"Are you afraid?"
"...
"You should be...

After the War, Theo moved in with Liam and started an uneasy friendship and each battle with their own feelings. Theo, still struggling to find his place and come to terms with his past, protects Liam from supernatural attack. As Theo heals, secrets are revealed and it turns out that the target of this attack might never have been Liam after all.

Why did the Dread Doctors choose Theo? Why does it seem like he has memories he can't
quite grasp and what will the consequences be if he does remember?

Notes

A/N: This is my first fanfic! Had this idea a while but it still needs structure. I mixed different ideas and references from Series/Books/Games etc. Will try to explain as best as I can along the way. Things will get very AU at some point with new characters and a bit OOC.

A few changes: Not everyone knows about werewolves in BH! Liam did not reveal the secret when Brett and Lori died!
Prologue

Mexico City

The blazing sun bared down on the busy streets of Mexico City. Sweaty men and women panting as they raced about their daily duties.

The woman sat at the booth in a local coffee shop, as she sipped her steaming drink she watched the people in the streets.

Amusing creatures, she thought with a slight curve at the corner of her perfectly formed lips, they don’t know real heat, but I do. I know it well.

The bell to the shop chimed as another woman entered, looking worn down by the heat as well with her white blouse sticking to her sweaty body and her hair flying wildly out of place.

Such a shame, for a woman not to at least try to look collected and even a bit seductive. It's the only way to get things done. It doesn't matter what she looks like. She's the one I've been waiting for.

The woman pulled her messy hair over one shoulder as she quickly ordered something for herself - water- like everyone else she was trying to beat the heat.

She looked rather uncomfortable in her pencil skirt as she sat down and pulled out her phone, dailing a number before bringing it up to her ear.

The busy streets were noisy as well, with animals sold as live stock at local markets, women yabbering to one another and children screaming as they play. The woman gave an annoyed look out of the window before fleeing to the restroom, hoping it would be quieter there so that she could hear the man on the other end of the phone.

How mundane.

The woman at the other booth remained seated and placed her empty coffee cup back on the tray. She delicately flipped her dark hair behind her ear and tilted her head to the side, listening to the phone conversation in the restroom.

"-not to worry Miss Queens, I believe traffic to be a nightmare at this time of day."

"Thank you General, I will leave again shortly, to stay on schedule as much as possible. This is not an offer I take lightly, sir. I would be delighted to meet the inmates and I assure you they-"

"Are not much of a delight I assure you. All we need is a psych-doctor who specializes in this field, to stop by for a few hours and evaluate our facility and its.... patients."

"Yes Sir, I should be at the bridge close to the facility in about an hour if I leave right away. We can meet there. I won't keep you any longer! Good da-"

The woman gave an amused smile as she watched Miss Queens hurry by and out of the shop. She twirled the remaining coffee around her cup, wishing she could stay to order another. Out of all of Man's creations, she certianly liked coffee and music the most.

She stood and stretched her long, tanned legs before following Miss Queens outside.
Miss Queens was waiting by the bridge. Typical, she raced to be on time and the General turned out to be late. She let out a huff and wiped a hand over her sweaty brow.

She heard the click clack of heels on pavement and was about to look at the face of whatever woman was crazy enough to wear those shoes in this heat, but she never got the chance.

The dark-haired lady pulls her now blood-free high heeled shoe back onto her foot before delicately sauntering over to the General's black SUV parked near the bridge, waiting for Miss Queens, waiting for her.

In the stuffy vehicle she would catch the guards looking at her with lust clouding their eyes. Idiots.

As they reached the gate the General twisted in his seat to catch her eye, "Welcome to Mexico State Prison, Home of the Criminally Insane."

She watched the patients with interest as the guard explained who each one was.

"See that old Lady at back? She's here because she bit a chunk out of a woman's arm in a restaurant. Menu was apparently lacking her favorite dish - human flesh."

The guard pointed to an old lady who had flies crawling all over her face, they appeared to be no bother.

"Over here we have Hutch, or as he likes to call himself, the Butcher, you don't wanna know why." The guard gave a big man a disapproving look before continuing.

They went about their introduction until they reached the last man, a skinny man with skin as white as paper, playing with a ball of clay

"This is Terrance, he killed his family and built a raft, hoping to sail to Holland. HA. What a joke. Alright thats the last of them. Just yell real loud if they do something unusual. Nah what am I saying they're all crazy!" The guard turned on her heel and stomped out.

The Woman looked at the lastly named man before crouching next to him. "You and I will be getting along splendidly", she took his face and started whispering in his ear.

Leaning back she saw that, much to her satisfaction, the black lines of corruption already lining his body.

"I just wanna go to Holland." the man muttered.

"You will, but first, you and your friends are going to a little town called Beacon Hills..."

Sunlight filtered through the blinds, light creeping slowly from the maroon lacrosse jersey hanging on the chair to land on light brown lashes, teasing the sleep from them. Liam Dunbar rolled over with an irritated huff and sleeping face-down into his pillow, snoring lightly.
An arm snakes out and smacks the alarm and Liam lets out a soft groan.

Right, first day of senior year.

He instinctively listened for the steady beat of the heart of the chimera with whom he now shared his home. He instead heard the shower going full blast in the guest bathroom, signalling that Theo was already awake.

After the war Liam tracked Theo's scent, finding him sleeping in his truck at the preserve. After multiple offers, the older boy finally accepted the offer of Liam's guestroom. Since the Jenna has been treating him like a second son, much to Theo's dismay, and showered him with affection and gifts in the forms of new clothes, books and fragrances, which Liam didn't think Theo needed anyway; with his natural musk of vanilla and sandalwood, almost like leather with a fresh breeze kind of finish that ... wait.

Liam threw a pillow against the wall and groaned in frustration as he got up and walked to his closet. That was something that has been happening the last few weeks. Liam was hyperaware of everything Theo-related. It confused and frustrated him to the means of driving him mad, but how could he come to make sense of his feelings? He trusted Theo, they were allies but not friends - right? - Theo was Liam's responsibility and his anchor, he didn't know if he was Theo's anchor in return but the thought of it made his stomach give a weird flutter. Thanks to David insisting on Theo finishing school, from today on Theo would also be Liam's classmate. Weird...

Liam heard the shower being turned down and the telltale creaking of the bathroom door. He grumbled as he pulled clothes from the closet and dragged his feet to the bathroom.

Theo never cared much for school, as going to collage was never a package deal with the whole murderous-chimera ordeal. Now, however, he found himself staring at his reflection in the mirror feeling slightly nervous about his first day of senior year. Ridiculous. Was it?

He watched how his freshly washed hair caused water to run down the bridge of his nose, avoiding the light bruising under his eyes from lack of sleep, before landing on the floor with a hollow sounding splash.

Theo let out a sigh. At least Tara had let him have a few hours of sleep last night. That doesn't change the fact that this will be a long day.

At least he had new clothes to wear, thanks to Jenna, and he knew where he would find himself spending his day, by Liam's side. That's where he always was no matter the setting. And where Liam was, Mason was. Which is where Corey was. Nolan usually made himself at home along with Alec, finding a mutual interest in both of them being new to the group. Theo felt tendrils of his nerves sneaking around his neck. Liam. The fiery beta had become the only secure thing Theo would allow himself to care for, to die for. Liam pulled him from the Pit. Liam kept him around. Liam saved his life.

But that's not why... is it?

Theo thought as he pulled his leather jacket over broad shoulders. Him and Liam... was there a him and Liam?

Doesn't matter. I'd protect Liam with everything in me. My last scrap of humanity will die fighting for Liam Dunbar.
Already 2 weeks into the schoolyear Theo sat on the bleachers watching Liam huddle with his team while Mason was fiercely scribbling away on his board: Beacon for the win!

*Typical.*

Theo sat silently cheering Liam on as the beta scored goal after goal. What was the point really? They were already leading so far the other team couldn't dream of catching up or breaking even.

Liam flung another winning shot, breaking into a wide grin as it smacked into the net.

*There, that's the point. It makes him happy.*

*Am I happy? Here? Beacon Hills?*

He let out a quiet sigh. He had a purpose here, by Liam's side, and that was enough. It was more than enough, he didn't deserve anything better.

Watching Liam be happy made him feel strangely content, the permanent knot in his chest unwinding a bit as he watched the young boy run around on the field enjoying himself.

*Purpose.*

The Toyota calmly followed the road as Theo chanced a glance at Liam. The beta had his forehead against the window, flesh sticking to the cool surface.

The drive had passed in a grim silence so far. Liam had received a text from Deaton requesting the Pack's presence at the clinic as soon as possible. Hence Liam being upset.

There had been no supernatural bumps in the road so far, but he should've known it was only a matter of time. Why had he gotten so used to having his guard down?

"Your chemosignals are stinking up the truck and you dirtied the window. Want to at least tell me why you're moping so bad?"

Liam's brow furrowed, "Aren't you worried? There might be something wrong in Beacon Hills, why else would Deaton ask to see us all?"

"No Baby Wolf, I'm not. Worried I mean. I'm more worried about how I'm gonna manage to de-Liam-grease my window."

Liam huffed before snapping his head in the Chimera's direction, away from the window.

"Of course you wouldn't care! I've been stupid enough to believe the town was safe, why not be stupid enough to think you care about something other than yourself?" he snapped at Theo, but the insult held little bite.

Taking his eyes of the road, Theo locked gazes with Liam and uttered a soft "We'll handle it," before letting his gaze drift slowly over Liam's face and back to the road.

Liam sighed but didn't argue.

They would handle it.
They always did, together.

That still doesn’t change the fact that Liam was feeling frustrated. He had gotten a taste of the sweet life. The normal life. Watching his goals lead his lacrosse team to victory, hearing the cheers of his teammates and friends, a certain chimera watching from the bleachers...

*It had to end sometime I guess*...

He sank deeper into his seat.

"I'm not greasy."

The papers strewn about the metal examining table and the empty coffee cups told Theo that Deaton wasn’t as calm as he always appeared.

He watched from his corner as Alec once again questioned the vet. Deaton took a deep breath before repeating himself, again.

"It's called Dark Spawn."

"Which means....?" Nolan draws out from his spot propped against the corner of the table, eyeing the papers with a mix of interest and nervousness.

"The Spawn is an ancient myth. It refers to sickness, an infection if you will, rather than a creature. In the olden days it spread through the people, corrupting minds and bodies, before it led to the death of thousands."

"Like the Black Death," Liam supplied with a smug smile.

Theo rolled his eyes as a fond smile tugged at his lips.

*Little Wolf, always the history nerd.*

"Yes, quite alike. But unfortunately in this case we have bigger opponents to worry about than rats. My sources say that it would be here in a few days. It's still a single infected creature, but it still acts as a vector for that infection, and for some reason it has its sights set on Beacon Hills."

"Because of the Nemeton?" Theo spoke up from his spot for the first time since they arrived, causing eyes to shift his way.

"Most likely, yes. If it reaches the town everyone stands a chance of being infected, but once again you have an advantage to stop it," Deaton replied with a glint in his eye.

"Let me guess, it doesn't infect werewolves?" Mason glanced at Nolan and met his gaze, both not liking that they would obviously not be much use in this scenario.

"It doesn’t," Deaton confirmed before looking at Liam and continuing "You have to cut it off before it completes its path and reaches the population."

"How? I mean how do you even beat it? Do we... try and save it? The human, I mean, that's in the inside and was infected," Liam asked with a slight frown.

"There is no cure. The sickness must be burnt into the earth along with the vessel."

Alec looked up at this, "So, fire?" A gleam lights his eyes at Deatons nod before Liam cuts him off.
"No Alec, you're not coming."

"Why not???

"Cuz, I'm Alpha in training and I said so. I think a smaller group would be best. We'll investigate Beacon Hills's borders first, not fight. After we figure out how to trap it we can decide who will be in the fighting party."

Liam stated firmly as he crossed his arms over his chest, hoping he looked more confident than he felt.

"We?" Mason raised a brow.

"Theo and me." Liam supplied, at which it was Theo's turn to raise a brow.

"I think Liam might have the best idea about how to go about it. We don't know much about this being, we have a week at least before its path alligns here, scouting out the area and finding the best place to confront it might be the best option. Theo and Liam can do that, while you three," Deaton nods to Mason, Corey and Nolan, " help me with more research about it"

"What about me???

"No one said you're not helping. You can fetch me everything we will need for the barbeque," Theo said with a smirk and a wink in Alec's direction.
Friends?

"LIAM, if you don't stop dragging your feet..." Theo gave an irritated shout over his shoulder.

Liam frowned and kicked at a nearby piece of grit causing it to shoot into the chimera's back. Theo whipped around with an angry "LIAM I swear to God!"

"I thought you were an atheist," He mumbled back, his stench of frustration filling the air and mixing with the smell of peeling paint, sweat, oil and Theo's musky scent that was already dancing in the air.

"And yet I find myself in need of a higher power to stop me from strangling you," Theo growled in return.

Liam couldn't help it. He was frustrated. About everything.

"This Spawn thing? What the hell man? Is it too much to ask to have finished this year as peacefully as it started?!" He kicked another piece of grit to accommodate his shout.

"Yes Liam, we're not normal, we're not supposed to have an all peachy and apple-pie-life" Theo said half-heartedly, clearly bored to have this discussion again, as he looked around the grounds of the abandoned factory's warehouse.

They only have two days to find a place to trap and kill the Spawn before its estimated time of arrival and have had no luck. They couldn't do it in the woods without the risk of foliage catching fire, residents of Beacon Hills will be swarming by a dozen to come put the fire out. And anywhere else was already too close to town.

The warehouse was their last stop for the day, moon already high up, but despite that the night was dark enough thanks to the clouds covering the moon that it left two pairs of glowing eyes. It also wasn't an option though, the reek of oil and chemical waste still left from the mine making it impossible to scent anything. The stench made Theo's eyes burn.

Liam came to an abrupt halt, refusing to follow Theo any further.

"We're just wasting time here, I doubt he'd be dumb enough to get himself cornered in a place smelling like this, everything here is basically flammable", he said with a roll of his eyes.

"It." Theo stated.

"What?"

"You called the creature a he."

"So?"

"Besides that being totally sexist Liam, I know what you're doing. Don't get attached to it, its dangerous."

"Like you?" The words flew out before he could stop them. He saw Theo halt as well as he felt the sting of Liam's words.

Liam hadn't lied. Theo is dangerous, but he wasn't a danger to Liam or anyone Liam cares about anymore, instead he became dangerous to those that would harm him and Liam knew this.
Theo slid his mask back on before giving Liam a smirk.

"Are you saying you've grown attached to me?"

"What? No that wasn't wha-" Liam closed his mouth with an audible clack and he stared at is feet, cuffing then through the grit.

Of course he had grown attached to Theo. It was in what way he was trying to figure out. He saw Theo take a step forward and tilting his head.

"Well, have you? Grown attached to me?" Theo asked, his tone somber, gray eyes melting into blue.

"Yes, you're my anchor, we go to school together, we live together, we're..... friends." The word fitted strangely in his mouth. They were friends...weren't they?

"Friends?" The Chimera raised an eyebrow.

Suddenly aware where this was going Liam got angry. Why was Theo bringing this up now? Asking questions Liam does not know the answers to?

"We're wasting time!" hee snapped and Theo took a step back again, just looking at Liam with a blank expression.

"What do you want from me? Yes Theo we can be best friends since you haven't killed my alpha in a while or planned any murder? Oh wait, that's what you're doing right now! Finding a way to kill him while we should be looking for a way to save him!"

"IT, Liam. It's an IT. It's a monster! Not your new Do-Good-Project!" Theo's own voice rose.

"What if its not a monster? What is I can save him? It's what Scott would've done!" Anger was pooling like hot lava in the pit of his stomach.

"Liam, this thing needs to die. We have to burn the infection out and to do that, we HAVE so kill it. You're not gonna save it, and you don't have to feel guilty about killing it! Because you're not this thing's saviour, you're not the Alpha and you ARE NOT SCOTT!"

Theo watched as hurt flashed through the beta's eyes before Liam yelled in reply.

"I know! I'm not Scott. And that's the problem!" Liam's scent changed to a mixture of frustration, anger and.... guilt.

At that Theo's shoulders slumbed in defeat as he closed the distance between them.

Liam felt Theo take a hold on the back of his neck. Next thing he knew he was folded into a strong embrace. Liam inhaled Theo's scent as he nuzzled into the chimera's neck. Anger slowly seeped out of him as he listened to the steady beat of his anchor's heart. Theo let him go after he knew the beta had relaxed, but he stayed close. Searching the depths of Liam's eyes, for what he did not know. Liam stared right back before his eyes involentarily moved to Theo's lips. He heard Theo's heart skip a beat.

"Shit. He saw that! What do I say now? Why did I do that???

Theo however had his focus fixed beyond Liam's shoulder, meaning he hadn't seen Liam looking at his lips, but Liam didn't realise this.

"We are!" Came Liam's voice with a slight squeal.
"Liam."
"Friends I mean."
"Liam"

"I trust you now! You're different. I trusted you before, you know the whole killing Scott thing and that was sort of the problem, not that it's a problem now, we are problem-free at the moment! Except for the creature coming here, besides that we are two problem-free frien-"

"LIAM!" Theo's shout finally drilling trough, Liam spun around to see what Theo had seen.

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"I don't get it," Alec said for what Nolan thought was the 100th time.

"None of us get it Alec! That's why we're here! Trying to get something that will make us get the other thing!" Mason sighed impatiently and rubbed at his eyes.

Corey moved forward and hugged him from behind.

"You alright there, Mase?" he asks as he spaces a soft kiss on Mason's shoulder.

"Yeah, Cor. It's just that this "infection" supposedly happened years ago. Years as in centuries. Why would it resurface now in the middle of nowhere? Where did it come from? And since its only one vector, guy, whatever, thats on its way here, why would it ignore the tons of other towns crawling with people to infect on its way here?"

"Mason's right," Deaton echoed.

"Sickness doesn't move with a plan or destination, it doesn't pick its victims."

Nolan closed the thick book on his lap with a loud crack, getting everyone's attention.

"Well this one does. And we don't even know what it wants. If it wanted to infect more people, it would've already. All we have that might be of interest is the Nemeton, but it looks like the Spawn pre-dates that as well. Plus, its Egyptian."

"Sooo what... for once that tree isn't the root of the problem?" Alec asked before giggling at his own joke.

"Not funny Alec!"

The room remained silent for a while, everybody trying to scrape their tired brains from the floor and come to some sort of conclusion.

Suddenly there was the sound of a loud blaring sound tune of the Local News coming from Alec's cellphone.

Alec looked up sheepishly as everyone glared at him.

"What? Not like I'm interrupting some big discussion. Plus I'm bored so I thought I'd take a look at whats happening in the real world."

"The real world? Really Alec?" Corey sighed at his friends' poor choice of words.
"You know, the white-picketfence world."

Mason opened his mouth to retort but before he could the news being reported caught his attention.

"Mexico State Prison reports that there are no new leads on the inmates that escaped from the Home for the Criminally Insane one fortnight ago. Police suspect they might have crossed the border already. These 12 inmates are extremely dangerous and contact should be avoided. They were still dressed in their white uniforms when they fled. Police and guards are at a loss as to how they escaped. Cameras show that there was no outside help, and that the breakout happened from inside the prison walls. There was an extremely large hole torn through the side of the building, how they made it is still unclear, we suspect some type of explosive. The inmates seemed extra attuned the days leading to the escape, nurses reported black lines tracing their bodies where their veins ran. Could this be some sort of new Superdrug that they are on? Did it give them the power to escape? Stay tuned as we find out."

"Deaton? You said there was one vector carrying the sickness. What if there's more. You said it yourself "Dark Spawn" refferes to the infection, not the host. So if the message you received said the Spawn in singular tense, it might've been the sickness they spoke of rather than the individual that was infected," Mason pieced together.

"Think about it, black veins, sudden superstrength to break out at the same time our creature shows up?" He urged at Deaton who was looking thoughtful.

Nolan pulled the map closer and examined it.

"If the breakout was 2 weeks ago in Mexico here", he marks the spot with a red X ", and Deaton received the message about the Spawn last week telling him it should arrive here in about another week, we now only have two days left, I think its possible for 12 supernatural creatures to reach Beacon Hills in that time slot."

