormed into her office, his brother a step behind him. “They really okay?”

“They are Dean. I don't have all the details, but Mr. Hale was the only injury and apparently Mr. Singer took that very personally.”

Dean made face, but Sam was smiling...sort of. “So...Bobby really changed for Peter?”

“He did.” She confirmed.

“Ugh.” Dean groaned. “So now they have to bond? Peter and Bobby have to have sex? With each other?”

“That is how it works between Dragons and their soulmates Dean.”

“I need to bleach my brain.”

She rolled her eyes. “I thought you had moved passed this.”

“Dude! Bobby is like our uncle...thinkin' about him havin' sex is almost as bad as thinkin' about parents doing it.” Dean complained. “The gay thing has nothing to do with it.”

“I wish you hadn't said that.” Sam grumbled.

“You got scary visuals now Sammy?”

“Unfortunately.”

Dean grinned. “So what happens now?”

“When their backup arrives everyone will be checked out, the scene will be cleaned up, and they'll head on to Harvelle's Roadhouse.”

“Just like that.”
“It’s not like we can let local authorities dispose of dead chimeras. They'll all be in human form in death, but the ones that shifted back to human when they died will be...slimy.”

“Fun.”

She nodded, Kate had never seen Chimera remains, but what she'd heard hadn't been pleasant. “Don't you two have classes?”

“We got a hall pass.” Dean remarked with a smirk.

“Better head back before I revoke it.”

He gave a sloppy salute and dragged Sam back out of her office and Kate had to smile.

xxx

They landed when Dawn got the call from one of the techs in D.C. There was no one around for miles next to the open stretch of road so their sudden appearance went unseen. The tech, Rudy Lom, told them what had happened and gave her the coordinates of RJ Caine's cell phone. From there Dawn tapped it into her GPS and hoped her portal would be close enough...it wasn't an exact science and it worked better if she knew the person and location personally.

“Just a sec guys.” She pulled out her tiny Swiss army knife and drew just a drop of blood from a finger. The portal opened easily, big enough for them to walk through single file. Dawn stepped through first and grinned. “Perfect.” She waved at the group; all of them, except Stiles, staring at her with wide eyes and dropped jaws. Stiles had seen her open a portal back in D.C. and was unimpressed.

“Hey Dawn.”

“Stiles.” She was still grinning and gave Vin the all clear through their bond and he and the others filed through the portal. “Nathan is a medic,” She gestured to the tall dark skinned man as he stepped through the portal just behind Vin. “He'll want to check you all out, just go with it. We'll work on collecting the bodies.”

“Wouldn't it be easier to just destroy them?” Bobby asked. By that time everyone had come through the portal and Dawn closed it. “Beggin' you're pardon, your majesties.”

Chris surveyed the bodies around them. “As far as we know they can't come back once they've been killed. We'll get them back to Kimball where they can be finger printed and identified.”

“Is that normal procedure?” Peter asked.

Buffy shrugged. “It’s an unusual situation. Chimeras have never attacked like this, all organized and stuff. The last Chimera attack we had was a loner who didn't know what he was. Tony Harris was formerly Xander's stepdad...he started to take Chimera form for the first time when he tried to kill Xander's mom. It’s what brought Jim Brass, her dragon, online. He rammed old Tony so hard into a wall he ended up a vegetable before he died.”

“Usually they deal with human trafficking.” Josiah muttered. “I don't like that they attacked a group of DragonKin like this.”

“Their guns are identical to the ones the hunters in Beacon Hills had.” Stiles told them.

“They were more mercenaries than hunters.” Vin said, leaning over one of the bodies. He looked
toward Bobby. "Would hunters work with the monsters?"

"I've never heard hunters working with anyone but other hunters. At least until I met you folks and you grandfathered us in."

"I can see that." Buffy said. "I'm just glad that most of you hunters don't sell parts of your kills on the black market." At Bobby's incredulous stare she shrugged. "First hunter I ever met tried to kill a classmate, a werewolf. His name was Caine and he had a necklace of werewolf teeth and he planned to skin Oz and sell his pelt. The only way to do that is to skin his kind of werewolf alive. We took offense to that and ran him out of town."

"Good, he sounds like a real prize."

She smirked. "He wasn't too happy when I bent his gun barrel with my bare hands." Buffy sighed. "Nathan, go ahead and check everyone out. Peter first."

"I've already healed, the bullets were regular, no wolfsbane or I'd still be injured."

"Noted, let him check you out anyway. That is normal procedure." She looked at the bodies scattered around the road. "They'll be easier to move if you guys are in dragon form...less messy too. All that slime."

Chris nodded in agreement. "We'll move them off road behind the tree line. I don't hear any traffic but eventually someone else will drive through."

