Howl

by littlefrog1025

Summary

A wolf pack is surprisingly a lot like a mafia family...

Notes

Inspired by several pieces of wonder fan fics and art, that most definitely receive credit from yours truly at the start of each chapter.

That being said, this entire series was initially inspired by a talented piece of fan art (SEE LINK BELOW) and heavily influences the first chapter.

** I DO NOT OWN TEEN WOLF, OR ITS CHARACTERS. THEY ARE PROPERTY OF MTV.

There's No Place Like Home

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Twisted limbs of arms and legs are entwined atop the rumpled bed. Greedy moans and groans fill the silence, along with obscene sounds of sucking.

Derek and Stiles are completely naked, wrapped together in a 69 position, feasting on one another hungrily.

Derek lets Stiles dick slip out of his mouth, replacing it with his index and middle finger, wetting them, while stroking Stiles swollen cock. He slips Stiles’ cock back into his mouth and pushes his slippery fingers past Stiles’ rim and into his slick hole, moving his digits in and out fiercely. Stiles whimpers loudly around Derek’s fat cock.

Derek keeps up the assault, working his mouth around Stiles and hammering his fingers in his hole, grazing his prostate.

Stiles can’t take it anymore. He pulls off Derek’s dick and backs away from him, his own cock falling out of Derek’s mouth and fingers leaving his pulsing hole.

“Get back here,” Derek growls.

“Fuck me. I need you to fuck me,” Stiles pants. Stiles pushes Derek fully on his back and swings his leg over him, straddling the older man. He grabs Derek’s girth-y 10 inch member and guides it to his aching hole. Stiles sinks slowly, allowing the head to push past his rim.

Derek is far too needy. He grips Stiles hips and surges up forcefully, balls deep into Stiles, not wanting to wait. “Derek,” Stiles screams.

“You okay, baby?”
Derek’s overexcitement hurt, causing a slight burning when he surged into Stiles like that, but Stiles is too hot and bothered to want to stop. He nods an 'yes' to him.

Derek takes Stiles’ assurance as permission to jackhammer into him.

“OhshitOhshitOhshit...,” Stiles rambles out of his wet mouth. He's definitely going to be sore later.

Stiles’ fingernails drag along Derek’s forearms as he fucks Stiles with an insatiable greediness. Derek watches as Stiles’ dick bobs against his stomach as he continues digging and pushing all he can out of his boy. Incoherent babbles fall out of the boy’s debauched mouth as Derek growls with each thrust.

Derek’s eyes turn blood red and his incisors fall. “Fuck, Derek…” Stiles twist enough in Derek’s strong grip to bend down and lick Derek’s sharp, biting fangs.

Suddenly, their bedroom door burst open! Within a blink of an eye, Derek throws Stiles to the side and covers his nakedness with the bedsheet!

Derek roars at the intruders as he jumps, butt naked, from the bed! Stiles turns to see Chris Argent stand before a five man team of FBI agents!

“Derek Hale. Stiles Stilinski. We have warrants for your arrest. Get dressed.”

“Go away, Argent. I’m fucking my husband,” Derek dismisses. Stiles can’t help but smirk as Derek coolly turns away from Chris and his men to climb back into bed with Stiles.

“This isn't a joke, Hale! You and Stilinski put your goddamn clothes on and come with me or we’ll put a full clip of wolfsbane bullets in your head!” Stiles glares at Chris. You don’t threaten Derek. His Alpha. His husband. His mate. But the agents behind Chris look ready, guns pointed directly at Derek.

Derek shifts into his beta form, ready to pounce, but Stiles stills him with a gripping hand on his shoulder. “This is not worth me losing you over,” he tells his mate.

Stiles is right. Dying over an arrest warrant is so stupid it's laughable. He could never leave Stiles, especially not like this, naked and roaring at federal agents. Derek reluctantly shifts back into human form. He grabs Stiles' hand off his shoulder and yanks him forward for a kiss. A 'thank you' for reminding him what's worth it, an anchoring him back from his anger.


Derek slips off the bed and grabs his clothes from off the floor, sliding them on his tan, muscular body.

“You, too, princess,” Chris says pointedly at Stiles.

Stiles flips him off. He makes to get off the bed, but Derek stills him. “Turn around,” Derek barks at Chris.

“You kidding me?”

“He’s mine. No one sees him undressed but me.” Stiles smiles smugly at Derek’s possessiveness.

“From what I tried very hard to not see when we came in here, chastity and virtue are not attributes either of you have. So quit with the modesty, Hale.”
Derek snarls at Chris. Stiles stills Derek again, but this time with a gentle touch. “Hey, Big Bad. Little Red’s fine. He’s yours. Only yours.”