"You might be right," Deaton said with a worried look.

"So what we're facing 12 creatures instead of one?" Corey asked worriedly.

"I truely don't know. Let's hope Liam and Theo find an area well suited for our encounter, and quick."

"I still don't get it."

"ALEC!"
I'd Die For You

Liam's eyes settled onto the figure standing a few feet away from him and Theo. There were more, standing slightly back as if waiting for the man in the front to tell them when to move forward.

The man was a tall, skinny and pale fellow. Dressed like his companions in white overalls, at least Liam thought they were white once, since they were now covered with grime and mud. They looked harmless enough, but something about them made Liam uneasy.

Liam heard Theo's heartbeat racing next to him, confirming the chimera's own unease and he curses himself. With the warehouse reeking of chemicals and oil they weren't able to scent the party of people, but if Liam hadn't started a fight with Theo they would've at least heard them coming. It was impossible to tell with the stench in the air, but they looked human.

Liam took a step forward and feels Theo's hand on his shoulder keeping him from going too close.

"Who are you?" He called out to them. The man tilted his head but said nothing. Liam swallowed before trying again "Are you guys lost?" he asks in a firmer tone this time.

The man at front giggled and his companions moved closer to him.

"No, we're going to Holland!" he exclaimed between giggles.

"Liam, they're nuts. Let's go." Theo insisted and started pulling Liam back by his arm.

Liam dug in his heels and ignored Theo's growl, "Holland?"

The men and women surrounded their friend and started placing their hands on his shoulders and back.

"Liam!" Theo spat out a warning trying to get the beta to move further back.

"We're going to Holland, but first we need to do the nice lady a favour," the man said, the second half of the sentence coming out in a much deeper, almost alien voice.

Liam stumbled back as he watched the scene unfold before him.

The man seemed to be absorbing the offered limbs of his companions, merging with a sickening crunch of bone and tearing of flesh into one being as the skin knit together to encase the multiple bodies into one.

He tried to focus on anything else, like getting his legs to work and run away, but he stood mesmerized.

The thing ended with scaly and patchy looking skin, a large mouth the shape of a pitbull's and horns curling from its head. It had long, powerful arms that seemed too big for its body that ended in tightly clenched fists with wicked claws.

Liam felt sick as he saw the outlines of bodies squirming beneath its skin, the individual that made up the creature still alive. Their limbs stuck out from its body oddly here and there, a protruding foot or limp arm swaying as the thing breathed raggedly.

Theo watched as the creature took its first step toward Liam, who was still frozen in shock. He shoved his own fear down and readied himself. It was clear he and Liam were going to have to fight,
but Liam still seemed to be in a trance.

Theo watched the creature lift its head before letting out a sickening screech.

He didn't think. He just moved.

Liam was ripped from his trance at Theo's loud shout of his name as he watched the creature prepare to lunge at him as it gathered its wide haunches.

Liam tried to get himself ready to retaliate, but Theo was quicker. He lunged at the thing, jumping over Liam's form before latching onto its neck and slashing at it with his claws.

Liam quickly joined the fray and the two boys fell into their natural rythm, fighting side by side.

It wailed miserably but the scratches they gave proved fruitless as the thing threw Liam back into the ground, hard. Liam saw stars as he battled to get his breath back. Theo shot him a worried glance before spotting the crank and rusty chain laying near Liam.

An idea formed in his head. Unfortunately Theo's thinking left a gap and the creature attacked, shoving Theo violently into an oil canister, leaving a dent and causing the oil to leak onto the concrete floor. It kept Theo pinned there.

Liam stumbled to his feet at the sight of Theo being pinned, starting to rush to his aid, heart thundering in his chest. He skidded to a stop and almost slipped on the oily cement as Theo called, "No Liam! The chains! We need the chains. Tie it up!"

Theo groaned in pain as he felt the creature's claws begin to sink into his sides and the pressure increasing in his chest, desperate for Liam to understand.

Liam understood.

He doubled back and grabbed the chain, hooking one end to the crank and running with the other, between the thing's legs, throwing a loop around its neck, jumping over its back, trying to tie it down any way possible.

He fumbled to get the chain to lock into another crank when he heard Theo finally scream in pain. The pressure on his chest was too much and he felt his ribs creaking under the creature's hold until they snapped.

Theo began to scream again but the blood rising in his throat cut him off as it spilled down the sides of his mouth.

"THEO!" Liam yelled helplessly as he saw the beast dropping the chimera on the ground. Theo curled in on himself and the creature rounded on Liam instead.

He swallowed in fear and went back to fumbling with the chain at the crank, trying to connect it in time.

Theo saw the thing move to where Liam was struggling and grabbed onto a piece of the chain from where he lay on the ground, pulling it tight, trying to hold the thing back and buy Liam enough time.

It let out a choking sound as the chain pulled tight around its neck and turned to find the source with its jaws dripping saliva.

Theo locked eyes with the thing a split second before it charges back to him. He grabbed a nearby
metal pole and stabbed it through the creature's thick skin, trying to hit something vital.

Laim finally got the chain to catch and the crank started to wind up, pulling at the chains. He ran down to Theo as fast as he could, but not fast enough.

It felt like it was happening in slow-motion. The pole Theo had been using to defend himself bended under the thing's weight and it closed the distance between them. The creature grabbed Theo by his neck and lifted his body, the chimera slashing at anything he could reach and thrashing to get away to no avail.

It slammed Theo's head down onto the concrete, making blood splatter and grit fly as the concrete cracked under the impact.

"NOOOO!" The shout tore from Liams as he ran, urging the crank to work faster, for his legs to move faster, for Theo to get away from its grasp.

Theo blinked in a daze as he tried to clear his vision in time to fight back but before he could gather his thoughts the thing slammed his head a second time, making his vision edge with black and his neck hung limply. When it happened the third time, a loud crack of bone sliced the air and Theo stayed down this time, no longer fighting back with blood pooling beneath his head.

No no no no! NO!

Liam skidded to a stop and fell to his knees near Theo just as the crank pulled the chains back tight enough for the creature to be dragged back to the leaking oil canister, letting out a series of cries and roars as it tried to sink its weight into the ground to anchor itself in place.

He glanced at Theo's bloodied face once and met a pair of gleaming eyes that were open halfway. Liam forced himself to finish the task before tending to Theo. He patted the older boy's pocket and found the lighter Theo always carries.

The tears started flooding his eyes by the time he threw the lighter and everything caught fire. The beast roared feebly before it was silenced.

"Theo? THEO! C'mon man look at me!" Liam sobbed as his hands gently cupped Theo's face.

He didn't know where to touch, the boy looked hurt all over. Liam had learnt enough from his dad to know not to move him and he didn't want to risk aggrevating the wounds. He settled for tapping his cheek.

Theo's eyes fluttured open but stopped at half-mast, he was too tired to open them all the way.

"Li..am?" he croaked, more blood spilling from his mouth and clogging his throat.

"I'm here Theo! Its gonna be okay! I'm gonna call fo help, okay? Theo? THEO!"

The chimera forced his eyes open again at the panic in the beta's voice, unaware that he's closed them again.

Liam dug in his pocket for his phone with trembling, blood slicked hands and called Mason on speed-dial.
Tires screeched over tar as Mason drove. The metallic scent of blood filled the car and rolled out the window in thick clouds.

He glanced in the rearview mirror and saw Liam cradling Theo's broken body, shouting out small words of encouragement to keep him awake.

Mason let out a curse as the car hit a speed bump, causing Theo to let out a hiss, and dragged his attention back to the road. He felt a light touch on his shoulder. Corey, trying to comfort him.

This was bad, very bad.

He'd expected it to be when Liam's paniced voice had filled his ears, shouting into the phone so loud it had made Mason's ears ring, but to actually see Theo himself was different. They had to move him, even though they all knew it could make things worse.

"Theo? Theo, hey! Mason he's slipping go faster!"

Mason floored the gas as he sped to the hospital where Alec, Nolan and Deaton were already waiting.

Theo let out a pained groan, causing Mason to look back again. Liam held the older boy's face as black veins snuck up his arms, taking Theo's pain. At the sight Mason let out a pained sob of his own. Liam was his best friend and Mason wasn't stupid. He saw the beta's blooming care for the chimera. He wasn't always in favour of it, but he knew that despite his dark past Theo would always be there to protect Liam. Judging by the beta's lack of wounds, that is exactly what happened again tonight.

Melissa McCall raced through the hospital, hair flying out behind her. Alec had called ahead letting her know something terrible has happened, they were supposed to take Theo to Deaton's but after she mentally compiled a list of the chimera's injuries she told them to come to the hospital instead.

Theo had been wheeled straight to surgery, Liam screaming as he was held back by Nolan and Alec, he begged Dr Geyer to save him.

Afterwards he had collapsed in a tired heap and allowed Melissa to check on his wounds. Nothing serious, which meant Theo took all the heavy blows to protect Liam.

She pushed her way into Theo's ICU room. He was stable now, hooked up to various machines. They had nearly lost him twice. She would've liked to spare the boys from knowing this but Liam and Alec's agonized screams had carried down the corridor when Theo flatlined, they knew.

Deaton and David looked up and saw Melissa enter, breathless from her run and with a grim look on her face. She handed the clutched envelope to David with a shaking hand.

"It's Theo's headscan results. It's not good."

Deaton pulled an eyelid back enough to shine a light into a dilated, unresponsive pupil.
Theo was in a coma, it was his body's attempt at saving energy to heal. And Theo was healing.

Deaton pulled the cover back to look at the boy's tanned torso, littered with bruises and faint pink scars left from his surgery, but otherwise woundless. His lungs and ribs were still repairing internally, but they were repairing.

Sadly, this was no cause for celebration. He tugged the cover back into place before turning to look at the CT scan again.

The bleeding on the brain had already stopped, but the extent of the injury was so bad Deaton had been surprised Theo was alive at all.

Chimera's healed slower than real werewolves and Theo's body was already at its limits. The only other time Deaton had seen an injury resembling this one had been when Cora almost died.

He traced the lines on the CT scan where the cracks in Theo's skull was visible before speaking, "The Hippocrampus. The part of the brain responsible to store memory and recognition."


He had heard Theo's heart give out twice before the electricity yanked it back to life. Theo was his responsibility, his anchor, his... how could I forgive myself for this?

His heart jumped into his throat as his dad came down the corridor. Dr Geyer pulled him into a tight embrace and he felt his tears seeping into the man's shirt. He took a shaky breath before stepping back and waiting for his father to tell him the dreaded news.

Melissa stepped up and gently pushed him back into a seated position.

"He's stable now, Liam. Surgery went well and his chest is already healing." Liam let out a relieved puff of air and exchanged hopeful looks with his friends.

"So, he's okay?"

The silence that followed gave him the answer he needed.

"What is it?" He whispered.

"His body is working very hard to heal, his lungs were punctured, ribs shattered, he... slipped into a comatose state."

"Coma?" Alec asked, wide-eyed.

"It's his body's way of saving enough energy to heal," Melissa explained in a soft tone.

"So now we just have to wait for him to wake up?"

Dr Geyer paused before answering his son's question with a weary sigh, "Theo's injuries might be healing now, but the head trauma was severe to say the least. His skull had completely cracked, wounding the brain tissue below and caused excessive bleeding. What worries us more is the area of the brain that was wounded."
"The Hippocrampus functions to store memory..." Melissa started before trailing off, her eyes teary.

"What does that mean?" Liam asked, panic seeping into his voice.

"Son, it means that if he wakes up-

"IF?!" Liam shouted loudly before rising to his feet feeling dizzy.

"-there's a chance he'd have lost his memory."
Ash drifted down from the clouded sky, softly turning the abandoned warehouse into an old black and white portrait, delicately covering the charred earth.

Like black snow, Parish took a moment to look at the landscape, wondering if the sight offered some dark irony that they have yet to see. Letting out a deep sigh, he made his way back to where the body of the charred Spawn was supposed to be, boots crunching on the grit.

Supposed to be. Key sentence. When the deputy arrived the smell of charred flesh led him right to it, a heap of coaling flesh, still smoking. He was less than impressed when he got sent to investigate, not knowing whether he was looking for 12 individual dead bodies or one giant-sized molded body like Liam tried to explain.

He walked up to the charred heap of flesh, poking it with the tip of his boot, trying to make out any features.

Disgusting, he thought bringing his boot back to poke at it again, only for the heap to suddenly shudder and then materialize. Parish leapt back in disgusted shock and watched as the flesh turn into a heap of crawling, very alive and unburnt, bugs. As the bugs untangled themselves from each other they crawled back into the earth.

I don't get payed enough for this, he thought as he eyed the now empty spot where the body had been. If it hadn't been for the telltale whiffs of burnt flesh he would never have known it was there in the first place.

Shaking his head he climbed back into his truck, watching the wiperblades clearing away the soft grey ash gathering on the windshield.

"Do you remember when we met? Well, we never officially met I guess, but the first time I saw you in person, at least. Stiles had me track you through the woods from your house after we watched you playing video games for like, three hours. By then I already thought he was finally going nuts, it got even worse when I followed your scent into the woods. I liked it," Liam smiled faintly, "Then we saw you paying tribute to Tara and I felt like the worst person for intruding."

"Do you remember what you said? You said that I was a lot stronger than I looked," tears clouded Liam's vision as he continued with a shaking voice, "Well, I'm not. You have to wake up now, Theo."

"What happened to the whole I'm not dying for you thing?" Liam asked the unresponsive older boy angrily as he blinked away tears. He looked peaceful, rested. The most rested he had looked in weeks if Liam was honest. He didn't look sick or wounded. Just... asleep. Liam guessed Tara couldn't get her clutches on his mind where he was now, where ever that may be. Still, he had to come back.

"Do you remember me?"

It's been four long days since the attack at the warehouse, with no news on whether or not the creature was even truely dead, given the absence of the body.
Four long days of Scott calling to check up on Liam at least three times a day, of Liam sitting by Theo's side whenever he could.

_The bastard_, Liam thought as he watched Theo sleeping peacefully, looking small in the large hospital bed.

According to Deaton and his dad, physically Theo was in perfect health again, the brain tissue had knitted itself back together and he was out of the woods. So why wasn't he waking up?

His anger was starting to get the better of him again as he snapped his third lacrosse stick in four days' time during practise.

This was stupid.

He had had to come back to school and sit through endless hours of class and homework each day, hours he would've rather spent by Theo's side.

Funny, before the attack this normal everyday routine was what he wanted most.

How could he have let this happen? He was supposed to be in charge now. Protecting Beacon Hills. It was his responsibility now. Just like Theo...

He was ripped from his train of thought as a sharp whistle sounded in his ear.

"DUMBbar! What the heck are you doing?! Get your head in the game!" He heard Coach yell from the side of the field. Right, the game...

They had to win, there were only winners and losers and Liam has lost enough as it is.

He scooped up the ball and flung it ruthlessly through the air. Then another, and another. He started to shake the fog in his mind, focussing only on the game, the battle, the victory. As he watched the last ball fly right through the net, ripping it as it went, he felt the familiar song of content buzzing in his chest and instinctively looked to the bleachers, searching.

O, right... Theo wasn't there.

His shoulders slumped as he dragged himself to the lockerroom and stepped into the cold spray of the shower with his gear still on.

_The sun, the moon, the truth._

_The sun, the moon, the truth._

_The sun, the moon..._ he repeated in his head, but the words that had once held so much meaning were now empty.

He tried to focus on his breathing instead, closing his eyes.

"I think you were rotting down there."

Rotting. He had said that. How could he? If he had chosen different words, would Theo still be in the hospital now? If Theo died, where would he go? Back to Tara?

"Does it hurt anymore?"

"UGH!" he let out a loud groan through clenching teeth as he slammed his hand into the shower
wall, sending tile shards flying.

"Liam! Stop it!"

Liam growled and whirled on Mason with glowing eyes.

"I know you miss him, Li. I know you're worried. I do. But you have to stop. You're spiralling!"

Mason took a tentative step forward.

"You don't know! How could you?!" He slammed another clawed fist through the tiles, blood and water now running in a steady stream into the drain.

"Liam, STOP! You're scaring me!"

The fight seems to suddenly seep out of Liam as he collapsed onto his knees.

"Sorry," he muttered. Mason closed the distance and pulled his soaking friend into a hug.

"I know, I know."

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Church of San Juan-Chiloé Islands Present day

Hallow clicking sounded as a pair of high heels limped up the cobblestone path toward the great double-doors posing as an entryway to the Church of San Juan.

The woman swung the doors open, a breeze carrying in a few wilted leaves that settled onto the empty wooden benches. Light filtered through stained glass windows, depicting the Stations of The Cross.

She glanced around before making her way to the confessions booth, her ankle almost giving way and she stumbled. Taking a seat on the plush chair behind the curtain she stared at her hands, picking at a scab on her hand while waiting.

Station One- Jesus is condemned to death.

She heard a creaking sound followed by a pained huff as the old Father sat down in his respected booth. With a deep breath she plucked the scab from her hand.

Station Two - Jesus takes up the Cross

"Forgive me Father, for I have sinned."

"What is it that troubles you, my child?"

"Impatience. My borrowed time is at its end, and I am left waiting for the consequences of my actions to make themselves known."

"What actions might those be?"

She frowned at a perfect manicured nail, taking it between her fingers and pulling it from the nailbed.

"I have more sins than I have time to spare to speak of them." She flicked the bloody nail away. "Why must we wither and waste, Father?"
The old man chuckled before replying "The body fails so that the soul could be set free."

"Set free and forgotten."

"You fear that loved ones will not remember you?"

Station Three- Jesus falls for the first time.

"Not I, Father, but my legacy."

Station Four- Jesus meets His mother.

"Children usually tend to take that fear away, twisting it into hope."

"I am Mother to many. We remain unseen, one with the shadows, yet our actions have caused the fall of tyrants and the liberation of mankind."

"You confuse my old mind, Child. I struggle to grasp that which you wish to tell me. You fear being forgotten, yet you leave many who look to you behind?"

"My path is mine to walk and mine alone!" She hissed at him.

"Ah, but are we not all in need of companionship? A helping hand?"

Station Five - Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus to carry the cross.

"Help is not what I am in need of. I need time."

She had recreated the Dark Spawn to help. Instead it got killed.

"To what end?"

"That which sleeps needs to be awoken. I have sent others to do the deed, but ultimately I have to do it myself. Sadly, what little time I have left is already wasting away. I refuse to wait another lifetime." She pulled at her hair, making it fall to the floor in dark heaps.

"Lifetime? I suppose the struggles of one's life may make it seem seemingly long, but life must be cherished all the same."

Station Six - Veronica wipes the face of Jesus.

"Life is a gift then, Father?"

"Indeed, payed for in blood."

"What then gives another the right to lay claim to a life that was gifted to me? All things gifted to me, rightfully mine?"

Station Seven - Jesus falls for the second time.

"You speak of vengeance?"

"I speak of righting a wrong done by another, but my own wrongs only keeps the scale tipping in an endless battle of sides. I am drenched in sin yet sin is the only answer."

"You must repent, sin is never the answer. They will be judged by the truly righteous, it is not for us to worry."
"The Angles were cast from Heaven once, Father. That makes me see little hope for mercy. Only justice."

Station 8 and 9 - Jesus meets the women of Juresalem before falling a third time.

"Mercy will be granted to those who seek it."

"I don't. I am not afraid of the flames."

"Fear is for the brave, my dear."

"Are cowards the brave then? Fearless because they are fearfull? Tell me Father, who is more wicked: The one who kills the wicked ones, or the one who protects them? Wicked souls have purged at my feet for centuries, only for me to fail at my task?"

"Task?"

Station 10 - Jesus is stripped of his clothes.

"To lead them, the people of the times, old and new. To show those who are blinded the way. My way."

"You speak words that taint your soul, be careful."

Station 11 - Jesus is nailed to the Cross

She let out a gurgling laugh and spit out a mouthful of blood, and a few teeth, onto the floor.

"Blood must have blood, Father." She snaked a hand into her dress and pulled out a curved blade that winked as it reflected the colours of the painted church windows. "And I can't wait another lifetime. What is asleep must be awoken."

With that she swung her arm around and through the curtain, knife finding its mark at the nape of the conscientia sui ipsius neck.