"Let's get to work then."

While Nathan checked each of them over Buffy and Dawn collected the guns, shell casings and spent ammunition. They wore gloves and bagged everything up, moving everything out of sight from the road. Josiah took his dragon form again, picked up the bus and moved it off road as well. Then all three dragons starting moving the bodies, what was left of them, out of sight.

An hour later the scene was cleaned up, except for a few skid marks but skid marks were something that you could see on any stretch of road. They did get a call through to River Tam, Buffy standing on top of the bus where they had decided to relocate themselves as well.

"Just a second Buffy." River shouted over the wind. "Need to land." A minute later the interference faded and River was talking again. "I got a text about the kids being okay."

"Once we had a location Dawn opened a portal. We're taking them on to the Roadhouse via Portal and then Dawn, Vin, and Josiah are going to stay with the bodies. They'll help you transport them to your compound...it's a lot of work but they need to be identified."

"Leave it to us...we got a cold room separate from the silo we can store them in." Mal said. "Anything else?"

"There's guns and ammo, and the bus our group was traveling in. Dawn will help you move everything with a portal."

"Roger that. We're still about two hours away." Mal hung up and Buffy jumped down from the bus roof.

"Dawn, you have the coordinates for Harvelle's Roadhouse?"

"Yeah; and a message to try and open the portal behind the building. Guess she doesn't want any
other hunters to see crazy magic.”

Buffy nodded and looked at Bobby, Peter, and the kids. “Ready for some rest and relaxation?” There was a chorus of agreement and Dawn opened a new portal.

xxx

Xander breathed a sigh of relief when the all clear text message came in. Practically the entire Community was gathered at his new shop. Setting up the showroom was the only way he could keep Raymond and Yelina busy while they waited for news about the kids. He had to wonder if they were going to let RJ out their sight ever again. Or even demand that Suzie and Maddie move to Sunnydale.

He stepped out of the office where Chris Argent and Raymond were arranging a dining table and chairs he'd made. “The kids are safe; Buffy's moved them to Harvelle's Roadhouse.”

Raymond closed his eyes and sank onto one of the chairs in relief, Yelina went to him immediately and they wrapped their arms around one another.

“No one was injured?” Chris asked.

“Peter Hale was grazed by a bullet...and brought on Bobby Singer's change. No other injuries.”

“So Singer is officially part of the Dragon Nation,” Spike said.

“Well we brought him in any way since Stiles and Mark Sloan identified him as an unchanged Dragon. Now he and Peter are the Alpha Pair of Sioux Falls.”

“Just like that?” Chris asked.

“Yep. Don't know how long it will take for them to expand their Community though. It was years before my dad and Levon brought anyone besides their friend Chicken into the fold...and they've been bonded since ’87.” He frowned. “Not sure when they told Esteban and his family...”

Yelina looked up, tears marring her makeup. “Does Suzie know that Madison is alright?”

“Parents were informed first; the text just went to me because I told the DSO we were all together.” He assured her. “I'll call anyway.”

“Thank you.”

Xander called Fornell, keeping his phone on speaker. “Xander.”

“Fornell - just wanted to be sure all the parents know what's going on and that the kids are okay.”

“Suzie, John, Melissa, and Laura have all been contacted.” Fornell told him. “Buffy and Chris are with them at Harvelle's Roadhouse. She'll call you with any changes.”

“Thanks Director.”

“My King.” Fornell hung up and Xander pocketed his phone.

The front door jingled as it was opened then, revealing Allison, Oz, and Jonathan with lunch. Jonathan looked at them with worried face. “We miss anything?”

xxx
Ellen had closed the Roadhouse early so no one was around when Dawn opened a portal to the bar. She fed the kids with Peter's help and congratulated Bobby on finding his soulmate, especially one who could cook. One by one the kids dozed off, exhausted from their ordeal. They were scattered around the booths, sprawled out on the old vinyl seats fast asleep as soon as their stomachs were full.

Except for Stiles who was sitting on a bar stool beside Buffy, but even he was yawning and fighting sleep. Buffy shook her head at him. “Go ahead and crash Stiles.”

He nodded and frowned. “Yeah...okay.”

“Somethin' wrong kid?” Ellen asked.

“Just disappointed that Bobby was the only one who changed...guess that means none of us kids are soulmates.”

Buffy raised a brow at him. “Or maybe you're all too young to make the change.”

Stiles nodded. “That would make more sense.” He yawned again. “So where do we go now?”

“Mal offered to put you kids up in the farmhouse on his compound, or you can stay with me and Chris on the ranch for a week or so.”

“Not the rest of the summer?”

“We figured Bobby and Peter would want a honeymoon period before we sent you kids back to Sioux Falls.”