He knows that, but he can't help the possessive way he feels about Stiles most of the time. None felt more than right now with Stiles being bare-ass naked for six strangers to gawk at. Stiles gives his shoulder a light squeeze. Derek nods.

Stiles throws the sheet back, then climbs off the bed. He gives Chris and his agents full view of his sweet, pale ass, mooning them, as he picks up his underwear off the floor.

Now it’s Derek’s turn to be smug.

Reporters and news crews scramble to the curb as five, black unmarked vehicles pull up to the nondescript building. Derek and Stiles immediately duck down and shield their faces from the cameras. Despite the windows being blacked-out with tint, they still need to be cautious. They're faces plastered everywhere would be more than bad news for them. It'd be fatal.

Agents hurry out of the cars trying to push the media back. But there's a reason they're nicknamed "vultures," and they're living up to it exponentially.

Having no luck and faced with an onslaught of questions they don’t want to answer, the agents get back into their respective cars and drive off.

“We’ll go around the back. Who the fuck called the goddamn press,” Chris shouts at the agent in the driver’s seat.

“CNN throw a wrench into your ridiculous bust,” Stiles asks haughtily as he lifts his head. Derek snorts.

Chris turns in his seat, looking at the married pair. “I’ve had enough of your smart mouth, Stilinski.”

"First off, it’s Stilinski-Hale,” Stiles corrects.

“I don’t give a fuck if it’s Peter Pan,” Chris retorts.

“Wrong kid’s tale, Agent Argent.”

“Shut him up, Hale.”

“Fine,” Derek says with a smile. Derek leans over and gives Stiles a sloppy, open-mouth kiss. He and Stiles blatantly make-out while handcuffed in the back seat.

“Jesus,” Chris complains, turning back in his seat.

Chris and his agents escort Derek, Stiles, and the rest of the Hale Pack—Scott, Allison, Boyd, Erica, Lydia, Isaac, Jackson, Cora, and Danny-- through the back entrance.

Each of them are wearing something accented with the color red: Jackson’s shirt, Lydia’s skirt, Stiles suspenders, the buttons and pocket square of Derek’s all black, 3-piece suit, Boyd’s belt, Erica’s lipstick, nails, and the laces to her knee-high boots, Isaac’s undone bowtie, Danny’s socks,
Allison’s dress, Scott’s red vest, and the red highlights weaved through Cora’s fishtail braid. Their clothes are somewhat formal. Seems there was a celebration the night before and everyone was forced to put on their clothes from last night.

They’re greeted by Kate Argent. She sneers at the lot of them, particularly Derek. “Knew I’d get you in this building eventually, Hale. By hook or by crook,” Kate smiles wickedly.


“Why not? They seem to enjoy fairytales; seeing as how these charges seem more crook than hook,” Derek adds.

“To you maybe. Take them into booking, then holding.” Agents cart off the Hale Pack. Kate gives a wink to Derek. He looks about ready to vomit. Stiles catches the interaction with a puzzling look about his face...

“Who the hell contacted the press,” Chris asks irritably.

“I did,” Kate answers.

“Excuse me?”

“I did, big brother.”

“And why the fuck would you do that?”

“To put their smug faces out there. If we can’t make the charges stick, at least we can blast their stupid mugs all over the news. Their ‘associates’ will see they’re toxic, having gotten picked up by the Feds and cease wanting to do business with them.”

“Or kill them to sever off all ties. And then we’d have nothing to take down Deucalion with. Derek is the little fish we need to get the big fish, remember,” Chris reminds her.

“Controlling all of Northern California’s supernatural territory is not ‘small fish’,” Kate responds with a raised eyebrow.

“Compared to Deucalion’s control over the entire west coast, Alaska, and Hawaii, I’d say it is.”

“Chris, I know you’re concerned about Allison--”

“Damn right I am.”

“--but we’ll get her back,” Kate finishes. “We won’t let Derek and his crew of crooks bring her down any further.”

Chris takes notice of the longing looks his daughter and Scott give one another as agents separate them for booking. “I think it’s already too late for that.” Chris stalks off to an interrogation room.

Kate presses record on the video camera behind her propped on a tripod. “This is agent Katherine Argent, badge #331 of the United States Bureau of Federal Investigation, San Francisco Division. Today is the April 7, 2025. Interviewing subject Derek Stephan Hale, alleged boss and Alpha of the Hale Pack criminal organization of Northern California, for the felony crimes of...”
Boyd faces an agent also recording their conversation. “Illegal magical drug and alcohol trafficking, manufacturing, distribution, and sale...,” the agent begins.