She stumbled out of the confession booth and collapsed to her knees. Her body was already lifeless as her limbs flayed about her body. Light filtering through the window depicting the final station illuminating the bugs that crawled beneath her skin before finally breaking through.

Station 12- Jesus died on the Cross

Beacon Hills  Present Day; 2AM

Liam banged on Deaton's door with the palm of his hand, the noise getting lost in the downpour of the pitter-patter of rain on pavement. Liam flipped his hair, now much longer than the normal buzz-cut, from his face sending a spray of water. As he raised a hand to knock again the door swung open and he stumbled inside, suprised.

"Liam?" Deaton blinked at the soaking wet beta in a sleepy daze. Lightning from outside illuminated his determined features.

"I think I know how to wake Theo!"
Conscientia sui ipsius

Liam watched as Alec and Nolan tipped another bucket of ice into the metal tub making a loud rattle and drowning out the noise (voice) coming from the laptop sitting on the corner of Deaton's desk. Good, he thought.

A moment later Stiles's frantic voice became audible again. "Uhm? Hallo! I'm talking! This is stupid. Liam I know you care about Hellboy over there but this is the worst possible plan EVER. Not even I would've thought of doing something so utterly stupid! Tell him, Derek?!

Derek raised his brows at the laptop screen before stating, "He's right. Last time it caused a Nogistune Stiles to run around."

Liam rolled his eyes and clenched his teeth, instead staring into the tub of ice water.

"Since I am the only one here with experience in the whole comatose-situation, I want to add that he might appreciate the help. Who knows what will happen if he eventually pulls himself into the waking world?" Peter asked with a bored expression as he leaned against the examination table next to Derek.

"He might turn into a homocidal-maniac wearing too tight V-neck shirts?" Malia suggested from her corner of the computer screen, poking a head around Scott's shoulder.

"Can we please handle father-daughter bonding time sometime else? Scott? Tell him this is beyond stupid!" Stiles yelled.

Scott eyed Liam's image on his own laptop. This type of thing needed to be handled in person, not through Skype. He sighed before saying, "It's risky. Last time ended with lives lost, Aiden...Allison.", sigh, "but, I also know that if I was Liam I'd take the risk. We already know the worst outcome. We can prepare for it this time."

Liam snapped his head back to the laptop screen. He hadn't thought anyone would agree with him, not that he had cared since he would've done it anyway, but Scott's support made his shoulders sag in relief.

"Thank you."

"WHAT?! SCOTT?!

Liam tuned out the argument as he stepped to Theo's side where he lay next to the tub. He ran a hand through the thick dark brown locks before collecting himself and turning to Deaton.

"Right, so how do I do this?"

"The cold temperature will slow his heart down to a pace that will allow you to enter Theo's thoughts. Since he is physically healed, there has to be another reason why Theo is stuck in his coma. By entering his mind, you might find out what is keeping him from waking."

Liam swallowed the knot of nerves, "Okay, so how will I know I found it?"

"Find him. You will see a collection of Theo's thoughts, moments he holds dear. Feel what he's feeling as if the moment was your own. They might be memories, dreams... nightmares. Considering Theo's time in Hell, I think you'll see something from there as well, so be careful."
Nolan and Alec lowered Theo's body into the cold water and Liam watched his head submerge. Shit, this is actually happening.

He closed his eyes as he took his position in at Theo's shoulders, the chimera was already shivering.

"Follow the trail that leads you to him, Liam. They are his deepest, darkest thoughts." He plunged into darkness.

Liam opened his eyes and gasped in suprise. Big mistake, slimey water flooded his mouth and invaded is nostrils as he fought to get to the surface. He broke through the silver sheen of water and dragged himself onto the surface of the muddy waterbank, coughing and sputterig.

*What the hell?!* he thought and looked around in confusion. It took him a moment to recognise his surroundings. He was in the woods at the creek by the bridge, Tara's bridge. It looked different, darker somehow with the tree branches stretching like clawed hands to block the moonlight. *Why was the water so deep? It's just the creek?* He looked back to where he had emerged from the water, only to find it now knee-deep and not the swallowing sinkhole that tried to drown him only a moment ago.

"*Help me, Theo.*"

He jerked back around and saw a girl lying at the bottom of the creek, stretching her hand to a boy standing stockstill on the bridge.

"*Please, Theo, it's cold.*" Her breath left her chapped lips in an icy puff.

*Shit! Theo. His memory.* Liam felt panicked and out of place. *Get it together Liam! Try to feel what Theo's feeling.*

Liam looked to the boy - Theo - standing on the bridge, watching his sister die with a blank expression on his face. *How am I supposed to feel what he's feeling? I don't know what to do!*

**Click-Click-Click**

Liam saw the Geneticist walking up to Theo, placing a hand on this shoulder.

"*No! Theo, wait!*" Liam yelled and tried to move to the bridge where Theo slowly followed the Geneticist, leaving Tara to die. But Liam couldn't move. The mud of the waterbank pulling him down like quicksand.

The last thing he saw was the Surgeon moving up to Tara's body before the mud closed over his head and pulled him down.

Liam awoke with a start, finding himself on the grimey floor of the Dread Doctor's lab. He moved to get up, only to find that he had been chained to the floor. He smelt the stale scent of fear and blood hanging in air.

*That's Theo's blood!*

He swallowed down the bile rising in his trought as he looked to the wall behind him and saw the
dried blood flaking of the walls. He heard a soft shuffling sound and whipped his head around, locking eyes with a miserable green gaze.

"THEO!" he scrambled to the boy lying on the floor. He looked slightly younger than the Theo Liam first met, but only by a little.

Theo didn't respond as Liam laid his hand on his shoulder, so Liam shook him. Still nothing. Can't he see or feel me? How am I supposed to save him if he doesn't know I'm here?!

He tried once more to feel what the other boy was feeling. Like drawing out pain, Liam felt tiredness creeping up his arm that still held Theo's shoulder. It caused Liam's shoulders to slump and his eyes felt heavy.

Tired, okay that's a start. Theo was feeling tired.

But this was more than tired. It was a sort of bone-deep wariness that made Liam's limbs feel like lead, causing him to be dragged to the floor. Now laying next to Theo, face inches from his, Liam moved his hand to the boy's wrist. There had to be more.

Click-Click-Click

No, not yet! he wanted to yell but his tounge was thick in his mouth.

The Pathologist kneeled by Theo and yanked his head up, inserting a large needle and plunging the syringe. He left again and something else flared through the connection - resignation.

No, Theo! You have to fight! he willed the other boy before realizing that Theo did fight. He fought for himself when he manipulated the pack and killed Scott. He did that for power - power that would let him get away from this.

Liam had thought of the old Theo as the Dread Doctors' pet. He remembered his own hours with them, when he and Hayden were captured. The fear. The chemical stench. Looking at this Theo lying in front of him, he realized he was with the Doctors, but still an experiment. A prisoner that had tired of trying to get away. Even now, Theo was still prisoner to those memories.

Don't worry, I'll fight with you. Liam thought as his eyes slipped closed, sleep pulling him under.

When Liam opened his eyes again they were met with bright sunlight, so he shut them again before slowly opening them to take in the scene.

Grass. A meadow. Birds chirping. Laughing boys. Was this a memory? Or was this a dream?

The hazy look the images had confirmed that it was the latter - only a dream. Theo's dream. Three boys charged by him, laughing in delight.

"C'mon Scott! You can't be the only one that gets to play!" A skinny boy spoke up to a shaggy looking boy with black hair.

Scott and Stiles. Then that must be Theo. Liam looked to the other boy who had a large smile plastered on his face, causing Liam to grin as well. This time he didn't need to touch him to know how he felt. He felt happy.
But this is just a dream, so where was Theo really?

A loud crash sounded above his head, pulling him into the waking world as if the dream had been his as much as it was Theo's. He blinked in confusion, suddenly in a bedroom. It was dark save for the flickering nightlight in the corner. He heard distant shouts and a whimper sounded next to him. He looked at a very young version of Theo, he barely looked like he could be in the third grade. This Theo had fearful eyes and bruises on his wrists. He was sitting barefoot, in pajamas on his bed.

He'd been asleep, dreaming about the meadow where he was playing. And I woke up with him. Liam realized as he looked around the room. It was much clearer than the dream had been, meaning that this was another memory.

Shouts continued and Liam tried to tune them into focus, but he couldn't. It was as if he had lost his werewolf hearing, cotton wool stuffed into his ears. He saw young Theo get up from the bed and sneak to his bedroom door. The boy opened it an inch and tilted his head to the side, trying to listen.

I hear what he hears! Liam realized as the sounds reaching his own ears sounded louder, but still out of focus. So, he went to stand beside the young Theo and followed him out into the hall as they silently crept closer to the shouts, trying to hear what they were about.

The hall smelled of smoke, alcohol and something sour. They ended at the top of the stairs leading to the kitchen, where Liam could see the backs of two adults. A woman with messy hair was sitting at the table, slowly sipping coffee and twirling a necklace with a golden cross on it between her fingers. The man was large and sweaty, the scent of alcohol seeping from his pores.

The man let out a loud curse and Liam could smell blood. He saw the man reaching down and pull a bloody shard from one of his feet. The floor was covered in shards, Liam noticed.

That explained the loud crash that waked me - Theo - from the dream.

He leaned forward, finally able to hear what all the shouting was about.

"Damn McCall woman, you should've seen the way she looked at me when we left the hospital." croaked the woman.

"NO! Damn you and that little runt for having to go to the hospital in the first place! You just take him there and assume I have the money to pay for treatment!" The man gave an angry kick at the chair.

"Your son had an ashma attack what else would you expect me to do?" The woman sounded bored, clearly this conversation has been had many times before.

"I expected you to give me another healthy, strong child like Tara. Instead I have a little sick devil costing me money everytime he wants to take a breath!" The man let out another string of curses. "About time I gave him another beating, one to remember!"

Liam let out a protective growl at the same time the young Theo let out a fearful whimper, causing both adults at the bottom of the stairs to freeze and slowly turn around.

Liam felt his breath catch as he saw them from the front for the first time. They had no faces, the skin was smooth where their features should've been.

Theo doesn't remember what his parents looked like, Liam realized as the man yelled "Get down here you little runt!" and grabbed him by his ankle instead of Theo, dragging him down the stairs.
Liam kicked out fearfully at the faceless man before his head slammed into the stairs and he lost consciousness again.

"Do you think it's working?" Alec asked as he watched Liam stand as still as a statue with his hands on Theo's shivering shoulders. The chimera's lips were tinted blue from the cold and his teeth was chattering. "Cuz Theo doesn't look to good." he supplied worriedly.

"I don't know, whatever is happening, Liam would have to move quickly. We can't keep Theo in this state for much longer before it grows dangerous." Deaton said looking thoughtful.

"Dangerous? It's already dangerous! My best friend is in someone's mind! Possibly reliving Theo's memories from Hell! How does that not sound dangerous?" Mason ran a shaking hand over his face, the other holding Corey's hand in a death-grip. "I still don't get how that is supposed to help!"

"Theo's memory centrum of the brain has been damaged. The only reason why he isn't waking up could be that he's stuck somewhere, a memory blocking his way that he can't remember. Maybe he doesn't remember what he has to wake up for. Liam has to find him and help him remember."

Liam opened his eyes again, this time he recognized where he was instantly. A spot he had missed being the last week - the passenger seat of Theo's truck. He looked over to see Theo had his eyes on the road, driving calmly.

"Theo?" He reached out a tentative hand and touched the back of the older boy's neck. No response. He let out a sigh before turning around to check the back seat, to say he was surprised at what he saw would be an understatement.

It was himself, slightly younger and with buzzed hair. He was holding Hayden's wounded body tightly.

This was after we escaped the Dread Doctors. Why would this be something significant to Theo? Liam watched in confusion as his past-self leaned to capture Hayden's mouth in his, drawing out her pain. An emotion flared through him from where he was still holding Theo's neck, making him look back to the chimera.

Theo was watching the scene in his rearview mirror with a blank expression, but the burning trail up Liam's arm told him that the scene made the boy feel... something.

Liam frowned as he tried to make out the jumble of emotions, wanting to focus on the strongest one. Theo looked back to the road before he could though, and the river of the emotional connection was cut off. Liam sighed before staring out his own window, leaning his head against the cool glass and closing his eyes.

Back again in the lab, Liam stood frozen helpless as he watched the Surgeon cut open Theo's chest. He screamed in pain along with Theo as the doctor closed a cold, metal hand around his heart. Liam felt each of the fibres snap as Theo's heart was yanked from his chest. Liam cried in pain, tears leaking down his face. His nerves were on fire. Theo slumped back against the table, unconscious.
from the pain. The large gaping cavity in his chest leaking blood. The heart was placed onto a metal tray before the Surgeon took the one next to it and placed it into the boy's open chest cavity, filling it once more.

*Tara's heart.*

The beta doubled over, finally losing against the nausea. *This is just sick.*

He wiped his mouth and forced himself to look back to the horror in front of him. The Surgeon was gone, leaving the Pathologist to sow up the loose flaps of skin on Theo's chest.

The Geneticist stepped forward, holding a long needle in one hand and tilted Theo's head to the side with the other. She carefully inserted it at the nape of his neck before stabbing it upward with brutal force.

*Into his brain. The Hippocampus. Same place Theo was injured in the fight with the Spawn.* Liam fought down another wave of sickness and watched as the Geneticist pulled the bloody needle free.

"**Damnatio Remoriae. Task completed.**" she stepped back dropping Theo's head.

*Damnatio Remoriae?* Liam frowned, now more confused than ever. He recognized the words. The Dread Doctors had used them to get the Beast of Gévaudan to remember its name. It meant condemnation of memory.

*What would the Dread Doctors want with Theo's memories? Did they make him forget something?*

"**Task completed, the bloodline is now cleansed.**" the Pathologist echoed.

*Bloodline? What bloodline?* Lights started flickering. *What does all of this mean? Is this what's keeping him from waking up?*

Liam's knee brushed against Theo's. He felt a blush creeping up his cheeks and looked away. He saw Mason scibbeling fiercely on a bord: **Beacon for the win!**

He remembered this day. He saw another version of past-Liam shooting a string of goals at the net, breaking into a huge smile.

"I'm happy." He whispered wistfully looking sideways at Theo, "what about you, what're you feeling?" He reached out a hand and placed it lightly on Theo's knee.

Lonely. Empty. Theo watched past-Liam running on the field with something clouding his gaze.

*Longing?*

Liam felt sad as he watched Theo's expression changing to one of determination.

*Purpose.*

---

*I can't breathe!*
Liam clawed his way through the dirt in a panic, desperate to reach some sort of surface. His lungs burnt and he inhaled a mouthful of foul-tasting dirt.

His fingers broke the surface, followed by his hand, arm, shoulders. He blinked dirt from his eyes and found himself staring into a pair of ice blue eyes.

He dragged himself the rest of the way before standing face-to-face with past-Liam.

_I'm seeing through Theo's eyes._

_I was the first thing he saw when he crawled out of Hell._

He felt the burn of emotions- anger, fear, confusion, dread... hope.

---

Liam walked through the dark halls of the school. He passed empty classrooms, desks were neatly in place. He walked aimlessly until he reached the boiler room. On the bord three words he did not understand were scribbled in jagged lines, as if the person who wrote them had been in a hurry:

"_conscientia sui ipsius_"

At the far corner of the room was a large blue door. It was completely out of place and Liam knew he had done it. If he opened the door, Theo would be on the other side.

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Theo wanderes aimlessly through the school halls, feet dragging. He felt like he had been at this for days, yet the hallway remained unending.

Do you remember me? Liam had asked.

Liam.

I have to get back to him. I have to wake up. He halted his steps and shook his head in frustration. Why can't I wake up?!

He punched a nearby locker, leaving a dent.

O no, I'm turning into Liam, he thought with a small humourless laugh before sliding down the wall and resting his head on his knee.

I'm missing something.

"But I do remember!" Theo shouted getting to his feet. "All the terrible things I did, my time in Hell, the Dread Doctors! I remember the Pack, Liam!" Theo welcomed the feel of his wolf’s anger, "There's nothing else!" he roared down the never ending school hall.

He stood there waiting for his voice to at least echo back, but it did not. Feeling defeated he went into one of the empty classrooms and sat at a random desk. He rested his head on his arms for a while.

Could be worse. I could've been back underground with Tara.

Theo tilted his head and rested his cheek on his hand, then frowned. The desk's surface was clean, unscratched and smooth.
That's not right...he thought back to the desks in the waking world that had decades of doodles and initials scratched into the surfaces. Without thinking he slid out a claw and started his own little doodle of a wolf in the woods. His mind went blank as he cleared his thoughts and focused on the feel of the wood sliding beneath his claw, it felt calming. He doesn't know how long he sat there etching lines into the desk when he heard a loud slamming noise, drawing him back. He snapped his head up in shock. For as long as he'd been here the silence had been completely deafening.

That came from the boiler room, he started to get up from the desk only to glance back at the surface one last time, seeing the full extent of what he'd been doing this entire time. What he had thought were just lines came together, forming a sort of canvas with curves and details, depicting a howling wolf in the woods along with letters. Three words.

"Conscientia sui ipsius?" He read aloud.

Did I write that? Another sound from the boiler room drew his attention away. It sounded like a door being slammed closed.

Suddenly afraid to lose track of the noise, he ran to the boiler room. He came to an adrupt halt as he saw the source of the noise - a large blue door opening and then slamming closed, over and over.

That definitely shouldn't be here, he swallowed a lump in his throat and slowly moved to the door only to stop himself as he passed the whiteboard.

"Conscientia sui ipsius." He muttered under his breath and moved to the board. He picked up a marker and quickly scribbled the words down, as if the action would help him remember them. They're important, he decided before once again moving to the door and opening it.

Theo blinked as sand blasted at his face, whirling in the strong wind.

Where am I? he spun around to where he had just entered from the door, only moments ago, only to find it gone.

Instead he now stood in a landscape with rolling sands as far as the eye could see. The sun blazed down on his shoulders. A desert?

"Well, isn't this just fucking perfect!" he growled out.

"Indeed it is," a feminine voice sounded behind him, making him whirl around. The wind and the sands suddenly settled.

Where moments ago there had been nothing, now stood a beautiful woman. She couldn't have been much older than Theo himself. She wore a white dress that illuminated her smooth tanned skin. Dark hair fell to her middle and golden bands and jewels adorned her arms, neck and fingers. The most shocking feature of her beauty, however, was piercing green eyes that seemed to see right through him.

"Who are you supposed to be?" He growled out letting his eyes glow. The woman frowned and stepped closer. Theo felt a wave of calm wash over him and let his eyes change back to normal. She grabbed him by the chin and searched his face.

"So this is how they managed to hide you from me? This was never the form you were meant to take." she said harshly.
"They? What are you talking about? Where am I?" Theo asked, feeling strangely docile.

"Hmm, I had hoped you would remember by now, but no matter. You will eventually," She said calmly, lowering his chin and gazing into his eyes. "Then we have much to do."

Theo forced himself to back away from her alluring gaze.

"We? We won't be doing anything. I am going to wake up and go back to where I belong."

He looked around helplessly. The door had still not returned.

"Where you belong. Yes, that is all I ever wanted for you."

He frowned and opened his mouth, about to ask her once more who she is and what she meant, when a loud banging followed by a familiar voice sounded.

"Theo?!"

"Liam?!" He yelled and looked for where the noise came from. It was impossible to tell.

The woman let out a soft tsk. "It seems we don't have much time after all. Theo, is it?"

"LIAM?! Where are you?" Theo whirled on the woman spitting in her face, " where is he?"

He gave a threatening step forward followed by a low growl. His defiance seemed to anger her as she pulled out a curved blade that had a golden hue in the blazing sunlight. She brought it up in a defensive stance.

"That's no way to address a Queen."

"Theo?! Open the door!!!" Liam's frantic call made Theo snap as he lunged for the woman.

The blade knicked the side of his neck and sent fire down his spine. He pinned her arms above her head.

"How do I get out?" He growled between his fangs.

"Conscientia sui ipsius." She answered, not at all looking scared of the looming predator above her.

"What does that mean?" He was getting irritated, causing him to dig his claws into her arms as he held her down. She trashed below him, trying to get away but not breaking eye-contact.

"Remember! Remember who you are! Who you were meant to be!" She hissed up at him.