“We appreciate that.” Peter said. “A week will be fine.”

“Denver then.” Stiles said. “I don't want to see those Chimera bodies ever again, or be anywhere near them.”

“Okay.” Chris said. “We'll head to Denver as soon as Dawn gets back.”

Stiles yawned one more time before hopping off the bar stool and heading for one of the booths where he laid down and fell right to sleep.

xxx

All the wards Bobby had on his property kept Dawn from opening a portal anywhere on it. The best she could do was to drop them off at the end of his long driveway. It wasn't too bad, just a little dark, or it would have been if his night vision hadn't been suddenly upgraded due to his change.

They made the walk in silence; it was a comfortable one as they'd had nearly a month to get to know one another. Though they didn't know every facet, but that would come with time. The real issue Bobby was having was the age difference. Peter was at least twenty-nine if not younger and Bobby was...a lot older than twenty-nine.

“You're thinking too hard.” Peter told him as they made their way up the front porch and he unlocked the door.

Bobby raised a brow and wondered when Peter had made himself a key. “Don't know what you're talkin' about.”
“Hah!” Peter scoffed and dragged Bobby inside the house, locking the door behind them. “I'm going to kiss you now old man.”

“Oh really?”

“I've wanted to ever since that first trip into town.”

Bobby frowned. “You did kiss me then.”

“On the cheek, and only to ruffle that rude man's feathers.” He smirked. “Think you can handle that Robert?”

“We'll see won't we?” And he leaned in to kiss Peter, ready for whatever was in store for them.

xxx

Buffy walked among the graves with a frown on her face. She hadn't patrolled this cemetery in years, not since she'd left Sunnydale and moved to Denver. Why was she back on the Hellmouth? She could have sworn she'd gone to bed at home on the ranch beside Chris, the summer camp kids safely tucked away in the guest rooms.

“She's here,” she heard Xander say.

“Buffy?”

She whirled, Mr. Pointy in her hand and glared at Xander. “What the hell Xander?”

“What do you mean? I'm on patrol; you're the one who suddenly appeared.”

She gestured to the tuxedo he was wearing. “Since when do you go formal for patrol?”

“What about you Red Riding Hood?”

Buffy looked down at her clothes, she was wearing her Halloween costume from that first semester of college. “Well...” Then she looked back Xander. “I think we're dreaming.”

He nodded. “But are we really sharing a dream?”

“Oh you are.” They jumped at the unfamiliar voice and stared at the stranger. “Hey there.”

He was wearing familiar clothes and Buffy pointed at him. “Isn't that what Oz wore that Halloween?”

“Like I'm gonna remember Oz's lack of costume-” The man opened his button shirt and showed them the name tag that said God. “Yep.” Then Xander frowned. “Chuck Shurley?”

“Not exactly. I'm just borrowing his form for a little while.”

“So that's what Chuck looks like.” She said. “I remember the last email provided a picture. So who are you?”

Not Chuck tapped his name tag. “Who else would I be?”

“Yeah right.” Xander grinned. “Why would 'God' talk to us in a dream?”

“Aren't you two the High Queen and King of the Dragon Nation?”

“So?” Buffy asked. “That doesn't really warrant a visit from 'God' if that's really who you are.”
“That's who I am. Just wanted you two to stop looking for Chuck, he's safe with an archangel.”

“Why?” Xander asked.

“Its procedure. Every Prophet gets one to look after them while they're alive.”

Buffy and Xander shared a look and Buffy tried not to giggle. “Chuck really is a Prophet?”

“Someday the Supernatural books will be called the Winchester Gospel.”

Xander snickered. “Okay then, weirdest dream ever. Even weirder than the one with the First Slayer.”

“You died in that dream.” She pointed out.

“I didn't say it was more horrific, just weirder.”

“Children, pay attention.” 'God' scolded them. “I have things I need to tell you before you wake up.”

“Sure, sure. Go ahead.” Xander humored him with a wave and planted himself on a headstone.

'God' rolled his eyes. “Fine, first, Chuck is going to keep writing the Winchester Gospel, and with all the copies you kids have been buying the publisher is going to keep publishing them.”


“I want to apologize, because there's a war coming...and your opponents are going to be many of the angels. I'm sorry for that.”

“Why the angels?” Xander asked. “What did we ever do to them?”

“A lot them are upset that I've been away for so long. So much so that they're going to work with the demons of Hell to try and start the Apocalypse.”

“Like The Big One?” Buffy asked. “Not a localized Hellmouth-y one?”

“Yeah.”

“Why tell us this?” Xander asked.

“Besides being Dragon royalty, aren't you two 'The Slayer' and her 'White Knight'?""'

“He's got us there.” Buffy muttered.

“Freaking Angel and his freaking title giving.” Xander pouted.