Cora plays absently with her hair, looking rather annoyed as the agent across from her reads her her charges: “Sexual harassment, sexual assault, extortion, bribery, prostitution, statutory rape…”

Lydia. “Money laundering, embezzlement, bribery, extortion, blackmail,” Lydia appears bored as she looks at her well-manicured nails, “grand larceny, tax evasion…” Lydia yawns.

Isaac. “Illegal gambling, gaming, and racketeering,” the agent before Isaac states into his Dictaphone.

Allison. “Theft, breaking and entering, burglary, robbery, looting, grand theft auto, vandalism…,” the agent across from Allison records.

Scott, Erica, and Jackson are seated across two agents rattling off their offenses: “Destruction of public property, destruction of private property, vandalism, indecent exposure, obstruction, resisting arrest, assaulting an officer, grand theft auto, arson, assault, assault with a deadly weapon, battery, mayhem, larceny, blackmail, illegal gambling, extortion, kidnapping, false imprisonment, conspiracy to commit arson, conspiracy to commit murder,” Scott and Erica hi-five, while Jackson smirks, enjoying the extensive list of their crimes, “vehicular homicide, manslaughter, murder, assassination,” the second agent continues.

Danny squirms at bit as his criminal offenses are being ticked off: “Hacking, illegal wiretapping, theft of classified information, evidence tampering, fraud, security fraud, identity fraud, bank fraud, wire fraud, credit card fraud, embezzlement, extortion, tax evasion…”

Stiles smiles fondly as Chris lists the criminal felonies he's being charged with: “…threatening an official, assault with a deadly weapon, illegal use of magic and/or sorcery, conspiracy to commit murder, conspiracy to kidnapping, conspiracy to commit arson, conspiracy to commit extortion, money laundering, bribery, larceny, blackmail, obstruction, jury tampering, tax evasion, violation of parole, and violation of probation. Did I get everything, Mr. Stilinski-Hale?”

Stiles merely raises an intrigued brow.

“We are going to bring down you, and your entire pack. All of it tumbling like a house made of bricks,” Chris assures.

“Well, that’s an odd analogy. I say that because bricks are a far more stable house building material
than straw, or sticks. Would have been better if you went with either of those instead. And you could have satisfied your wolf comparison. You know, The Three Little Pigs."

"Thanks. I’ll remember to use that in court during your trial when I’m on the witness stand."

"Hmm," is all Stiles gives him.

"It’s not just you and your captains, you know. We got your whole damn organization. From Derek all the way down to the lowest piece of grime you got working for you. So you can sit there with that shit-eating grin on your face if you want to, but someone will crack. Someone will talk," Chris sneers in his attempt at scaring Stiles.

"Come on, Chris. I thought you knew how a pack worked. No one is going to say shit to you, that bitch sister of yours, or any other agent in here, about anything."

"Really? Because Danny and Isaac both looked a little shook up when they were brought in."

"First timers. Never been arrested before. But don’t you fret about them. My pups are fine."

Chris leans back in his chair. "That’s right. You’re like the-- What do you call it...? ‘den mother’?"

"That, or ‘pack mom’," Stiles answers nonchalantly.

"Wow. You really are Derek Hale’s bitch, aren’t you," Chris goads.

Stiles glowers at Chris needling him. Okay. If Chris Argent wants a fight, Stiles will give him a good one. "Eats at your very core, doesn’t it?"

"What does," Chris asks.

"The fact that your daughter would rather spend her days and nights running around with alleged criminals than sit down to one single dinner at the Argent house. This the first time you’ve seen her, in what...? 8 years? Maybe nine... I see her all the time. Every birthday, every holiday. Practically every day that ends in ‘Y’. Funny part is, she doesn’t even live with me anymore and I feel like I see her more now than when she did. I also see Scott, just as much. I see them. Together. And sometimes I hear them. Together. Late at night. When they’re in their old room, trying to be quiet so no one else in the house will hear. But I don’t need to be a werewolf to hear the way he makes her lose her breath. The hoarse growls she makes him spill from his throat. Or the way the room shakes like an earthquake when Scott roars and all she can do is scream his name, over and over and over and over again."

A beat of tense silence creates a deafening sound within the tiny room. But Stiles is as cool as a cucumber, same smirk, same shit-eating grin, he had a moment ago plastered on his face, turned up at the older man.

Chris breaks from the table, grabbing Stiles by his suspenders, and raising his fist, ready to strike! Chris’ superior, Finstock, burst through the room before Chris’ punch can connect to Stiles’ priggish face! "Argent," Finstock shouts.

The corner of Stiles’ mouth turns up further at Chris being cowed by his nutty-looking boss. Like a dog that pissed on the new carpet.