"Theo! Can you hear me?"

"Enough games!" he moved a hand to her throat and started to squeeze. The wind picked up again and sand stung his face, making him loosen his grip on her arm. She freed her hand and clasped at his wrist where he still held her neck with bruising force. Clearly she was stronger than she looked.

"Remember my name! And remember yourself! It won't be long before he comes for you now, you need me!"

"I don't need anyone!" He hissed and squeezed her neck harder, waiting for the bones to snap.

The cut on his neck still oozed blood, making it drip on her face. The burning down his spine
increased and he let out a pained scream but refused to let go of her.

The desert scene and the woman began to grow hazy and Theo felt dizzy. "What's happening to me?" He asked through clenched teeth, trying to fight the dizzy-spell.

The fight left her body as she brought a hand up to delicately cup his face, paying no attention to the death-grip he still had on her throat. "You're waking up."

"Who are you?" He asked again desperately as the image started to slip away at the edges of his vision.

"Amunet." The reply came just as everything fell away to darkness.

Liam gasped as he was yanked into the waking world. Mason's worried face filled his vision. "Mason?"

"He's awake! I did it! The connection's broken!" Mason yelled loudly over his shoulder causing Liam's ears to ring.

"What happened? Did it work? Where is he?" Mason's gaze softened into one of sympathy.

"I'm sorry Liam, we had to stop it. The cold temperature almost killed him. And you..." he pointed to Liam's nose. Liam brought a shaking hand to his face and wiped away blood from his nose.

He looked over his friend's shoulder to see Theo on the ground with his head on Nolan's lap. His lips were blue and his face pale. He wasn't awake. It didn't work.

"No!" The broken yell tore from Liam's throat as he fell to his knees beside Theo's head. "I was so close!"

He remembered to blue door.

"I couldn't get it to open!" He said miserably and rested his head on Theo's cold chest, feeling the sluggish beat of his heart as it started to pick up pace again now that it was out of the ice.

"I'm so sorry." Liam sobbed into his anchor's chest, not hearing his heartbeat flutter.

"Li...am?" Theo croaked.

Liam's head snapped up and blue met green once more.
"Liam?" Theo asked again clearer this time.

Liam threw himself onto Theo, knocking the air from the chimera's lungs, and pulled him into a tight embrace. After a while of hesitation, Theo returned the beta's hug and inhaled his scent.

"You're back, you remember me." Liam murmured against his chest.

"How could anyone ever forget you, Little Wolf?" Theo whispered.

"It worked. I did it, I woke you up!"

"Actually, it would appear that Mr Raeken woke up on his own." Deaton supplied from the back of the room in his usual mono-tone manner.

Hearing Deaton's voice Liam suddenly remembered that he was in a room full of people and he let go of Theo's body. The chimera didn't seem too bothered and leaned back against Nolan who was still sitting behind him. Liam fought the blush creeping to his face by asking, "What do you mean?"

"When we pulled you out of it Theo was still under, Liam." Mason reasoned. Liam felt an irrational frustration blooming in his chest before he shook his head.

It's fine. Theo's awake and it doesn't matter if it isn't because of me.

Alec moved to sit beside Theo on the floor and also pulled him into a rough embrace. Theo smiled softly and returned the young wolf's hug. Liam's mouth suddenly held a bitter taste.

"What I would like to know is how he did it. After almost a week in his comatose state how did he finally manage to pull himself out?" Deaton mused as he kneeled in Theo's line of vision. "Theo? It's Doctor Deaton, do you remember me?"

Theo looked startled at being addressed directly. Liam moved forward when he noticed that the older boy still had a dazed look in his eye. At Theo's nod he breathed a sigh of relief.

"Good. Can you tell me anything about the time while you were asleep?" Deaton asked carefully.

Theo frowned as he racked his brain, coming up with nothing.

"N-no." He answered looking at the floor as if it held all the answers.

"Deaton." He answered looking at the floor as if it held all the answers.

Deaton nodded before getting up and facing Liam. "Do you remember anything from your time in Theo's memories?"

Liam nodded, "I remember everything." his voice wavering a bit on the last word.

"You were in my head?!" Theo asked harshly and got up from his spot on the floor, causing Nolan to land on his bottom in surprise.

Liam smelt betrayal and anger coming from Theo in waves. It made him defensive. "I did it to save you!"

"Yeah, well by the sound of it you didn't do a very good job!" Theo spat at him.

Liam ignored the hurt he felt from the jibe and shoved Theo in the chest, hard. "You're an ass! Why
He heard the crack before he felt the pained blossoming in his jaw. Theo had punched him. He growled in disbelief. Alec and Corey each held onto Theo's arm trying to calm him down. The chimera was breathing hard and fast, fangs now fully on display as he watched Liam with glowing eyes.

_He looks feral._ Liam thought and stepped back in disgust. Theo shoved Corey and Alec to the side and turned to lean on the nearby table. Slowly he collected himself and when he turned around all signs of the wolf and his previous slip in control was gone.

"Liam," Deaton warned from where he had watched the exchange, "his mind might still be in a fragile state." "I'm fine." Theo hissed before crossing his arms in defence. Liam decided not to call him out on the lie when he saw the older boy's shoulders were slightly shaking. It was obvious he struggled to keep the brave front and his control, both of which usually came naturally to him. It made Liam's anger fade back into concern and pity.

*I wouldn't have behaved any different if I just woke from a coma.*

"How long did you say I was out?"

"A week." Liam met Theo's gaze, seeing that the older boy had also calmed down.

"A week." Theo muttered to himself, "what happened? The monster?"

"Dead." Liam walked up to him only stopping when he was a few steps away.

"And you? You're okay?" At the waver in Theo's voice Liam took another step forward.

"I'm okay," he confirmed softly, "you saved me."

Theo rolled his shoulders as if trying to release built up tension, "Good." He said before looking at the floor again.

"Sit down, Theo. Let me do some tests to at least get Liam to stop worrying." He looked to Deaton about to defend himself when he saw the knowing look he gave him. He'd said that to get Theo to agree to be checked out.

Sitting on the examination table with a sigh Theo let Deaton draw a vial of blood. "Liam, you said you came close to getting to Theo. What had made you believe that?" the vet asked casually as he shined a light in the chimera's eyes.

"I don't know. I just felt like I was close... I was in the boiler room and there was a big blue door. It wasn't supposed to be there, so I guess that's how I knew." He thought back to how he pounded at the door, how blood had seeped from his split knuckles as he called out for his anchor. "I couldn't get it to open though," he added softly while running a finger over his new healed knuckles.

"Interesting. Do you remember anything else besides the door?" Deaton held his fingers to Theo's neck, counting beats as he measured his pulse.

"Yeah, actually. There were words written on the bord with a marker. I don't know what they mean, but I did my best to remember them because I thought they might be important," he frowned as he thought before carefully spelling the words out, "conscientia sui ipsius?" he tested. The words felt
strange on his tounge, like they didn't fit.

Theo snapped his head up in suprise at the word, recognition lighting his eyes. "I've seen those words. Or maybe I heard them, I'm not sure, but they're familiar."

Deaton paused his examination with a thoughtful expression on his face.

"What?" Theo swallowed, "what's wrong? What does it mean?" "It's Latin. It means self-awareness or knowledge of one's self if you will." "Why would that be written in my mind?" Theo asked and Deaton couldn't help but think that he looked adorably confused. "I don't know. I suppose time would tell, for now I suggest you go home and rest. You seem to be physically fine." Liam saw Mason frown as he watched the vet carefully. He seemed wary.

*I'll have to remember to ask him about that later.* Liam decided as he moved to the door, hovering near Theo in case he needed support, but not daring to touch him.

"Thank you, for everything." Liam told the vet as the others gathered their things and left.

"Yeah, thanks..." Theo mumbled and they pushed their way outside and walked to the truck.

"Keys." Theo said in a demanding voice, holding out his hand.

"What? C'mon you can't drive now you just woke up!"

"You heard the vet, I'm fine." He wiggled his fingers, "Keys."

Liam grumbled but still tossed them over. Theo caught them mid-air with a smirk in Liam's direction before getting in the driver's seat.

Asshole.

---

The drive had passed in an awkward silence so far. Theo's grip tightened on the wheel as he saw the beta shooting him another glance from the corner of his eye.

"Yes, Liam?" he bit out in irritation.

"Oh uh, nothing. I was just thinking about how glad my mom will be to see you. She missed you." *I missed you.*

When Theo remained silent Liam continued hurriedly, "She doesn't know about, uh, the whole me going into your mind thing. So, uh, maybe not mention that."

Theo's grip tightened even further on the wheel. "Wasn't planning on it."

The tense drive continued. When Theo once again saw Liam glance at him he had had enough. He yanked the steering wheel to the side, hard. The truck flew from tar onto grass as it skidded to a halt at the side of the road.

"Dude! What the hell?!" Liam yelled as he watched Theo get out of the truck and slam the door. He sat for a while to calm his racing heart before getting out as well.

It was already dark out and crickets chirped in the distance. He watched Theo pace and rake a shaking hand through his hair.
"Theo?"

"What?!"

"I'm sorry." Liam swallowed the lump in his throat.

Silence. More pacing.

"I thought I could save you. I think I almost did. After the memory of you getting out of Hell i was suddenly in the school and-"

"LIAM." the warning note in the older boy's voice cut him off. Theo stopped pacing and locked eyes with the beta for the first time since pulling over. Liam felt his breath catch when he saw tears in his eyes. He looked so broken. "I don't want to talk about it. I don't want to know what happened - what you saw. I don't want you to tell someone else about it. They're my memories. It's my weight to bear!" he yelled in a hoarse voice.

"Not alone." Liam shook his head. Theo slid down a tree and sat on the grass with a sigh.

"Something's wrong, I can tell. What is it?" He sat down next to Theo and plucked at the grass.

He let out a dry laugh, "Of course something's wrong. Isn't there always something wrong in this damn town?"

Liam let out a chuckle of his own, trying to ease the tension. There was a long pause before Theo whispered, "I feel... different. Like something's missing, but I can't figure out what."

Liam's brow furrowed, "Maybe you just need to rest, you've been through a lot."

"I've been resting." Theo looked at Liam and brought a hand to his face, gently tracing the dark circle under his eye with his thumb ,"and by the looks of it you haven't." His breath tickled Liam's face, causing his heart to jump. Theo jerked his hand away as if he'd been burnt and got to his feet.

"C'mon, Baby Wolf, let's go home." He held out an arm to pull Liam to his feet before walking to the truck.

Jenna had been delighted to welcome both of the boys home. David was working a shift at the hospital and she sent them both to bed after declaring in a sing-song voice that they had school in the morning, causing both boys to groan.

They'd each gone to their own rooms. Theo heard Liam's bed creak under his weight as the beta threw himself down.

He slipped out of his still-wet clothes and stepped into the shower, water blasting and steam clouding the mirror. He rolled his shoulders as he tried to ease the tension that made his muscles spasm. The hot water usually helped, but not tonight it seemed.He closed his eyes and rested his forehead on the shower wall.

What happened? Why does Liam remember but I don't.

Liam. Theo tuned his senses toward the beta, hearing the steady beat of his heart. The tension in his shoulders lessened somewhat.

What had he seen?
Theo felt oddly naked and exposed at the thought that someone had been in his memories.

*Had he seen...had he lived through...*

Theo forced his train of thought to come to a halt and got out of the shower. He wiped the steam from the mirror and stared at himself.

*Is that me? I feel so empty. I feel... wrong. Geuss that's cause all I've ever been is wrong. The bad guy.*

He returned to his room and tugged on a pair of boxers before he laid on the bed. He listened once more to Liam's heartbeat.

*Still the same. He's still awake.*

Liam listened to Theo's heartbeat, as if it might disappear any second. Despite being tired, he doubted he'd be getting much sleep. He stared at the ceiling and tried to piece together what he'd discovered about Theo.

He heard his bedroom door open and felt the bed next to him sink under Theo's weight. The chimera put an arm behind his head and stared at the ceiling as well.

Liam breathed in his musky scent and breathed a sigh of relief at having the older boy near him. His anchor was back.

"I know I said I didn't want to talk about it. I don't. I just want to know one thing."

Liam swallowed, "Okay."

"Did you see-" sigh, " I mean were you-" another sigh followed by a light growl, "did you have to see it - Hell, I mean. Tara. The morgue?"

"No! No..." Liam answered and turned on his side to look at Theo. He let his eyes trail down to his naked chest before snapping them back to his face. Theo was still looking at the ceiling.

"Okay, that's good."

Liam shifted back to his previous position and counted the cracks in the ceiling - 7 - before asking, "Why do you do it?"

Theo remained silent as he waited for the beta to continue.

"Why do you keep saving me? Protecting me? You did it again with the Spawn. Why?"

"Because, you're... you." Theo softly whispered and turned his head to the side to look at Liam, "How could I not?"

Liam also turned his head and their eyes met. "I missed you." He breathed, as if saying it louder would scare Theo away.

"I know."

Liam felt the back of the chimera's hand brush his own and turned his palm outward, catching it in his own.
"I was scared."

"I know."

He felt Theo intertwine their fingers and they laid like that until Liam felt sleep pulling at his eyes.

"I was angry." He whispered one last time and heard the faint reply of "Of course you were." before falling asleep.
Are We There Yet?

Chapter Summary

Things are getting back to normal for the teens in BH and they can't help but feel like things are looking up. Liam confides in Mason about his confused feelings at one of Theo's memories.

When Liam woke the next morning Theo was back in his own room, meaning he hadn't spent the night. His mother insisted on cutting their hair before they go back to school. After many protests from both boys they finally complied. Liam ran a hand through is now short but stylish hair from where he sat next to Theo in the truck on the way to school. Theo's hair was cut in a similar fashion, buzzed from his neck and a bit longer at the top leaving his bangs to fall softly on his face.

*He looks good*, Liam thought as he ran another hand through his own hair.

"What's wrong? Does Puppy not like it's shave?" Theo quiped from beside him.

"No just glad you finally got a proper bath, honestly poor Melissa! Imagine having to give you a spongebath!" Liam shot back.

Theo smirked devilishly, "I'm sure you do."

Liam felt his cheeks burn as he grasped what Theo was saying, "Wha- no, I wasn't! I mean I don't! Imagine that! At all!" he struggled.

Theo threw his head back and laughed. It was so real. Liam watched him as the sun fell on Theo's features. He was smiling broadly as he took another jab at Liam, but Liam wasn't even paying attention.

*He can take as many jabs at me as he wants, as long as it keeps him smiling like that.*

"What?"

The question drew him back to the moment and he looked away, feeling embarassed at being caught staring.

"Nothing."

It was only the first period and Liam was already squirming in his seat - why did it have to be Biology? He angrily stared down at the pop quiz on this desk, willing his gaze to set it alight. Mason sat next to him and made a show of having 3 sharpened pencils at the ready, placing one behind each ear and using the other one to furiously fill in the little circles. Liam glanced at his own page that was still blank and growled lightly in frustration. He heard a snicker coming from the back of the room and turned to see Theo smirking at him with an amused spark in his eye.
Liam colored in random circles as the buzzer sounded and the teacher went around the class to collect the papers. When she took Liam's from his hand he held on tightly, causing her to pull harder. He finally relented and let her take it from him and dropped his head back on his desk.

The rest of the lecture was just as bad as Liam stared in confusion as she skipped from slide to slide, moving way to fast for his brain to comprehend.  

"Pssst!"

He flipped through his book and tried to find the page the teacher was reading from, placing a highlighter in his mouth and frowning in frustration. He couldn't fall behind this early in the year!  

"Pssssssssssst!"

Liam came to a page that illustrated a coloured image of the human heart, causing him to slam his book shut.

"Something wrong Mr Dunbar?"

"Uh, no! No, sorry! There was a uh, fly sitting on my book! So I uh, killed it?" He heard another snicker coming from the chimera in the back of the classroom.

"Very well, then. Why don't you tell us what the energy source in the cell is, or were you too busy hunting flies to pay attention?"

A few students laughed and Liam gripped his desk tightly. "Uh, energy source?"

"Yes Mr Dunbar. The energy source." The teacher lowered her glasses to sit on the tip of her nose and eyes him impatiently.

"Uh..."

"So you've said Mr Dunbar, do you have any actual words for us?" More laughter sounded and Liam felt his claws itching to come out.

"The mitochondria functions as the cell's power house, providing it of needed energy for growth and development. But the actual source of energy would be ATP, derived from many factors. Like a healthy diet of protein, for example." Came the smooth reply from the back of the room and Liam turned to meet Theo's eyes. He was still smirking at him.

"Thank you, Mr Dunbar," she said sarcastically before returning her attention back to her slides and resuming the lecture.

Liam heaved a sigh of relief and tried to focus on what she was saying.

"PSSSSSSSSSSSTTTTT!"

"What?!" He whispered angrily at Mason.

"Dude, Theo just saved your ass!"

He could practically feel Theo's gaze burn a hole in his head. Knowing he was listening he replied, "Yeah but he's still a dick." He smirked when he heard Theo give a dramatic exhale.
He turned back to Mason and saw him looking between Theo and Liam, now aware that the chimera could hear them. This seemed to be a problem as he resorted to using facial expressions to communicate with Liam.

He pulled his brows high as he pointed between them, mouthing "We need to talk!"

Liam raised his eyebrow "About?"

Mason flared his nostrils and jerked his head in Theo's direction. "Him!"

Liam frowned and raised his shoulders "What?"

Mason copied him "What?"

Liam's frown got deeper as he made a motion with his hands and jerked his head in Theo's direction. "What?"

"Mr Dunbar..." came a tired sigh from the teacher, "what on earth are you doing?"

"I uhhh... there was a, uh..."

"Another fly? Really Mr Dunbar?"

He nodded sheepishly.

The rest of the day appeared to pass quite normally and before they knew it it was time for lunch. The Puppy Pack crowded their usual table in the cafeteria as they ate between words of conversation.

"I can't believe you!" Alec snapped at Nolan as he walked up to the table to sit beside him. Nolan just smiled sweetly and took another bite from his pudding cup.

"You took the last one even though I was before you in the line!"

Nolan licked his spoon, "Age before beauty," he threw a wink at Alec.

Alec gaped at him "O really this again? I'm not that much younger than you guys!"

Corey slid in next to Mason and handed him a pudding cup, "Would it be cheesy if I said for my Pudding?"

Mason smiled and kissed him on the cheek, "Totally, thanks babe!"

"Where did you get one?!"

Corey shrugged, "There are no lines to wait in if you're invisible." he said innocently and Mason threw an arm over his shoulders fondly.

"Okay, thats just unfair! Also, we need to get more girls in the group! I can't watch you too be all cuddly anymore, I need a girlfriend!" Alec rolled his eyes and made a gagging motion as he watched Corey nuzzle under Mason's arm. "Seriously! C'mon Liam you haven't had a girlfriend since that girl Hayden left."
"Or a boyfriend." Nolan supplied and caused Liam to choke on his sandwich. "Just stating the obvious, since I don't know what you're into."

Theo laughed and slapped Liam on the back to help him get his breath back from choking, "Aw, is the Puppy feeling lonely?"

"You're one to talk, Raeken. I haven't seen you with anyone... ever." Mason pointed out, "have you ever even kissed someone?"

Theo raised his eyebrows and Liam felt curious to hear the answer. Which was of course, "Have you seen my face?"

"Wow, how modest of you." Liam rolled his eyes and Theo playfully shoved his shoulder.

"No, that's true. You may be hot, but I've never seen you even go for the girls - or guys - that swoon over you." Liam bit into his sandwich again, _There were people awooning over him?_

"Hey! Did you just call him hot?" Corey asked his boyfriend.

"Yeah, you said so yourself!"

Corey narrowed his eyes, "True..."

"I'm flattered, really." Theo shook his head and played with his food.

"Who'd you kiss?" Liam heard himself asking before his mind could catch up to his mouth.

"Tracy," Theo shrugged before spooning a mouthful of food into his mouth, chewing loudly in Liam's face.

"Tracy?!" He echoed in surprise.

"You said you kissed her, did you sleep with her?" Mason raised a brow.

"Okay! This is TMI." Nolan clapped his hands together in front of his face.

"Seriously, we need to meet new people!" Alec piped up again.