“So...what do we do?” Buffy asked.

“It would be best if you derailed the Apocalypse before it starts.”

“And how would we do that?” Xander asked.

“Can't tell you that...I can tell you that bringing the Winchesters in was a step in the right direction. If they'd been left on their own...” He shrugged. “Just keep doing what you're doing and look after your people.”
“We can do that.” Buffy told him.

“Good choice.” God grinned at them and they were really starting to believe he really was God. “Because I have much bigger plans for all of you. The Missing haven't even been returned yet.”

They shared another look and Buffy frowned at God. “What happened to them anyway?”

“Something out of this world.” He faded away and Buffy sat up suddenly in bed in her and Chris' room.

“Damn it.”

Chris sat up beside her. “What's wrong?”

She didn't answer, instead turned on the lamp and reached for her phone to call Xander. It rang once and he picked up. “Xander?”

“Hey Buff, funny you should call. I just had the weirdest-”

“It wasn't a dream Xander.”

“But-” He groaned. “Tell me you didn't just have a dream where we were in our Halloween Costumes from '99 and had a lovely little chat with God in a cemetery.”

“Sorry Xan, can't do that. It happened.”

“Monkey poop.” He sighed. “So we're really gonna have to fight some angels.”

“Looks like it.”

“And The Missing were abducted by aliens.”

She snorted. “No way. They must have fallen into a Hell dimension or something. No way its aliens. Its gotta be demons, it’s always demons.”

“Except when it’s not.” Xander told her.

“Damn it.” She pouted. “Maybe it was the angels? God said we'd have to fight them...maybe they were trying to take a few dragons out of the game so our side would be weakened.”

“You're not gonna accept the alien theory are you?” He asked her.

“Never.”

XXX
Epilogue

Allies and Enemies
calikocat

Word count: 568

XXX

Sandra Maldonado walked through the Old Houston Light Guard Armory, Sam Synturion at her side. They were careful as they walked, staying out of the work crew's way, hard hats on their heads just in case. The crew was a mix of human and non-human and they had just started the clean up and restoration of the historical building. They had their work cut out for them, but they expected to have their new HQ up and running within a year.

She smiled at the thought. Assistant Director of the DSO looked like it was going to be a good fit. All she had to do now was find an apartment.

xxx

Her introduction to the Miami Community had been at a trying time with the attack on the kids in South Dakota. Despite that though, they'd made Becky feel welcome and at home among them. So much so, that Horatio and Wally wanted her to be their Agent-on-Site.

Already the Community had purchased the Old Delgado Hotel and once it was restored it would be their DSO Field Office and safe house. A place where any of them could stay and a place for guests from other Communities.

The crew that was working on the D.C. Community safe house had put them in contact with a local non-human crew who could do the work. Even as it was though, Becky was in love with abandoned building.

As she walked through it, Wally to her left and Horatio to her right she felt giddy. This was going to be her home and responsibility. She'd be here full time as their Agent-on-Site, the faith they had in her was a wonderful warmth and she couldn't wait to join the second class of Agents-in-Training.

xxx

It was mid-July and Jethro was right on schedule. They'd made it to the safe house, the barn restored and the corner apartment completed, a day before he laid the egg. He spent the night pacing, restless, and held off changing until early the next morning.

For hours Jethro laid on his side in Dragon form, his head in Tim's lap, though really it was too big for that. Hotch was on guard outside the barn so he could change at a moment's notice and head off any attack.

The entire D.C. Community was stationed throughout the grounds to guard their Alpha Pair. Only Fornell and the doctor were inside the barn with them.

When Jethro could feel the egg coming he shifted and Tim got up, taking a blanket from Doctor Jack Stewart so he could catch the egg as it came. It was as silver and shiny as Jethro was, despite the bit of blood on its shell. Tim cradled it and carefully carried the large armful around to Jethro's side who was panting from the effort.
“Hard part's over Jethro. Now we just have to keep him warm for the next month.”

Jethro chuckled and nuzzled at Tim's face before he laid back down. “Then the really hard part is going to start Tim. A baby is more work than an egg.”

“Do you two have a name picked out?” Fornell asked as Tim settled beside Jethro's shining form, the egg between them.

They looked at one another, a silent conversation happening between the pair. Finally Jethro nodded and looked at Fornell. “Lincoln.”

Tim grinned. “Lincoln Gibbs-McGee.”

XXX

A/N: I started writing Allies & Enemies August 06, 2016 and I didn't finish it until September 08, 2018. Just over two years to write this monstrosity...it was only supposed to be a little filler fic...but then it exploded and fought me almost every step of the way. In other words, comments mean more to me than kudos.

A/N 2: Thank god I'm done with this thing.

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!