Chris shoves Stiles back into his seat. He stares daggers at him.

Chris takes a breath, trying to still his rage…

He turns off the video camera and storms from the room.

Derek flicks a No. 2 pencil between his fingers, staring at it as he twirls it between each digit, ignoring Kate and her questions; refusing to answer and acknowledge her presence. “At this very minute we have agents tearing your house apart, inside and out. There’s nothing you tried to hide that we won’t find,” she goads.

Derek remains stoic, staring at the yellow pencil doing somersaults in his hand.

“We’ve even got agents heading over to Hale House in Beacon Hills, visiting your parents, and your father-in-law. A few visiting your sister Valerie and her husband Jason in Sacramento, your uncle Peter in Fresno, your aunt Salina in San Diego... Your whole organization is being penetrated right now,” she continues.

Nothing. He still gives her nothing. She’s invisible.

But Kate’s not good a being invisible... “Speaking of penetration—Stiles,” she starts. And that gains some attention from Derek, finally looking over at her; pencil held tight in his fist. “There’s a rumor in the whole mystical/magical creatures world, that he’s not just your husband, but your mate. Fifth times the charm, huh?”

“None of my other, ‘past relationships’ were even close to being mated,” he says finally.

“Passing fancies until the real thing turned eighteen, huh?”

“If you say so.”

“I have it on good authority that you and Stilinski didn’t wait until he was eighteen to consummate your mating. That’s statutory rape, you know?” Derek knows full well she’s bluffing. He met Stiles when he was 18 years old, and a freshman at Stanford University. The first time they made love was two years later, when Stiles was twenty.

“Source,” Derek inquires.

“Tsk. Tsk. Tsk. You know I can’t do that, Derek.”

“Then we’ll just call it bullshit for now.”

“Guess it makes sense though. Seeing as how you used to date an older woman when you were a teenager.” Derek’s jaw tightens. “Didn’t you? Or is that just a nasty rumor, too?”

Derek snaps the pencil in his hand. “Lawyer. Now,” he barks through gritted teeth.

Just then the door opens and in walks the stunning Laura Hale, in all her stylish, solicitor glory. “Here I am, baby brother,” she turns to Kate, “Is there any reason you're questioning my clients without proper representation before hand?”

Kate glowers in response.

Laura props herself up on the table, crossing her legs. “Now, now, Katie-poo. You know the law better than that.” Derek snorts at his sister’s condescending pet name. “You’re supposed to wait for me so that my clients don’t say or do anything to incriminate themselves of these supposed crimes.
And since you didn’t, my darling little Kate, I’ll be arguing for all charges to be dropped. That, and the fact that all your so-called evidence is speculative and circumstantial at best. Plus, your brother almost cold-clocked my brother-in-law during his interrogation.”

Derek’s eyes turn fire engine red at hearing that his mate was nearly assaulted. “Calm down, baby brother. He’s fine. I said ‘almost’,” she pats his shoulder, “But the cherry on top? You and Chris shouldn’t even be on this case, given you’re bias as Allison Argent’s aunt and father.”

“She was arrested as well,” Kate spits out through clenched teeth.

“And I’m sure her do-gooder aunt and father were ready to cart her off to the big house with the rest of her pack. No plans forming to get her sentence reduced, or sent to one of those cushy, rich people prisons if she were convicted, or have her turn states’ evidence against her boyfriend and their pack for witness protection...? I’m sure. Katie-love, there’s so many holes in this thing it should be Swiss cheese, not felony charges,” Laura’s good. Real good. “This is a shakedown, plain and simple. You got nothing. And you’re going to leave with nothing. Derek.”

Derek stands and tosses the broken pencil onto the table. He grins at Kate as he confidently walks out of the room.

“Oh, and I hope you guys didn’t actually go through all the trouble of harassing my innocent mother and our relatives. I’d hate to sue the FBI. And I especially hope you were bullshitting and didn’t really tear my brother’s beautiful home apart, because a pissed off Stiles is far scarier than a pissed of Derek. Trust me.”

She gives Kate a bright smile that Kate ignores as she takes notice of the red-bottom, Christian Louboutin heels on Laura’s feet as she saunters out.

Stiles stands in the foyer of a clean and contemporary 12,000 sq. ft. home of outdoor living spaces, with a custom exterior kitchen, corten steel fire pits, large rooftop entertaining areas, including a guest house, an infinity pool, and large gardens. In other words: it’s a badass house.