"Fine, let's go to the club next Saturday?" Mason suggested.

"Yeah sounds good." Liam answered and glanced to Theo who said nothing. Liam knew he'd go though. Where Liam went, Theo went.

The last class of the day rolled around and Theo found himself in AP History. Not his favourite subject, to say the least. He saw Liam hanging to the words that left the teacher's mouth as if they were made of gold, his hand shooting up ever so often to eagerly answer the questions he asked.

_Good, that means he can explain this nonsense to me later._

Theo opened his book and doodles little pictures around the edges of each page. He lost himself in this action. The pencil sliding on the paper soothed him somewhat.

After a while he got bored and resorted to shooting paper triangles into the back of Liam's head.
Liam turned around and glared at him, Theo snickered before raising his hands, signalling peace.

Bored once more he scanned the classroom walls, looking at the various posters taped there.

*Lady Liberty. Boring.*

*George Washinton. Boring.*

*WW1. Slightly less boring.*

*Hitler. What a joke.*

*Abraham Lincoln. Boring.*

His gaze came to rest on a poster that depicted the pyramids in a desert. It read "Ancient Egypt" at the bottom. He stared at it with interest and flipped through his book, trying to see if there was anything about Egypt in it. There wasn’t.

*Of course not, why would there be anything that actually interests me in the damned class.*

Liam walked into the sweaty locker room after practise. He had a quick shower before heading back out to where Mason was waiting for him in the parking lot. He'd told Theo he'd catch a ride with Mason after practise to which he got, "Oh, good so you don't have to walk then. Or were you just assuming I'd wait for you to finish?" followed by a smirk as the chimera left the school without him.

*Again, such an Ass.*

He got into Mason's car and threw his stuff in the back.

"How was practise?"

"Eh, alright I guess."

"Corey any better at defending the goalbox?"

"Nope." Liam let out a popping sound at the p.

"Ouch. Wanna stop for some food?"

"Yeah sounds good..."

They fell into a comfortable silence as they drove to the Grill. Mason's radio playing Beyoncé on repeat until they arrived.

They slid into their usual booth, ordered their usual food from their usual waitress. It felt good to have some sort of pattern.

A few minutes later Liam was stuffing his face with fries and Mason loudly sipped the last of his milkshake from his straw before pushing it aside.

"So... Theo's okay?"

"Yeah, it seems so." Liam replied casually.
Mason nodded, "Uh huh. I think Deaton's hiding something."

Liam looked up at this and stopped mid-chew. "Whhuth?" he mumbled around a mouthful of food.

"At least it seemed a bit strange. The way he reacted when he heard those words you saw written on the bord? One moment he was all concerned vet examining Theo, the next he was basically rushing us out of the clinic."

Liam swallowed his mouthful, "I don't know... maybe he was just tired?"

"Yeah. Maybe. Still, it was weird."

They ate in silence for a while longer before Mason piped up again, "What about you? Are you okay?"

*He wants to know about Theo's memories.*

"Yeah I'm good, really. There's nothing to tell."

*Liar.*

They finished their food and payed the bill. As they got in the car Liam worked up the courage to say what had been on his mind since Theo woke up.

"Actually, no. I'm not okay. I'm... confused."

"About what?"

"One of Theo's memories was about me and Hayden. In the back of his truck. Kissing."

Mason let out a low whistle, "Intense."

"I couldn't figure out what it made him feel, but he felt something!" he let out a sigh and sank deeper into the soft leather seat, "I don't know... Why would that be a memory Theo keeps close?"

"Maybe he was jealous?"

Liam frowned, "Jealous? If he'd liked Hayden back then I'm sure he wouldn't have let the Doctors kill her."

Mason heaved a heavy sigh and brought a hand up to his face, shaking his head. "Honestly Liam, I love you man, but you can be so... dense sometimes!"

"Gee, thanks!"

"Liam, have you ever thought that Theo might care about you?"

"Of course he cares about me, he keeps saving my ass even though I tell him not to."

"No, I mean have you ever gotten the impression that he might like you?"

"Again, yes. Of course he likes me, we're friends."

Mason looked at his friend slightly dumbfounded before trying again, "No, Liam. I mean that he like *likes* you?"

"What do you mean like likes- Oh. Ohhhh." Liam widened his eyes as Mason's meaning dawned on
him. "No." He shook his head. "Definitely not! You heard his saying that he'd kissed Tracy today."

"So?"

"So!" Liam made wild gestures with his hands, "Tracy's a girl!"

"Right... So?"

"I'm a guy!" he yelled frantically.

"Yes, you are indeed a guy." Mason fought to control the laughter bubbling in his throat.

"Thank you! Exactly! So Theo can't like me, since I'm a guy and Tracy's a girl. A girl who he kissed. Therefore he can't be gay."

Now Mason laughed, "Seriously Liam? There isn't just straight and gay. Theo could be bi?"

"Oh. Right." Liam frowned as he thought about it.

"Hypothetically speaking, let's say he is into you. How would that make you feel?"

"I don't know... it'd be weird, I guess."

"Weird? So, you wouldn't be - hypothetically speaking - into him being into you?"

"What? Hypothetically speaking I'm not into guys."

Mason shrugged, "How would you know? You've only ever been with Hayden."

At Liam's slightly horrified expression he quickly added, "Okay okay okay. You're not into guys!"

Liam relaxed somewhat before Mason continued, "Let's say you were - hypothetically speaking..."

"I'm not!"

"Dude, hypothetically speaking!"

"What does that even mean?"

"It means humour me for a second. Let's say you were into guys and Theo was into you, would that bother you?"

"I don't know... I mean it's Theo! Theo who invaded my pack and killed Scott!"

"But he's not that Theo to you anymore, is he?" Mason asked softly.

Liam heaved another sigh, "No. He's Theo that keeps saving me. Theo that's a part of the Puppy Pack. Theo that's my friend - my anchor."

Silence.

"I guess if he were into me, I wouldn't mind." Mason nodded before starting the car.

Liam added, "Hypothetically speaking!"
Title inspired by a Grace Mitchell song.

Liam finally stops worrying about Theo's state of mind while Deaton continued his research in secret before turning to an unlikely source. Throw in a big lacrosse game that could change Liam's future and a steamy afterparty with sexual tension running high. Meanwhile Theo is confronted by his demons.

It's been almost a week since Theo had woken up and nothing strange had happened. Things had been strangely good. In fact, there was a big lacrosse game the following the day. *Big* was an understatement. Scouts were coming to watch from various colleges all across the country, looking for new potential, and Liam would be damned if he didn't impress them.

He wasn't clueless. He knew his grades weren't enough to get him into a good school. He had to work hard to pass all his subjects while balancing all the supernatural business as well. If he impressed the scouts out on the field tomorrow he stood a chance at getting a sport scholarship.

Liam stared at his 09 lacrosse jersey hanging over his chair. The future was catching up to them, he knew. Mason and Corey already had plans to go to college together and were checking out campus grounds online. Nolan was thinking about going to France to join Argent's team of fellow hunters there and continue the hunt for Monroe. And Theo? Liam didn't have a clue.

*Speaking of, where is he?*

Liam shot him a text asking just that before he received one back only seconds later.

*Your snoring was keeping me awake so I went for a run. Don't miss me too much ;)*

Liam knew the snore joke meant the chimera had had another sleepless night due to his nightmares. He sighed before texting back.

*In your dreams.*

He waited for a reply. After it became clear he wasn't getting one he got to his feet and went to sit by his desk.

*Might as well finish my homework.*

He dug through his bag and groaned as he remembered he'd left his History book on the backseat of the truck.

He walked down the hall on his way to go fetch it when he paused by Theo's bedroom door. The door was open and Liam saw Theo's backpack by the foot of his neatly made bed. He went inside and pulled Theo's History book free from the bag.

*He wouldn't mind,* Liam thought as he went back to his own room and sat at the desk. He flipped through the pages looking for the one they had their homework, catching sight of doodles at the
edges of some of the papers. Curious, Liam opened at one of the pages to get a better look and his heart sank.

Foreign black symbols were drawn in pencil. They were bold and dark, not the normal soft lines of pencil sketches. Liam thought they looked... sinister. He snapped a picture of the page.

I knew something was wrong.

He raced out of the house, grabbing the truck's keys as he went. Before he knew it he was on his way to the animal clinic.

Deaton zoomed the microscope as he tried to focus on the bloodcells on the glass. Leaning back he did the same with another microscope sitting close by.

On the table there were 3 vials of blood, individually marked: werewolf, werecoyote and chimera. The vial labeled "chimera" contained Theo's blood that he'd sampled after the boy had woken up.

He frowned as he compared the samples. A cat sprang onto the table next to him, knocking a few things over before moving to rub it's head on Deaton's hand and purred.

"Alright, Yatsi. I'll feed you in a bit." Deaton sighed and rubbed the cat's head. Yatsi had been picked up at the side of the road and dropped at the clinic. Deaton had nursed him back to health and had no choice but to keep him.

He smiled fondly at the cat, "At least you keep good company."

He heard the bell of the clinic door ringing, signalling that someone had arrived. He put the cat next to his food bowl and moved to the front of the clinic.

"Liam." he greeted in suprise. "Not that friendly visits aren't welcome, but what are you doing here?"

"I found something." Liam fumbled with his phone, "in Theo's history book."

He passed the phone to the vet and Deaton looked at the screen. He had to fight to keep his composture as his breath caught at what he saw. He looked from the phone to Liam and back again. Liam was pacing around the room.

"He drew them! I knew something was wrong. I knew it couldn't just be that easy..." Liam sighed and wiped a hand over his brow.

"Do you know what they mean?"

"Calm down, Liam. There is no reason to worry." He focused on keeping his heart as steady as his voice, "Theo is fine. These are just doodles."

Liam paused with a hopeful expression lighting up his face. "Are you sure? I thought they might mean something. They looked like symbols."

Deaton swallowed his guilt at lying to the boy. "I'm sure. They look like symbols, yes. But they aren't. Just... meaningless pictures. The only thing wrong with Mr Raeken is that he isn't paying attention in History class."

Liam let out a small, relieved laugh. "Yeah, he hates that subject."

"Don't you have a big game tomorrow? You should be at home resting, not chasing geese and
worrying about Theo. He's perfectly fine, Liam."

"Alright. Thank you." Liam took his phone back and moved to the door.

"Goodluck with the game."

"Oh, thanks."

Deaton watched as Liam drove off. *Forgive me young wolf, but this is beyond your reach.*

He went back to his research and pulled one of the many books from the shelf in his office, *"Angelic Runes"* it read. He flipped through a few pages, sighing as he went.

"Well Yatsi, it would appear my suspicions were correct."

Theo leaned forward and placed his hand on his knees as he caught his breath. He'd been running since it was dark out. Since Tara had released his body to flop to the floor of the hospital, heartless. He cracked his neck and shook his shoulders before taking off on a sprint once more.

He ran through the woods, trees blurring as he passed them. He ran until his lungs burnt and he couldn't breathe anymore. He flopped down on the grass and sucked air into his lungs in large gulps. He heard his phone ding and checked the screen.

*Liam: Where are you?*

He replied the beta quickly, fingers flying across the screen before tucking his phone away once more. He laid a hand on his chest, feeling his heart pounding through his shirt. He counted the beats.

One, two.

One, two.

One- his phone gave another ding signalling Liam's reply. Instead of taking his phone out again he gave a sigh and chose to ignore it. He tried to count beats again but couldn't fall back into the rhythm.

*Of course. Liam's always letting me fall out of rythm. Step out of my comfort zone. Makes me quit my pattern.*

*Pattern... being a killer? Is that my pattern?*

He started his jog back to Liam's house.

Liam's hands twisted nervously around the handle of his lacrosse stick as he gulped the cool night air. His nerves were killing him. He glanced at the faces around the field and to where the scouts were huddled together in a meeting before the game starts. He gulped again and looked at the bleachers helplessly.

"Liam, he'll be here." Nolan jogged up to his side and placed a reassuring hand on his back.

"He's late! He's never been late!" Liam said desperately as he looked to the empty spot between
Mason and Alec. "What if he doesn't show up?"

"He'll be here. He's never missed a game and he wouldn't miss this, Li, you know that."

"B-but if he's not here and I lose it-" he stammered.

Nolan's slap on the back pulled him out of his train of thought and he followed his freckled friend's pointed look at the bleachers.

A huge sigh of relief escaped him as he met Theo's gaze from where the chimera now sat next to Mason.

"He's right Little Wolf, I wouldn't miss this for the world."

Liam felt an unwelcome warmth spreading through his chest. "You're late, and don't call me that!"

Theo smirked at him and winked causing Liam to look away as a blush crept up his neck.

"Told 'ya! Now c'mon, we've got a game to win!" Nolan slapped him on the back one more time with a wide grin before jogging off to his position on the field. Liam felt the competitive anticipation burning in his veins and grinned as well.

*I've got a game to win.*

Theo watched the game slightly losing interest. The team from North California High were good, sure, but they were already losing badly.

Alec on the other hand wasn't bored at all, "Who is that?" he let out a low whistle as he watched the Cali Cheerleaders doing a routine at the side of the field, tops lifting to expose tanned bellies. "And why do we not have cheerleaders?! Seriously, what's with this school?!"

"Can't say I see the appeal," Mason piped up from Theo's other side.

"Hey you don't hear me complaining! More for us, right Theo?" Alec swung an arm around his shoulders with a wide grin but continued to look at the girls.

Theo gave a low chuckle and saw Mason studying him from the corner of his eye.

Great, what's his deal?

Theo chose to ignore his look. He didn't have the energy for this, whatever *this* was. Tara hadn't been merciful since he'd woken from his coma and the extra time he spent running to clear his head didn't help with the exhaustion.

Alec nudged him sharply in the side, "Dude! She's totally checking you out! Like, a lot!" Theo followed his gaze to one of the cheerleaders. It was easy to spot which one Alec had meant. All of the other girls were cheering for their team on the field, but one kept glancing back over her shoulder to him.

He'd be lying if he said she wasn't pretty. She was definitely the most beautiful out of her team. Her short skirt exposed long toned legs that glowed, clearly sunkissed. She had her dark brown hair pulled back into a high ponytail.

He grinned when he caught her looking at him and she quickly looked away in shock at being caught. His smile slowly turned sour as Mason's gaze bore holes into the side of his head. He gave a
sigh and turned to face the boy with a bored expression, "Yes, Mason?" he asked in mock kindness that dripped with sarcasm.

"Nothing, just trying to see if you're into that."

"That?" Theo asked in the same sarcastic tone. "If that means pretty cheerleader, is there a reason I shouldn't be?"

Mason frowned and opened his mouth to speak more irritating words, but was cut off due to the loud cheering of the people around him as Beacon Hills scored another goal. Theo looked to the field and saw that it was once again Liam that scored. He saw the scouts huddling together, without a doubt whispering about Liam.

Theo felt proud and saw how happy Liam was with his own performance in the match.

*Good, he deserves to be happy after all the worry I put him through. He also deserves that scholarship. He needs to get out of this town.*

Theo felt guilty about the worry he'd put Liam through and even worse about what Liam must've seen in his head. He might be Liam's anchor, but given how unstable he was himself he knew Liam would be better off finding a new one. But he didn't even bother bringing it up, Liam would just get angry and argue with him. Besides, Theo liked being Liam's anchor. It made him feel needed, important even. It gave him purpose.

Theo watched as the score on the board kept climbing and climbing for BHH and his gaze drifted around the different faces on the field. Then he saw her.

At the opposite side of the field, hair dripping as she watched him.

*Tara?*

Theo swallowed. This had never happened before. He had never seen her in the waking world that guarded him from his nightmares. He felt his heart beat racing and held his breath. A sharp nudge in his side drew his attention away from her and he looked into Alec's confused eyes, "Dude you okay? You smell sorta ... I don't know. Funky?"

Theo glanced back to where Tara had been only to find her gone. He sent a silent thanks to Alec's obliviousness. He was still learning about chemosignals and hadn't picked up on his utter terror.

"Yeah, I'm fine. Other than the fact that I'm slightly offended at being told I smell 'funky'." He slipped his mask back into place and shoved the young wolf with his shoulder playfully.

Liam was on cloud 9. They had won the game easily and Liam had been approached by several scouts from different schools who told him that they were impressed and that if he continued to impress in the rest of the games this year he had a chance of getting a full ride scholarship to some great schools.

He sat beaming in his living room with his friend's all gathered around him, except for Theo, who was still getting ready.

*Seriously, how much self care does that guy do before going to a party?!*
Which was exactly where they were headed. A huge party at one of his teammates' homes. Lots of booze, friends and hey, they were fucking celebrating! What could be better than that?

Theo trudged down the stairs a moment later dressed in a white V-neck tank, tanned muscles of his arms on full display. He also sported dark jeans and his white converse sneakers. Liam felt his breath hitch at the sight of the other teen.

_Wow, he looks..._ Liam ended that thought immediately and gazed at his own outfit, lacrosse jersey (cause hey, they won!) and a pair of lighter jeans with brown leather shoes.

_Do I look good? I don't look THAT good. It should be illegal for someone to look like that!_ 

Theo found his eyes like they always do, and a smirk played across his lips just like it always does.

It made Liam feel lighter, happier - they were back to just being them. Everything had turned out fine. Better than fine.

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Theo rolled his eyes as yet another person congratulated Liam for the amazing game. It was amazing sure - but really now? Chasing a ball?

_Mundanes are so small minded._

Theo frowned immediately as that thought flew through his head. Where did that come from? Mundane means human, but he'd never spoken like that or thought like that, had he? Then why did the thought come so easily?

He was snapped from his confusion when Alec slung an arm around his shoulder and whistled into his ear, "Dammnnnn! The cheerleaders came!"

"What? Why?" He spots them easily enough as some still had their hair tied with the ribbons they wore at the match, but the tight outfits were exchanged for new even tighter ones.

"Who cares!" Alec dreamily trailed after a blonde.

Theo snorted. Hormonal teenagers. He wandered over to a drink table and grabbed the nearest cup since it didn't really matter what the contents were, he was leaving just as sober as he'd arrived unfortunately. He sipped cheap tasting beer and surveyed the party. Girls were dancing on the kitchen counter already topless, in the dining room a fierce match of beer pong was underway and a guy was chugging from a ceg nearby. The music from inside was matched with more pulsing rhythms from outside where a few teens were gathered around the pool.

All in all - not Theo's scene.

He spotted Mason and Corey making out in a not so secluded corner while Nolan was taking a drag from a cigar with a group of stoners. Theo shook his head when he saw the boy cough and moved over.

"Nolan?" He clapped the younger boy roughly on the back, "Whatcha doing?"

Nolan coughed another puff of smoke and his eyes watered slightly, "No idea, you?"

"Same," Theo smirked and grabbed the cigar from him. Ignoring Nolan's protests he brought it to his own lips and filled his lungs with smoke. He let it puff from his nose and flicked the stump away,
"Gross."

One of the stoner guys angrily mumbled a string of curses at Theo before lighting another one, but Theo pulled Nolan aside.

"Enough of that."

Nolan pouted, "You're no fun!" The whiskey breath stung Theo's nose.

"Yeah? Well you stink."

"Lemme go," Nolan tugged himself from Theo's grip and leaned on the wall watching him with a pensive gaze that made the chimera feel uncomfortable.

"What?" He snapped when he couldn't take the look anymore.

"Where's Liam?"

"How would I know?"

Nolan shrugged, "Not having fun?"

"You and I have different definitions of fun obviously," Theo rolled his eyes.

"Rather be killing someone?" Nolan smirked at him.

"Yep, you rather be hunting our asses?" He shot back.

"Yeesh, lighten up!" Nolan showed his palms in a peaceful gesture.

"Not feeling it, I think I'm gonna go-"

"Ah, there's Liam!" Nolan gestured to the stairs and Theo turned to see the beta talking closely with a cheerleader who had her hand on his belt buckle.

"You would swear I'm not even co-captian! Where's my cheerleader?!"

Theo drowned Nolan out as he watched Liam grip the girl's hand and pull her up the stairs, sliding the other hand to the small of her back as they disappeared from view.

"Theo?" Nolan tapped his shoulder, "you listening to me?"

"No," he growled and headed for the door.

He was stopped halfway when a dark haired girl stumbled into him and spilled a cranberry soda all over the front of his shirt.

"Oh shit! I'm so sorry!"

He began a faint growl in annoyance, "It's fine-"

"No really I-" the girl's doe eyes met his own and his growl died away. It was the pretty cheerleader he'd seen at the game. The one who'd been checking him out. She was dressed in a denim skirt with a leather jacket that hugged her curves just right.

"Theo," he smirked at her when she took too long to continue her sentence.
"Oh, hi! I mean, Sarah. I'm Sarah." She giggled at being tongue tied and shook his hand delicately before surprising him by hugging him, "Nice to meet you!"

"Uh," Theo stiffened and she pulled back, his sticky shirt clung to her front.

"Oh damn, sorry!"

"Like I said it's fine, I was just leaving anyway."

"What?" Her eyes widened, "No come on, why?"

He shrugged, "Not feeling entertained."

"How about we go upstairs and clean this mess," she placed a manicured nail on his chest, "and we'll see what we can do about that?"

She bit her lip and he found himself tracking the movement. The invitation was clear. While he didn't have much experience, he'd be a fool to miss that hint. And she was super hot, he'd be a total idiot to say no. He glanced at the stairs uncertainly and remembered Liam disappearing with his girl a moment ago. It made him feel, what? Irritated?

He felt Sarah slip a hand beneath his shirt and run it around to rest on the small of his back, his body tingled in response and his eyes found hers again. She smiled sweetly as she took him by the hand and led him upstairs. Between walking through the packed hallway and finding a vacant room his mind was buzzing and he found himself unable to think.

Even more so when the door shut behind him and Sarah pressed her body against his, pinning him to the wall as her mouth caught his in a hungry kiss. His heart fluttered and his mind raced for a moment, where should he put his hands? He had no experience with something like this, he'd only ever kissed Tracy and that was as far as he ever went.

His uncertainty disappeared when she rolled her hips against his and he growled softly against her lips. He felt her mouth twist in a smirk as they made their way to the bed, kicking off their shoes as they went. He pushed her down and raked her shirt up over her head, kissing his way from her bellybutton to her breasts, nipping the edges of flesh that vanished beneath her bra. She moaned in reply and pulled his wet and sticky shirt over his head, making his hair stand wildly in all directions. His mouth found a place to suck at the nape of her throat and he felt his wolf shimmer with lust beneath his skin when they started to roll their hips in a steady rhythm, the friction drove him mad. He slipped his hands beneath her skirt and gripped her smooth ass, he felt her hands fumbling with his belt and pulled back to look at her face.

His eyes locked gazes with a pair of piercing green orbs and he felt his breath leave his body. Sarah's eyes had been brown, not green. Her hair had been brown, not black. And that was definately not her face.

Instead he saw a woman slightly older than him maybe, sunkissed and confidently staring up at him from beneath heavy dark lashes.

"Wha- Who-" he stuttered and was cut off when she grabbed the back of his neck harshly, pulling him closer so that the eye contact couldn't be avoided.

Her gaze was wild and calm at the same time. He felt a telltale stinging across his face and his skin prickled, reminding him of being whipped by sand in the wind. He instinctively gripped her throat and bared his fangs at her.
She smirked and seemed unfazed, "Now now Theo, play nice."

He tightened his grip and she did the same, not backing down.

"How do you know my name?" He hissed.

Her smile widened and she leaned up. He felt her lips brush his earlobe as she whispered, "Remember me..."

A sharp sting on his cheek jerked him back to reality and he touched it lightly in shock. Sarah glared at him from where she now sat on the other side of the bed, clathing her shirt to cover her breasts. He could see bruises already froming around her neck and glanced at his own hands, they were still trembling from the effort.

"What the fuck is wrong with you?!" She shrieked at him and stumbled to grab her shoes from the floor.

"Sarah," he held out his hands, "I'm sorry I don't know what came over me!"

"Freak!" She spat at him before leaving the room, still barefoot and shirtless.

He sat on the edge of the bed gasping for breath. His hands were still trembling so he clenched them into tight fists, letting his claws draw blood from his palms in hope that the pain would grant him some clarity.

He tried to focus, shaking his head which felt fuzzy. The loud music, stench of alcohol and hormones made it impossible so he grabbed his shirt and left the room, putting it on in a hurry while pushing drunk teenagers aside and taking the stairs two at a time. He made a bee-line for the front door only to slam into Mason along the way.

Mason swayed from the impact and grabbed Theo's shoulder to steady himself, "Ey Theo! Were you just up there with Sarah, cause she looks pretty pissed!"

"Who?" Theo frowned at him and eyed the door again.

"Sarah?"

"Huh? Yeah, sure." He mumbled and shook his head again. It still felt fuzzy.

"Dude, you okay?"

"Fine," he grumbled and pushed passed Mason and the rest of the bodies obstructing his way to the door.

Liam happily followed Kelly down the stairs and smiled sheepishly when she blew him a kiss and turned to join her friends, currently all clustered together and giggling at Liam. He tried to tune into their whispers but gave up when he couldn't hear passed the loud music. Instead he turned to find Alec being fed jello shots from cheerleaders and Nolan playing beerpong, Corey and Mason were standing close together talking.

Where's Theo?

He scanned the party for the chimera to no avail. Despite his good mood it irked him somewhat, so
he went to Mason and Corey.

"Liaaaaam!" Mason grinned at him, "Man of the hour! Or should I say lucky hour?"

Corey chuckled at his boyfriend's joke, "You get her number?"

"Among other things," he smiled smugly and enjoyed joking with his friends. When the laughter died down he asked Mason, "Have you seen Theo?"

"Yeah! He left already."

"What? He just left without telling me?! He's my ride!"

"Hey, in his defense if I left a girl behind looking like that I'd wanna bolt too!"

"What girl?" Liam frowned at his friend.

Mason pointed to a pretty brunette, "Sarah, she went upstairs with Theo and-"

"Euw! I don't wanna know!" He made a face.

"Don't think it happened though! She came down half dressed and pissed, then he came down looking completely out of it and left."

"Oh," Liam frowned at the information, "I should probably make sure he's okay..."

"Dude!" Mason flicked him on the forehead, "You can't do that! Let the man wallow in it by himself and save him the embarrassment."

"Embarassment?"

"Look, Theo kissed Tracy as we know, but I think he's a virgin."

"No way!"

"Way. I don't think the Dread Doctors gave him much time for teen romance, so virgin plus angry cheerleader after encounter equals... he couldn't get it up! So leave him be and have some fun."

"Couldn't get wha- Oh! Oh yeah! Yeah okay, he'll be fine. Just a major blow to his ego!"

They laughed and resumed their night.
Amunet watched the flickering lights of Beacon Hills from where she stood on a cliff overlooking the sorry little town. How something so simple and small could contain beings of such power was beyond her. She heard twigs snap beneath the weight of another but didn't need to turn to see who it is.

"Hallo Ramses," she spoke without turning. An owl hooted somewhere in the distance and the man walked up to stand next to her.

"Hallo, dear sister," his voice was smooth sounding, matching his elegant appearance. He was dressed in a crisp white button down shirt with a black suit.

"As much as I enjoy being back in the present, I don't particularly feel like bonding."

"Neither do I," he chuckled and shook his head fondly, "Imagine my surprise when my little birdies told me you were topside. How did you manage to do so without my help?"

She smirked smugly. Ramses had always been the more powerful if the two and she'd been relying on him to ressurect her into the present when she needed. Her own magic had dwindled over the centuries and was practically useless to her. Until now.

"Amunet?"

"I made an investment."

"An investment?" He raised a brow at her.

"Yes, besides, this body is much nicer than the one you picked for me last time." She twirled a dark lock of hair between her fingers, "This one's beauty lasts much longer."

"I must say, when your vessel died in St Joan's Church I thought I'd seen the last of you, but you live to surprise, don't you?"

She laughed and scrunched her nose but remained silent otherwise.

"How did you do this?" He eyed her like he was trying to solve the puzzle that she was. Darkness dawned on his face as he realised, "You've managed to upset the Balance."

When her smirk widened he asked, "How? After all these years..."

"My son," she smiled at him.

"How?" He repeated.

"It seems that the Balance got too comfortable and it upset itself," she waved her hand in a small movement, "I summoned the Spawn-"

"No, you used my power to summon the Spawn," he reminded her which made her huff in irritation.

"Yes, yes Ramses. I sent the Spawn here, to him. He suffered an injury. A ... gap in his mind seemed to be all I needed to reach him."

"And yet here you are, so you weren't successful after all. He doesn't remember you."
"He wil," she snapped.

"How?"

"It seems my son sufferes from his own share of nightmares from this lifetime..."

"So you mess with his head? That's so like you."

"He'll remember me, you'll see. It's already working. How else would I be here in the flesh tonight with you, dear brother? By my own magic. After centuries of trying I've managed the impossible. I've defied Fate, I've defied the Balance. I've reached my son despite all those who opposed."

"How was he?"

"Beautiful, young..." she smiled softly, "Fierce!"

"And?"

She frowned, "And different. A lycanthrope of sort it would seem, disgusting!"

"So that's how they managed to hide him from you in this lifetime? By altering his biology."

"It's not the form he was meant to take, the form I made him for..."

"You didn't do it alone, Amunet." Ramses reminded warily.

"I know that!"

"What will you do when He Who Should Not Be Named comes for the boy?"

"We'll be long gone by then, ruling the past and present. Building a new future. An empire."

Ramses snorted, "You live in the past. Look at me, embracing the present has done me nothing but good. But you keep picking at old wounds, and they will fester."

"I take no heed of your warning, this is my right! My destiny. Just like the throne had been!"

"Ah, but don't expect any assistance from me sister. I told you, your previous vessel was the last favour you will receive from me," he warned.

"I don't need you or your favours anymore, brother. I found him. All will change now."

"Indeed. But for better or worse?"

"A matter of perspective..."

"Hmmm... I will take my leave now, Amunet. Or should I ask the Queen's permission?" He mocked.

"Mock all you want," she waved him off.

"Farewell sister..."

"Goodbye Ramses."

Remember me...
Theo woke from his nightmare gasping and in cold sweat, fisting at the sheets on his bed. His heart thudded so loudly he couldn't hear Liam's quiet breathing for the first few moments after waking. He heaved a sigh of relief when the familiar beat reached his ears signalling that the beta was still soundly asleep.

This was getting out of hand. His nightmares had been acting up now more than ever, twisting the images into new scenarios that seemed even more brutal than the original.

He kept this to himself, of course. No need to worry Liam again, especially now. Things had been... awkward to say the least. The two days since the party had been filled with minimal interaction, but Liam carried a happy buzz that Theo only assumed was thanks to having sex with the cheerleader. Not that Theo would know.

He grunted as he pushed himself to his feet. He pulled on a pair of shorts and a random shirt before he grabbed his sneakers, tying them with a rhythm that had come from days of doing the same pattern. Whenever he woke from a nightmare he refused to fall back into another one, so he went running until dawn instead. He left the house quietly and took off at a steady pace, letting the sounds of nature flow around him when he reached the forestline. The air was cool and clear.

He never ran with a destination in mind, just picked a direction and went. Today his feet seemed to lead him to a small white-washed Church building. He halted and watched it, panting. He never was much of a church person. He liked facts. Science. Still, it seemed like he could use a prayer or two now. He shook his head and kept running.

"Mrs Finch is losing it, really. She can't ask a pop quiz and let us write on all of... this!" Liam gestured helplessly at the mass of papers on his bed wildly and stuck a pencil behind his ear.

"No one forced you to take AP Bio Liam," Mason reminded and took a paper from his own much more neatly organized binder.

"You're supposed to back me!"

"Whatever, why don't you ask your housemate for help instead of bothering me on a Sunday?"

Liam shrugged and tore the corner of his page absentmindedly, "He's out..."

"Out?" Mason raised his eyebrow.

"Yeah, he goes out running. Doesn't come back until late on weekends..." Liam mumbled.

"Oh, okay." Mason nodded.

"Anyway, can we get back to this instead?" Liam motioned to his papers.

"Why does Theo running upset you?"

"It doesn't!" He replied hurriedly.

"Yes it does."

"Its not the running... he's just distant..."

"Distant how?"
"I dunno! Distant," Liam groaned and fell onto his back, settling himself among his papers, "I wonder if being dead for a few months makes it harder to sleep..."

"What?"

"Theo," Liam supplied, "He has nightmares, pretty bad ones."

"Do you know what they're about?"

"Yeah, he told me once. That's why he goes running. It's like his new coping mechanism or something..."

"Opposed to murder?" Mason joked and was rewarded with a small smile.

"They're worse since he woke up from his coma, but Deaton says he's fine and he's shutting me out so I have no choice but to let it go..."

"Hmmmm..." Mason hummed at the mention of the vet, still unsure if he had told them everything.

"Anyway," Liam sighed loudly, "What the fuck is mitosis?"

Theo filled his Science questionare quickly, pencil filling the small circles with lead. Around him students bit at their nails and scratched their heads in frustration, but the answers came easily to him. He confidently put his pencil aside and rested his head on his arms.

He felt the tendrils of sleep tug at his mind, pulling him down, down, down.

He lifted his head with a start and found the classroom empty.

Theoooo...

Theoooooo...

He swallowed thickly when he recognised Tara's voice echoeing in the hallway. He heard her scrape her nails on the lockers, peeling paint and steel as she came closer.

"Theo Raeken," a voice sounded from the front of the classroom and pulled his attention to a figure that definitely wasn't there before.

The Pathologist lifted chalk and wrote on the board, "Failure." He read aloud when he was done, dropping the chalk to the floor.

"No," Theo muttered, "No I'm not!"

"Failure."

"No!"

He jerked awake in his desk, heels digging into the floor as if to stop him from falling. The classroom was full of confused teens again, the teacher in front flipping through a magazine. He willed his heart to slow down.

He glanced at his answer sheet and frowned. He'd coloured all of the questions outside the circles, creating little dots splattered across the page at random. He was still puzzling over it when the teacher grasped it from beneath his gaze and the bell rang.
He gathered his things and moved to the door only to be stopped by the teacher instead, "Mr Raeken, a word."

He didn't bother disguising his morbid sigh and waited impatiently, shifting his weight from foot to foot.

"Mr Raeken, your absence from last year made you have to repeat, but you only need a few marks for Science to pass the class. I would like to propose doing your final practical assignment after class hours, the credit should be enough to allow you to drop the class."

"Oh, yeah. Yeah I'd like that," he added quickly. If he could get at least one subject off his back it would help.

"Fine, I'll see you Wednesday afternoon in the lab."

"Thanks," he said honestly and left for his next class. He was already late again.

Later that afternoon Theo arrived at the Dunbar household alone, Liam was at practise today and he didn't feel like watching today.

"Hallo Theo!" Jenna greeted him warmly from the kitchen while stirring something in a pot.

"Hi, Mrs Geyer." He set his bag down and grabbed a carton of orange juice from the fridge.

"How was school?"

"Eh," he poured a glass and sipped it, leaning his hip against the kitchen counter, "Need any help?"

"No, that's alright!" She smiled fondly at him and patted a chair close to her, "Company would be nice, though."

He sat wordlessly and watched her stir.

"You hungry?"

"Not really, what are we having?"

"Pasta," she added spice," You want to wait for dinner time?"

"Yeah I'll wait for Liam, he'll probably wolf all this down within seconds though!"

She laughed and accidentally knocked the spice bottle over, sending a few flakes to the floor along with her wedding ring that had been resting on the counter. Theo picked it up for her and examined it for a moment. Three diamonds adorned a thin gold band, the one in the middle slightly larger.

"This is nice," he mumbled a bit unsure of what to say.

"Thank you, the story behind it is much nicer," she said warmly as he placed the ring back on the counter.

"What story?"

"David had such a nice speech when he asked me to marry him. So prepared," she laughed at the memory, "He said that the ring represents our lives. Seperately and together. One of the smaller diamonds represents our past, the one we accepted about each other. The other smaller one is our
present. Our time together now."

"The big one?"

"Future. The one we'll build together. It's the largest because the best is yet to come."

"That's..."

"Nice?" She chuckled at him and winked.

Later that night he stared at his ceiling and thought about the ring and its meaning.

Past.

Present.

Future.

That's life. Three words to summarise it all.


Present. Living with Liam, being better.

Future?

What would he do after school? What would he do tomorrow? Or next week, next month... was the best yet to come for him as well?
Blue Flame

Yatsi meowed and rubbed his body along the leg of Deaton's visitor, purring loudly.
"Can't deny the irony," he mused as he watched the vet clear his table, putting papers in messy stacks.
"You'll have to excuse Yatsi, he can get friendly with strangers..." Deaton said without looking away from his task.

Deucalion glanced down at the cat again and shook his leg, trying to dislodge it to no avail. He frowned at the cat hair that clung to the fabric of his pants.
"Dr Deaton, why am I here?"
"Right," Deaton mumbled, "I asked you here."
"I'm well aware, the question remains, why?"
The vet sighed and motioned to an empty chair, "Have a seat."
"I'd rather not."
"You might need to after you hear what I have to say..."
"Well the day isn't getting any younger now, is it?"
"No, I suppose not. I called you here today because I need your opinion."
"My opinion?" He enquired, "I came all this way to give my opinion?"
"Yes."
"Why not ask one of McCall's pack members?"
"Quite frankly I need someone with a bit more... expertise..."
"Fine, what is it?"
"Have you heard the tale of the Banük?"
At this Daucalion laughed openly only to be met with Deaton's serious gaze.
"Are you serious?"
"Dreadfully so I am afraid."
"It's just a story. A speculation. Legends jumbled up and tangled together, nothing more."
"What if there is some truth to it?"
"Why are you chasing geese, Dr Deaton?"
"I'd hope for it to be a wild goosechase, but I fear otherwise. Tell me what you know about the tale, please."
He sighed, "There are many different versions. I know the basic plot, of Nephilim and Fallen Angels, Egyptian Queen's and blood magic. Is that the tale you are referring to? Quite grand I must add..."

"Quite grand indeed..."

"What brings this to light?"

"Young Theo Raeken recently awoke from his coma, I have reason to believe there might be something more sinister at work. The Spawn is an ancient disease from Egyptian timelines, yet here it surfaces in modern day time and comes straight for Beacon Hills. Strange no?"

"It could've come for the Nemeton."

Deaton's lip twitched into a small smile, "You know that isn't the case. The Spawn existed long before Nemetons and druids."

"Did it? Like I said, tall tales and nothing more."

"Take a look at this," the vet pushed a book to him.

He sighed at the symbols that adorned the pages, "Where did these come from?"

"Mr Raeken drew them."

"I see."

"There's more," Deaton motioned him to a microscope that had three samples of blood and let him compare them.

"This is the worst week ever..." Liam complained as he took his place at their table for lunch.

"It's Tuesday," Nolan pointed out while chewing a mouthful of his sandwich.

"Yeah, 10:30 in the morning," Corey added.

"Gee thanks guys," Liam rolled his eyes while his friends all chuckled.

"I have to agree though," Mason supplied and sipped his water, "I have to do major cramming for a Trig test on Thursday and I've got a paper due on Friday - no idea what I'm gonna write!"

"And a poem for English!" Corey finished and everyone at the table groaned, except for Alec who didn't have class with them. He just sat there happily eating his pudding cup, he'd gotten three today.

"Why do we need to write a poem? When are we ever gonna need to write a poem in real life?!" Liam ranted.

"To seduce a girl?" Alec wiggled his eyebrows.

"Why do you only ever think about girls?" Mason flicked Alec with a grape.

"Why do you only ever think about guys?" Alec shot back.

"Why are you always such a smart mouth? You're the youngest!" Nolan shoved Alec's shoulder
"Can't be that hard. Let's see - Oh Mason, do thou know mine heart art with thee?" Corey tried in a mocking voice.

"Oh, Corey, thou art naught but a soul for mine to greet," Mason impressively finished.

"You're such a showoff! Lemme try" Liam frowned and Theo chuckled.

"This might take a while," Theo said to the rest at the table who laughed and Liam's frown just deepened.

"Theodore thou art such a dick," he grumbled.

"Is that all?" Theo smirked at Liam's angry expression.

"Yeah! That's all! I suck in english ..."

"Oh Liam, thou art in such peril this week, but naught for it was only Tuesday," Nolan laughed at how bad it sounded.

"Theo? Wanna give it a go?"

"No way, I'm not a loser, right Alec?" Theo asked his friend who was already eating his third pudding cup.

"Na-uh!" Alec mumbled with his mouth full of pudding.

"Can't we like have a major study night? My folks aren't home tonight?" Liam asked hopefully. All people confirmed except Alec who wouldn't know what they're talking about anyway.

Preparing for major study night apparently meant Theo driving Liam to the store to pick up snacks. Theo leaned lazily on the trolley as he pushed it while Liam just chucked item into it. Chips, soda, more chips, oreos, more soda.

"Liam? You get that this isn't brainfood right?"

"It's my brain's food!" Liam happily argued and tossed a few highlighters and coloured pens into the trolley.

Theo just rolled his eyes and chose healthier things for himself.

When they got home Liam ordered pizza for delivery and Theo ordered sushi. Liam set out the snacks in the living room where this extreme studying would be happening.

Moments later the gang arrived and each delved deep into studying or finishing their assignments.

Theo stared at his laptop screen. Theo Raeken write a poem? Ha! What a joke. What would he write about? If he had any say in the matter he'd have written about how dumb poems were, but the teacher had made it clear that the poem was supposed to be from the heart and it amounted at least 20% of their final grade, so he had to do well.

Nothing.
Great.

He closed his laptop with a sigh. He didn't have other things to study so he excused himself and went upstairs. He surveyed the space. His walls were free of posters and photos, save for the periodic table above his desk. He didn't need it since he knew it by heart anyway, but it made the room feel more personal. He sighed and sat on his bed. He heard chips crunching as the teens downstairs ate.

He sat by his desk and pulled out a paper. He intended to try writing the poem again but a few moments later he was drawing. Just letting his hand guide him and without thought. He finished a sketch and took another paper and began again, and again, and again...

His alarm clock was the only indication he had that it was morning already. Well shit, he'd spent the entire night drawing?!

He placed his drawings into a book, not really looking at them and went to take a shower. He could tell the others had left already and Liam was cursing at his alarm like usual.

Theo decided on a cold shower that day to wake him up, and it was actually nice. Usually he likes super warm showers, but this was nice today. He didn't think much of it and dressed instead. A pair of ripped black jeans, his converse and a white Polo T-shirt and he was good to go.

As the boys drove to school listening to some music Theo told Liam, "Hey, can you ask Mason to give you a ride after school? I have to stay behind and do my science project."

"Oh yeah sure, he won't mind.

The schoolday passed by sluggishly and to have to stay behind when everyone went home sucked. But he knew it was worth it.

The lab was empty save for his teacher who quickly explained his task and left in a hurry, clearly not to keen on spending extra time at school either.

Theo picked a spot and lit his Bunsen Burner. He quickly weighed powders and added them to a mixture of acid. He twirled it around and shook it a bit before making up the volume with water. He poured his mixture into a flask that was left to simmer above the flame. He had to leave it like that for half an hour so he set his stopwatch.

Waiting was boring as fuck.

So he tried to keep himself busy. He wandered around the lab and easily identified all the instruments used. He'd been doing science with the Dread Doctors all the time. This was just wasting his time.

He lit another burner and stared into the flame. It was bright orange with blue fire in the middle. Theo knew blue was warmer than orange. He turned the heat up so that the entire flame was blue. It was breathtakingly beautiful. Dancing seductively, begging to be touched. It looked so pretty, but was so dangerous. Pretty things usually are. It was 1500 degrees Celsius.

*Remember me...*

He reached without thinking and put his hand into the flame. He closed his eyes and waited for the pain.
It never came.

He opened his eyes and removed his hand from the fire to examine it. It was completely fine. Unburnt.

What the hell?

His alarm sounded and he got back to his project, trying to push what had just happened to the back of his mind.
Radio Silence


Liam pulled at his hair in frustration. He had no idea what to write - and he could write about anything really. The teacher expected something close to his heart. He had a lot of that, he was lucky. He had a pack, friends, lacrosse, a family. But he had to write in "Shakespearian" as he called it. Not use common words.

But Liam was never really good with words. He'd ask Theo for help but he could smell his frustration all the way to his bedroom. He heard small curses uttered and keys clicked as the chimera typed and deleted over and over again.

Theo doesn't have much, what will he write about?

---

Entreat me not to leave thee, Or return from following after thee -

For whither thou goest, I will go, And where thou lodgest, I will lodge.

Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God.

Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried

The Angel do so to me, and more also,

If aught but death part thee and

me.

Theo stared at his laptop screen with surprise. He'd just ended up typing the words. He hadn't even put any thought to it. They felt familiar, like he'd read them before. Kinda like remembering the lyrics to a song you hadn't listened to in ages. Like he'd spoken them before. But he hadn't, had he?

The words made him feel strangely alone and sad, like he'd suffered some great loss of a friend he didn't even know. He printed the page and folded it into his notebook with the drawings he'd made, hiding them as if they were precious.

He couldn't give this poem to the teacher in English. It felt personal and private somehow. He could just imagine the look on her face, the words made no sense and yet they held so much meaning. Meaning to what Theo didn't know.

Instead he opted writing a sad poem about Tara's death. This poem made him feel no emotion but he knew he'd get good grades on it. He finished his poem that had to be handed in tomorrow morning and put on running clothes.

He knocked softly at Liam's door, smelling his frustration and chuckled at him.

Liam looked up, hair messy and eyes desperate, "I'm not a poet!"

Theo grinned, "No, you're not."
"Help me!"

Theo laughed and shook his head fondly, "I can't Liam, it has to be your feelings."

Liam just groaned, "I'm bad at words!"

"I'm bad at feelings, so don't ask for help from me," Theo grinned.

Liam groaned helplessly before frowning at Theo's attire, "Are you going running?"

"Yeah, kinda what people do when they're dressed in running clothes, Liam."

"Asshole."

"Bye, Dumbar!"

He dodged the pillow that was flung against the door and left.

He ran with a destination in mind today, and he felt his spine shiver when he reached it.

The Dread Doctors' lab.

"Welcome home, Theo..." he muttered bitterly.

Truth be told, this is the last place he wanted to be. But if he had a chance at figuring out his present and building a better future he first had to confront his past.

Most of the research had been destroyed or taken by Deaton, but Theo knew his own file was still here somewhere because it wasn't at Deaton's. He just didn't know where. He glanced at the three masks that laid on a research table. He'd taken them from the Dread Doctors' bodies after they died, had hid them. He didn't know why, they gave him the creeps. But it was the only thing he'd had at the time, maybe he'd kept them as trophies, as memories?

He went through the leftover things and found nothing of value. Where did they put it? He found a video recorder and snorted. He wondered if it even worked. He checked to see that it had batteries and pressed the power button with little hope, but the screen flared to life surprising him.

He went through a few video's. Most were about experiments so he deleted those and sat on a nearby chair. He toyed with the camera and got an idea, albeit a stupid one and he would die of embarrassment if Liam saw him now. He positioned the camera toward him on the table and pressed record.

He cleared his throat uncomfortably before starting.

"My name is Theo Raeken... And this is stupid. But what the heck right? Nobody will ever see this video anyway. So. I'm a Chimera, a hybrid between a wolf and a coyote. A science experiment of the Dread Doctors. The First Chimera.

They made me what I am, and how they wanted me to be. A killer. I've murdered people, but I paid for it in Hell. When I came back I felt different. Like I was born anew but with guilt over what I had done. I try to do better, to be better.

It's kinda hard. I don't always understand behavior other consider normal. And I have nightmares. About Tara my sister, I let her die when I was a little boy so that I can steal her heart.
Anyway, that's now why I'm making a video. I'm... I had an accident, and I could've lost my memory. But I didn't. I'm okay, but something's different. I feel like somethings missing. Like when you walk into a room and forgot why you went there in the first place. Like the answer is just beneath the surface waiting to be uncovered but... I don't see it.

I'm still... afraid of forgetting I suppose, that's why I'm making these tapes to keep track of the strange things that's been happening to me. Well, more strange than usual."

He talked about his nightmares acting up, about the party and seeing someone who wasn't Sarah. About the poem he wrote. About not burning when he touched the flame and about seeing Tara in the waking world.

"Well done class, you all had... interesting poems. One stood out however," the teachers eyes found Liam and he sank deeper into his seat.

"Mr Dunbar?"

"Yes?" He grimanced.

"Why don't you read us your poem?"

"I'd rather not." Liam gripped his desk and prayed for his claws to stay at bay.

"Fine, I'll read it then," the teacher cleared her throat and Liam groaned.

This can't be happening.

"Roses are red," she began to read, " My name is not Dave. This poem makes no sense. Microwave."

The class laughed and Liam guess he should've expected that reaction. He was so pissed he just settled on writing that to piss his teacher off. Clearly it backfired.

Theo went home earlier again on Friday. Alone again. Coach had the Lacrosse team running laps for Saturday's game so Liam won't be in until late.

He settled at his desk and started his homework. He finished around 9pm when Liam came into the house on wobbly legs.

They ate dinner together in silence and went to their separate rooms after saying goodnight. He heard Liam snore the moment his head hit the pillow and smiled. He's lucky to have healing powers otherwise he'd be pretty stiff tomorrow!

Theo packed his books away and rearranged his desk to be neater. A stray paper fell to the floor and he frowned before picking it up. It was a drawing he'd made.

He removed the rest of the drawings from the pile and spread them over his bed to inspect them. He was never much of an artist, so they were a shock to him. Because they were good. Really good. Just... confusing.

One page had a wing drawn in great detail down to every feather, another was of a scared torso covered in tattoos, another was of a hand, every fingerprint visible and bloody from the cut on the palm, another was just fire, licking the air. The next were a pair of eyes that looked like cat eyes, a
indigo blue.

There were many more. Sketches of weapons, people he didn't know, there were drawings of the Dread Doctors. There was one of a heart in a hand that only he would know was Tara's.

Then there was one of a woman standing on a dune in a desert. A charl covered most of her face to protect it from the sun but her eyes were recognisable. They were the eyes of the woman he'd hallucinated at the party.

*Remember me...*

He swallowed and gathered the drawings before putting them in a separate folder and sliding it underneath his bed.

He went to the bathroom and splashed cold water on his face, taking deep breaths. He opened his eyes and saw a reflection behind him in the mirror of the same woman, but when he turned she was gone.
Deucalion watched Deaton compare blood samples again and rolled his eyes. Three samples individually marked - werewolf, werecoyote and T.R. Theo was a hybrid created by the Dread Doctors to have both sets of DNA, but the bloodwork showed a little more than just the expected werewolf and werecoyote counterparts.

"They don't match, no matter how many times you check."

"I can't find any match for the other DNA sets. This couldn't have been a result of the Dread Doctors tampering," Deaton confidently stated as he zoomed the microscope once more.

"How many different sets are there?"

Deaton merely shook his head. It was impossible to tell.

Theo's chest heaved as he gripped the sink in a white knuckled grip, leaning close to the mirror. Both Mr and Mrs Geyer were at work and Liam was at lacrosse. It was now or never.

"Where are you?" He hissed at his reflection.

"I know you're there, I know you want me to remember and I know you're fucking with my head so knock it off!"

Tanned arms snaked across his torso in the reflection of the mirror and he could imagine feeling them in real life. The dark haired woman had golden jewels on her arms and her dark hair spilled over his shoulder when she rested her chin there.

"Remember me," she whispered in his ear.

"I'm trying!" He he snarled at the ominous reflection.

"Remember me!" her mouth twisted in a sinister scowl and she raked her fingers through his hair before yanking at the strands, pulling his head back with force.

He thrashed in her grip, it felt so real, and snapped his jaws at her throat only to meet thin air as she disappeared once more.

He stood there panting and still growling softly from shock. She was gone. Just like that. She'd never been here, it was all in his head and yet it had felt to real. His scalp was still stinging from where she'd pulled his hair and he rubbed at it absentmindedly and watched a few loose strands fall to the tiled floor, broken from the abuse.

So it had been real?

The sun.

The moon.

The truth.
A loud whistle interrupted his mantra and Liam's nostrils flared at Coach from where the man stood on the side of the field with his hands on his hips.

"Dumb-bar! What the hell are you just standing around for?!" The older man barked at him, making Liam clench his fists.

He heard a snicker come from one of the guys on the opposite team. They were only practicing but Coach had had the brilliant idea to collaborate with teams from other schools for practice matches. It was infuriating.

He glared at the smug looking guy and twisted his stick in his hands.

"Liam, calm down man," Nolan whispered at him from where he stood in his position, knowing the wolf would hear him.

Calm down?

Easier said than done, but Liam breathed deeply through his nose and readied himself for the whistle.

When the loud ringing cut through the air the ball flew through the air in a wide arch and he easily caught it before he took off running, spiked sending grass and dirt spraying behind him. Footsteps thundered behind him as the other team's players pursued him, but he was too fast. He was going to make it. He tightened his grip on his stick as he readied himself to deliver the shot into the net. The ball tore through the air- and hit the helmet of another player who got in the way with a loud crack.

The boy fell to the ground harshly and both teams made pained sounds of sympathy before Coach blew the whistle again.

"Damn it Dunbar!"

Everyone gathered around the downed player who tore his helmet from his head and sat there dazed but otherwise okay.

"It's not my fault! He jumped right in front of the damn ball!" He yelled helplessly.

"Can it Dunbar! Hey, get up!"

The dazed boy rose to his feet with the help of his friends and swayed a bit unsteadily.

"That's a wrap up! Go home you barbarians!"
He growled angrily to himself and threw his stick down as he ripped his gloves from his hands and stalked to the lockerroom. Once inside he shoved his sweaty gear into his locker and tugged his shirt over his head. He felt hot. Heat was creeping up his spine and into his neck.

"Hey, you okay?" Corey asked worriedly.

"M'fine."

"It wasn't your fault Liam."

"I know that!" He snapped and watched his friend recoil, "Sorry..." he muttered and searched his bag for a clean T-Shirt, not bothering to shower. He wanted to get out of here as quickly as possible.

"It's fine," Corey tried to soothe him, "Do you want a -"

Liam left without saying goodbye and walked to the parking lot, still steaming from the ears and dressed in his lacrosse spikes. He saw Theo's truck parked there and sprinted for the door. Once settled in the passenger seat he took a few deep breaths before facing Theo and his damn smirk and raised eyebrow.

"Hey," Liam muttered.

"Hey," Theo tips his head to the side, "Sooo, want to talk about it?"

"No, just drive."

Theo complied and reversed out of his parking spot and started down the street.

"I don't wanna go home just yet," the beta muttered.

"Okay, where do you want to go?"

Theo huffed in annoyance when Liam only shrugged and kept staring out of the window. So he drove to the destination he had in mind while both boys remained silent. It wasn't an uncomfortable silence and Theo used the time to evaluate Liam's scent - anger, frustration, salty sweat and underneath it all the musty scent of Liam.

He pulled to a stop at the edge of the woods and Liam frowned at him. Theo only smirked at him and slapped his thigh, earning a yelp.

"C'mon Baby Alpha!"

Theo was put of the car already, but he still heard Liam's muffled grumbles from inside the car before he finally got out as well.

"What are you doing?" He eyed Theo sceptically as Theo pulled off his shirt and kicked off his shoes. When he got to his pants Liam started to flush so he turned around quickly, hoping Theo didn't notice and asked through clenched teeth, "WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!"

"WE are going running," Theo answered as he dug around a bag at the back of his seat.

"NAKED?!" Liam asked in disbelief but still with his back to Theo.

"No dumbass, I'm changing into running gear."

"Since when do you keep running gear in your truck?" He asked with a frown as he turned around.
"Since I've got annoying Baby Wolves with anger issues to look after, drives me insane, so gotta be prepared!" He winked at Liam.

Theo already dressed in his running shorts. Theo tossed a similar pair into his face, causing Liam to groan before his muffled complaint still behind the pair of shorts reached Theo's ears.

"What was that, Little Wolf?" He teased as he tied the laces on his running shoes.

Liam yanked the pair from his face and glared at the Chimera, "Don't call me that! And I don't want to go running!"

"Stop complaining." Theo rolled his eyes, "This is what I do when I want to clear my head, and it usually works. Since you clearly need some air in that head of yours..."

"Fine!" Liam grumbled small curse words while getting dressed into the shorts as well, hoping Theo was keeping his eyes to himself.

He wasn't.

"Nice undies," Theo remarked and Liam groaned in embarrassment as he yanked the short up to cover his Spiderman briefs.

"Shut up!"

"No, really! They had me weak in the knees for a second," Theo mocked him further so Liam picked up his sweaty Lacrosse pants and chucked them at him, earning him a yelp as Theo dodged.

Luckily he still has his own spikes, Theo's feet are huge.

He eyed Theo who was still shirtless with a pointed look to which the chimera just shrugged, "It's warm out."

Liam rolled his eyes and threw his own shirt aside. Two can play at this game.

"Ready?" Theo asked him, slightly amused and a bit excited.

"Whatever," Liam started to jog but halted when he heard Theo laughing, "What now?!"

"You don't run like that," Theo came up to him and shook his head.

"Oh so there are right ways to run and wrong ways to run now? You jog back to the house!"

"Yes, because I'm afraid humans might see me, Dumbass."

"Then enlighten me!" Liam glared at Theo who flashed his eyes at Liam in return. Liam felt his wolf rumbling in his chest and soon his own eyes glowed. The wolf pawed in his chest, begging to be set free.

Theo smirked at this and softly whispered, "Run."

So Liam ran with the full speed of his wolf, legs stretching over leaves, wolf eyes showing him each obstacle in his way. He felt the fire in his veins - not from anger but from pure pleasure. He felt leaves and twigs scratch his face but paid them no mind, they'd be healed within seconds. He felt pure primal happiness, running like this with Theo, his worried suddenly scattered to the wind as the muscles in his legs stretched and burned from effort.
He heard Theo's own feet and breaths catching up to him so he pressed harder until his lungs felt like they might explode, the familiar joy of competition taking control. He burst into a clearing and was about to feel triumphant when he felt Theo's arms circle around his waist and tackle him to the ground.

The little breath he had left was knocked out of him as he gave a small yelp of surprise and they rolled a few times before coming to a stop. Theo pinned Liam's arms above his head with a grin, "Got you."

As his chest heaved for oxygen it was equally robbed from him as he marveled at Theo. He looked so alive, eyes shining with mischief and delight. He could smell the salt of his own sweat mixing with Theo's in the fresh cool air. He heard small bugs digging around in the dirt below him and Theo's thundering heartbeat. Or was that his? He couldn't be sure.

A moment later Theo rolled off him and Liam was grateful as he settled beside him instead. Maybe now he could find it in him to actually breathe. Liam gulped huge breaths of air while Theo barely seemed winded.

"What the-" Liam gasped for more air, "How did you-" gasp "catch up so damn-" gasp "fast?!!"

Theo just chuckled at him and they laid there with their backs on the damp grass, staring at the sky and the fluffy puffs of clouds that covered the sun, slightly darkened with the promise of rain. He licked his lips which were chapped from the wind and tasted salt.

"I'm serious," Liam tried again after getting his breath back, "I had a head start, how did you catch me?"

"I don't know," Theo huffed, "maybe it's the coyote in me that's a bit faster?"

"Maybe..." it made sense.

"Stop being such a sore loser," Theo teased lightheartedly and slapped Liam playfully on his shoulder.

"I'm not!" Liam rolled his eyes and slapped Theo in return.

"Are too," Theo proclaimed with another slap.

"I didn't even lose!" Liam exclaimed with a returning slap.

"Yeah you did," the older boy said matter of factly with another slap.

"I reached the clearing first!" Liam slapped him again.

"So?" Theo asked petulantly before slapping again, this time on Liam's head.

"So I win!" Liam growled softly and slapped Theo's head too.

"No you don't I caught you!"

Slap.

"Yeah, cause you cheated!"

Slap.
"Oh did I now?"

The slapping turned into full blown wrestling as they play-fought on the ground, grass staining their shorts and dirt getting in their hair. It ended with Liam on top pinning Theo down this time. The beta smiled victoriously down at Theo, "Got you," he threw the chimera's earlier words back at him smugly.

Theo huffed and rolled his eyes, but couldn't hide the small smile tugging at his lips.

"Yeah, yeah! Get off me!" He grumbled playfully.

Liam rolled off with a laugh, "Now who is a sore loser?"

"Still you."

Liam slapped him again, "Asshole!"

Theo returned the slap, "Loser!"

They glared at one another before they started to chuckle, which turned into giggling like school girls and then full blown laughter, echoing loudly through the trees and meadow grass.

It died down gradually and they just laid there, breathing the nature air and each other's scent, drawing comfort from their closeness.

"I almost lost it today..." Liam whispered softly, as if he was afraid to disturb the peaceful air around them.

Theo's heartbeat picked up a notch and he reached for Liam's wrist, gently circling it with his hand as he waited for the beta to continue.

"I don't know why. I wasn't provoked or anything... I just feel a bit down ya know? I thought I'd gotten a grip on my anger with you as my anchor. I thought I'd beat it."

Theo traced small patterns into Liam's wrist with his thumb, "It's a part of who you are Liam, you can't beat what's a part of you."

"I know..." Liam sighed heavily.

"I'm sorry," Theo said softly.

"Why are you sorry?"

"I dunno. For not being a better anchor I guess. I've been... distant. And it's affecting you."

"Oh. I noticed the distant part."

"Yeah?"

"Yeah."

More silence.

"Why though?"

Theo sighed, not ready to have this conversation.
"Did I do something wrong?"

"No Liam, it's not that, really. I just... I'm just processing. I have a lot of shit to deal with, Liam."

Liam knows that all too well. He remembers his time in Theo's head, those terrible memories...

"You don't have to deal with it alone..."

"I know, but I thing I want to. I need to, I dunno, file through things? I feel... I haven't..." he frowned as he struggled to find a way to explain himself.

"Have you... remembered anything from when you were... you know?"

"No," Theo answered truthfully.

"Okay..."

"C'mon," Theo rose to his feet, effectively ending the moment. He held out a hand for Liam which the beta took with a raised eyebrow.

"I'll race you back," Theo smiled playfully before taking off again, leaving Liam stunned for a moment before he followed.

"Cheater!"

Later that night Theo rolled around in bed restlessly, his thoughts too jumbled and loud for him to fall asleep. He focused his senses and could hear the sounds in the Geyer household crystal clear in the silence of the night. David's light snoring and Jenna's heavy breathing, the air conditioning in the livingroom, Liam's soft breaths puffing and sheets rustling as he moved around in his sleep, the ticking of various clocks in the house.

If what happened today with Liam at the lacrosse field was any indication, Theo's instability was affecting the beta negatively. Understandably so, he guessed. He was Liam's anchor after all. But how was he supposed to keep Liam from spiralling when he barely felt like his feet were solidly on the ground?

Liam deserved better. He deserved a better anchor, a better friend... he didn't deserve someone like Theo. Especially not now, not after all the beta had been through, trying to cope as stand in Alpha for Scott, being co-captian of his team, keeping his grades up, keeping Beacon Hills safe, working for a future after highschool...

If he were to find out about the horrors creeping at the edges of Theo's vision, he'd lose it and go mad with worry and Theo had caused Liam enough worry as it is. He'd lose it even more if he knew Theo kept it from him though, this was something Theo knew all too well. Because for some unexplainable reason Liam cared about him. And he cared about Liam.

_I can't tell him._

He rolled out of bed with a deep sigh and padded to Liam's room without giving it much thought. He entered silently and smiled a bit at how Liam was sprawled out on the bed with his hair messy, arm flung above his head and legs spread wide. He shut the door behind him and moved to the bed before he climbed in, gently nudging Liam to make room for himself.

The beta moaned softly and blinked blearily at Theo from half-mast sleepy eyes. He rubbed sleep
from those blue orbs and blinked at Theo again as the chimera gently laid his head beside his on the pillow, as if he thought he'd dreamt it.

"Hey," Liam murmured softly as he locked eyes with Theo.

"Hey," the chimera answered softly.

"You 'kay?"

"Mm-hmmm," Theo hummed an affirmation and shifted closer, seeking the comfort and warmth.

"Okay," Liam mumbled already half asleep again.

Theo pressed his body tightly against Liam's and lay there, side by side with the beta and listened to his breaths even out as he fell asleep once more.

*I won't tell him.*
The telltale crash of Liam throwing his latest alarm at a wall woke Theo. He lay on his back for a while and stared at the ceiling as he listened to Liam's explosive footsteps walking up and down the hallway, slamming doors as he went. He heard Jenna scolding him for doing so and David kissing his wife's cheek as he left for work. He heard the croak of rusty pipes in the ceiling above him as Liam turned on the water to shower. He heard birds chirping in the tree outside his window.

He closed his eyes and strained his ears, trying to tell exactly how far he could hear. The neighbours going about their morning routine. A car being hooting and an angry driver shouting. A skidding sound on gravel, a bike?

Farther, a nibbling sound. A rodent scuttering up a tree. Three streets down someone was doing a morning run, sucking puffing breaths. Church bell's tolling...

A loud curse snapped him back to where he was followed by Liam's angry yell, "Mom! Something's wrong with the pipes again the water is scalding!"

Theo smiled softly and tried to listen again, but this time his senses didn't go beyond their normal reach. His head felt clear though. For the first time in... months? He'd slept through the night and woken up buzzing. He felt good.

He stretched his muscles, the normal tightness in his neck just a tad looser today, but he's thankful for the small mercy. He rummaged through his bedroom drawers and chose clothes before heading to the bathroom himself.

The steam carried the mixed scents of the small room up his nose as he undressed. He could smell the bleach Jenna used to clean the bathroom, tangy scent of sweaty clothes, the toothpaste that had smeared on the bathroom sink, the chloride in the water that dripped from the tap, Liam's shampoo...

He turned the shower on and eyed the violent spray of overly heated water Liam had complained about before stepping under it.

He didn't burn.

"What's with you?"

Theo raised a brow in Liam's direction from where the beta sat in the passenger seat eyeballing him as he drove them to school.

"What's with your face?"

Liam's stare turned into a glare and Theo chuckled, "I'm serious! Why are you so...? I dunno weird?"

"Let's see, I'm in an enclosed space with you for starters-"

Liam smacked his arm causing the truck to swerve slightly and Theo replied by slapping the side of his face, leaving Liam's ear red.

"Stop being such an asshole!"
"Stop being annoying!"

Their glares broke into small smiles before they both started laughing. Theo wasn't sure what they were laughing about, he didn't care. They settled into a comfortable silence after that.

"I feel relaxed I guess?"

Liam was silent for a while before answering.

"Good, me too..."

The day continued with Theo's elevated mood lasting until he had the class he absolutely despised. History.

He was already annoyed by the time he took his usual seat next to Liam. He gnawed his teeth until his jaw ached a bit and only stopped when Liam gave him a weird look.

"What?" He bit out.

"Nothing," Liam said defensively and tried to divert Theo's attention, "did you do any of the reading for class?"

"Do I ever do the reading?"

Liam chuckled, "Good point. If I were you I'd have done it though."

Theo raised a brow, "And why is that?"

"We have Mrs Harvey as our sub today," Liam grinned at the look of horror on Theo's face. "You're kidding! She hates me!"

"She does not you're overreacting."

"She only ever picks me to answer stuff and I don't know anything! Which, by the way, she knows, yet she keeps asking me anyway!"

Liam laughed softly, "Which is why you should do the reading!"

"Why do I need to know this stuff if it happened already?"

Liam opened his mouth for a snarky reply but didn't get the chance. Theo grumbled something under his breath as Mrs Harvey entered the classroom. Her eyes scanned the room until they found him and she smirked devilishly, causing Theo to sink into his seat with a groan.

"Good day, I regret to inform you that your teacher is ill with the flu and that I will be filling in today. Please turn to page 432 in your books and we can continue to discuss last night's reading."

Theo glumly dug around his bag for his History textbook only to find it missing. Weird. He never did his reading or homework for this class, the book is always in his bag. Had he taken it out?

He missed the nervous look Liam shot at him as he just closed his bag with a sigh and sank even lower into his chair, awaiting impending doom.

"Mr Raeken."
"Of course.

"...would you please read the passage about Adolf Hitler's invasion on Poland?"

Theo grumbled something at her which made her frown and cross her arms, "Excuse me Mr. Raeken?"

"I don't have my book here today," he repeated.

"Ah, I see. Well they say soldiers can't forget their weapons at home during the war, don't they?"

When he just stayed silent she narrowed her eyes, and walked toward his desk like she was stalking prey.

"Nevermind the book, you should remember the facts from last night's reading anyway. You did do the reading, didn't you?"

Theo sighed in defeat, "No."

"I see. Well, maybe we should make an example out of you to show the class exactly why reading is so important."

_Bitch._

"Let's start off easy, what date did Adolf invade Poland?"

Theo shrugged.

"Can you tell me what month?"

He rolled his eyes in response.

"What year maybe?"

"No I can't be-"

"No, of course you can't. I bet you can't even tell me what era it happened, correct Mr. Raeken?" She grinned at her own joke when a few students snickered.

She left him without an answer and stalked back to the front of the class, heels clicking on the floor. Theo's blood started to boil.

"Mr. Raeken I truly am amazed at your lack of effort..."

Her words were drowned out by the sudden ringing in his ears that gradually grew louder and louder. His nailbeds itched as his claws threatened to emerge. He glared at her as he watched her lips form more insulting words, a hair was stuck to her lipgloss on the side of her mouth. Her eyes were almost as black as her hair.

_Bitch._

She seemed to finally be done with him and moved back to her desk only to freeze in surprise.

"Adolf Hitler invaded Poland in September 1939."

Silence filled the classroom and she turned around to face him.
"Shit, did I just say that?"

"Interesting. So you do have a brain. Let's put it to the test shall we?" She narrowed her eyes in a challenge at him.

By his side Liam stiffened, but Theo kept his gaze locked with hers and lifted his chin.

"Let's take this a little closer to home shall we? In 1864 Beacon Hills had a civil war, how many casualties resulted from the battle of Willowberry Creek?"

Liam began to come to his defense, "That's not part of our textbook!"

"363 casualties, unless you're counting local civilians," Theo answered smoothly.

She straightened her back in surprise and Theo felt Liam's gaze burn the side of his face.

"Correct, except there were no civilian casualties."

"Actually there were 27. Soldiers fired on a church, believing it to be housing weapons. They were wrong. A night of great loss, wouldn't you agree Mrs Harvey?" He tilted his head at her and her composure faltered a bit.

"The Pearl Harbour tragedy occurred when?" Her gaze hardened.

"December 7th 1941," at her hard look he shrugged, "maybe I'm good with dates."

"Let's see how good. Keep it to the year. The fall of the Berlin Wall?"

"1989."

"Civil Rights Act?"

"1964."

"Kennedy assassination?"

"1963."

"Martin Luther King-"

"1968."

Her face softened into one of confusion and she stepped closer to his desk.

"Lincoln?"

"1865."

"Corean War?"

"1951 until 1953."

"Ha!" She smiled in triumph, "It ended in 1952!"

"Actually, Mrs Harvey, it was 1953."

Some students from the back whistled at his open challenge at her.
She pointed to the nearest student, "You! Check please."

The student fumbled with his phone and searched the internet before claiming, "It's 1953!"

The class broke into applause just as the bell rang. The loud ringing brought Theo back to earth and he startled.

*What the hell just happened?*

"What the hell just happened?!" Liam yelled at him when they exited the classroom, leaving a dumbstruck Mrs Harvey behind. Theo ducked as a few students clapped him on the back in a sort of congratulating manner.

"How did you know that stuff? I don't even know all of that!"

Theo just shook his head, "I-"

"Have you been like secretly studying or something?"

"No I-"

"Sup guys!" Mason greeted warmly as he joined them.

"Dude! Theo just completely roasted Mrs Harvey! It was badass!"

Liam excitedly flung himself into retelling the event and Theo was happy for the distraction.

He had no idea how he knew those things. He can't even really remember what he had said. He was just so angry at her and the words just came out.

"Woah! Intense," Mason gave him an admiring look as Liam finished and tried to catch his breath from talking at such a speed.

"Yeah, I guess," Theo shrugged it off.

The woman had it coming anyway, doesn't matter how the hell Theo managed to do it.

Theo felt relieved when the topic was quickly steered off track by Nolan joining them and indulging everyone into a conversation about an upcoming lacrosse game. Theo didn't really listen, instead he tried to reach his senses beyond the imprisoning walls of the school to somewhere further away, just like he'd done that morning. He quickly sighed in annoyance and shook his head to clear the buzzing from his ears when a student slammed their locker as the group walked by.

Rude, but no one else seemed bothered by it.

A second assault to his eardrums signaled the start of the next class.

"Ah, Hell's Bells," Mason rolled his eyes and kissed Corey's cheek quickly, "I need to get to choir practice, see you guys later!"

"See ya!"

Corey, Liam and Nolan all went to get their pre-mix from their lockers before heading to practice and leaving Theo alone.
He had a free period, so he was kind of just floating around until everyone left and the loud hallway turned silent.

As much as he was annoyed with too much company sometimes he suddenly felt a strange empty pit in his stomach.

He found himself utterly bored but didn't consider leaving, Liam would need a lift after practice after all. So instead he went to the library and dwelled through the stocked shelves, dragging his feet as he went. His gaze flickered over the many paperbacks and worn shelves with gum stuck to the dusty wooden surface.

Gross.

He continued to browse. Biology section was pointless, he was pretty sure he knew enough from first hand experience of picking discarded organs off of the floor after the Doctors finished carving into their fresh meat. Same with Science, he was a fucking science experiment himself. Math? Yuck. Languages? He didn't really feel like falling asleep now. History, huh. After today's strange events he'd had enough of that for now.

"Looking for a good read are ya?"

The librarian's breath reached him before her voice did and he struggled not to cringe at the thought of what tooth might be rotting inside her mouth. Judging by how she sucked on her left cheek he figured it was a molar.

"Uh, no. Just looking around." He tried to shoulder past her but she quickly sidestepped and blocked his path.

"No use in lookin' if you ain't even planning on reading something! I know this here place like the back off my hand, name your poison and I'll get it for ya!"

This time he did cringe when she flashed him a tainted smile. The only thing that claimed she was once beautiful was her piercing green eyes.

"Fine, why don't you just pick something for me then... Anna?" He read her tag.

"What do you like?" She started shuffling through the shelves and brushed wrinkled fingers over books as she went.

"I hate pretty much everything so goodluck," he grumbled not expecting her to hear him.

"Everyone likes something young man. Everyone loves something."

"I'm not everyone," he shrugged and she gave an amused huff.

"No, you are definately not."

Before he could as what she meant she flung a book into his chest with surprising strength for such a frail lady, "This one."

He scanned the cover, "Tales of Egypt?" he snorted, "Thanks but I'm not into the whole Moses parting the sea and aliens building pyramids thing."

"How do you know if you haven't even tried it?"

He shifted uncomfortably. He was unsure how to get out of this situation without hurting the
woman's feelings. He settled on saying, "I don't have a library card."

"Take it, who knows, you might like it" she insisted.

"Uh okay, thanks..."

As he turned to leave she called after him in a raspy voice, "Maybe you'll even end up loving it!"

Theo lazily watched Liam and his team chasing after Coach's commands. He leant with his back against a tree, choosing the cool shade of the leaves over the rusty bleachers today.

"My grandmotger runs faster than you! And she's DEAD!" Coach yelled into a panting kid's ear as he jogged past him.

Theo snorted. He couldn't deny that the man was quite the character. He picked at the grass and twirled a piece between his fingers, sniffing the sap as he crushed it.

After a while of boredom he dug into his bag and pulled out his latest homework assignments. All except History. He refused to do it.

He quickly finished the various math equations on his answer sheet before moving on to the next subject. He was finished earlier than he thought he would be, it felt like it had taken him only a couple of minutes to complete. Teachers must be feeling merciful today.

Next he pulled his phone from his bag and selected his compiled playlist before stuffing his ears with his earphones and laying back.

"Okay let's wrap it up!" Coach blew his whistle loudly.

"Oh thank God!" Nolan panted as he wiped sweat from his brow.

Liam himself was drenched and tired, coach had really pushed them today. He joined the rest of his team as they huddled around the sour looking man that still had the whistle hanging loosely from his mouth.

"What can I say, you SUCK! Have a nice weekend," he waved them off and grumbled under his breath as he left.

"Wow, I feel encouraged..." Corey spoke up as he freed his head from his helmet, shaking his hair out like a dog.

"Euw watch it!" Some guy complained when Corey's sweat spray hit him.

"Sorry!"

"Man, the sun cooked us today. Do I have any new freckles?" Nolan asked wide eyed and twisted his face in awkward directions for his friends to check.

"I don't know, do you count them?" Liam frowned at his friend.

"Nah that would take forever," Corey dodged the empty water bottle Nolan threw at him with a yelp and trotted in the direction of Mason's car.
"You could at least pick it up!" Nolan shouted after him and lazily bent to pick up the bottle, "So what are your plans for tonight?"

Liam shrugged, "Nah I don't know. Early night I think."

"Yeah me too, I'm sweating in places I didn't know I could sweat!"

Liam laughed only to stop when Nolan's gaze flickered over his shoulder, "Theo's waiting for you."

Liam craned his neck to see Theo leaning against a tree listening to music. He turned back to Nolan with a shrug.

"Does he seem a bit off to you?"

The question surprised him and made him choke on a sip of water, "What do you mean?"

Nolan thought for a bit before trying again, "I don't know. Maybe 'off' isn't the right word. Just... different?"

Liam switched shoulders with his bag uneasily, "Yeah, I guess a little."

"You think we should worry about it?"

"No, I mean it's not a bad different is it?"

"You know him best," Nolan shrugged just as Theo's shout cut through the air.

"Move it Dumbass I don't have all day!"

"Maybe not that different..." Liam groaned.

The weekend ended as relaxed as it had started with Theo having no nightmares. Which of course made him uneasy. He wasn't one to receive small blessings but he'd take what he can get. It was Sunday night that he first remembered the book he'd gotten from the old lady in the library.

Liam was playing video games online shouting orders at Mason who was at his home looking equally stupid as they frantically tapped away at their keys. Some new obsession called Fortnite. Theo didn't get it, why would you build a fort while someone tries to shoot you?

The TV was buzzing downstairs as Liam's parents watched evening church. Equally bizarre to Theo. Since he had no homework left, except History, but screw that bitch, he was bored out of his mind. After counting the cracks in the ceiling for the 7th time he decided to give the damn book a try.

He freed the heavy heap of paper from his bag and splayed out on his bed. He ran his fingers over the faded golden lettering before opening it.

"Guess it's just me and you now, Moses."

He flipped through a few pages only to find each lined with hierarchy layouts. Names and titles leading down to the next and the next, creating a giant tree of information.

Kind of like a family tree, he thought. Each page had its own. Some were so long they were
continued on following pages and others ended abruptly.

He flipped through all the pages and scoffed, "That's it?" He turned to the cover again.

Tales of Egypt.

"Right, so where's the tales?" He mumbled.

A loose page slipped out and onto his floor, so he inspected the binding. The pages and the cover was old, no question. But the glue smelt fresh. Did someone replace the book's original content?

"Well, that's nice. No Moses for me. Just... names." He grumbled and pushed the book aside with distaste.

He lasted a few good minutes before he grew restless and pulled it back to him and flipping to the first page again. He scanned the ages of families, pharos and other important people. Their titles were funny. "Golden Finger" apparently had a talent for farming, "The Barbarian" slew hundreds in battle...

He got to the royalty charts near the end of the book, names now being given a face that some scribe had tried to recreate. He was getting bored when a title caught his eye.

The Hidden One.

There was a picture of a beautiful woman, all in black and white ink but Theo could imagine the details of her silk dress and her jewels in colour. Underneath the title her name was given simply as Amunet. She was daughter of the Pharo. Judging by the tree she had a brother who had many children with another woman depicted by his side, but her tree met a rather disappointing end. It showed she had one son, but the child was not depicted. There was no name or mention of the father either, but the child had a name.

Malakai.

Other words were deleted by the means of smudged ink. Theo frowned as he traced the woman's face. The page had darkened the image with years of age, but it was easy to see the madness in her gaze. The hunger.

He knew that look. He himself had worn it in the past. A look that craved power.

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