But Stiles is fuming, clenching his fist as he stares into his house. And it’s not a wonder given the house is in fact turned upside down: furniture is upturned and broken into pieces, accented pillows ripped open, exposing their stuffing and feathers, soot from the fireplaces are trampled throughout the house in various footprints, broken glass is everywhere, and anything with a cabinet or drawer is open and it’s contents regurgitated on the floor.

Derek can smell the fury seeping off Stiles. He approaches his husband. “Stiles.”

“Someone’s going to die. I mean it. I am going to kill someone. Murder, Derek. Unabashed, straight-up mur--”

Derek kisses him quick, cutting him off. He leans into Stiles’ ear to whisper: “They could have planted bugs.”

Stiles bites his lip, seething, nearly drawing blood, trying hard not to flip the fuck out.

“Holy fuck!” Stiles and Derek turn to Laura entering the house behind the rest of the slack-jawed pack. Derek puts his finger to his lips asking her to shush.

Laura motions for them to all go outside.
The whole pack filters outside.

“Can I scream now?”

“Yes.”


“Stiles, you can’t go on a murder spree just because of a few upturned chairs.”

Stiles turns wide-eyed and murderous towards his husband. "What? What did you just say to me, Derek Hale?" Isaac runs out of the house and tosses Stiles his bat. He catches it with one hand without looking. Laura is right. A pissed off Stiles is a lot scarier than a pissed off Derek.

“Stiles--”

“I had to spend three agonizing months looking at fucking color swatches with Lydia and the most flamboyant interior designer on the planet over those goddamn chairs.”

“Hey,” Lydia barks, insulted. Stiles glares at her. Lydia shuts up.

“And the throw pillows and the stupid soap in the guest bedrooms that no one’s supposed to use.” Stiles turns an evil eye toward Lydia. She cowers a bit. “Just so you’d have a place to call ‘home’ and build your fucking empire and somewhere your pack could be together and happy.”

Derek approaches his mate and grips the bat in his hands. “Our empire. Our pack. I get it. It’s more than a house. It’s a sanctuary. It’s a place built to be safe for us, the pack, and someone-- a bunch of someones-- traipsed through it without a single ounce of respect, and when everything clams down, I promise you, I will find out who they are, and I will rip their throats out. But right now, I need my Stiles to breathe, and focus. I need my Little Red who always has a plan in his back pocket to be here, and figure out what we should do next. Do you hear me?” Derek always has a way of centering Stiles and making him zero in on the important thing in front of him when tangents and rambling take over.

Stiles takes a deep breath. He nods.

“Thank you.” Derek takes Stiles’ bat. “I’m going to hold on to this for a while. Okay?”

Stiles nods. He takes another breath, trying to get his mind to quiet and concentrate...“Safe house. There’s too much heat on us here.”

“Which one,” Cora asks.

“Monte Carlo. We’re on good terms with the pack there and the Alpha that runs the South of France. We lay low there for a while then come back under the radar. My mom, John, and Peter can run things until we get back and there’s less heat on us.”

The betas cheer with excitement at a group venture to Monte Carlo...until Danny clears his throat with the pretense of shattering their dreams.

“What,” Derek asks, apprehensively.
“We can’t go.”

“Care to elaborate a little more, Danny?”

“Only you, me, and Cora are the ones with a real passport. Everyone else has passports and licenses that I forged. Stiles’ passport was revoked when he got sent upstate last year,” Danny answers.

“We can’t leave the country in general, so we definitely can’t with forged documentation while the FBI waits for us to f**k up. Not to mention, Scott and Erica are on probation. And even if we all could leave the country, we can’t do it with dirty money,” Stiles adds.

“Hello! That’s what Danny and I do! We could use the ‘clean’ money from the nail salons and the laundromats,” Lydia replies.

“You can’t,” Laura tells her.

Stiles expands on Laura’s blunt answer, “Despite some of that money being clean, they’re dying for us to touch it so they can trace it and nail use with a money laundering charge. They know we want to run.”

“Ugh! Goddamn Feds,” Erica growls in frustration.

“Hey, Catwoman. If Batman can’t lose it, neither can you. Take a deep breath, babe.” Erica listens and takes a deep, deep, calming breath... “We good? Okay?” Erica nods. Boyd puts a hand on the small of her back. She leans into him, head on his shoulder.

Derek brings them back to the problem at hand, “Alright. Where the hell can we go?”

“We have to stay on the west coast,” Stiles reminds them.

Cora chimes in, “Portland?”

“Ugh! Not with all those hipster-weres. I hate them,” Lydia groans in response. Stiles, Danny, and Allison pipe up about how much they like Portland and the hipster-weres. “Of course you three would,” she adds with an eye roll.

“Portland’s a no-go,” Derek states. “They’ve got a serious witch problem right now that their Alpha’s trying to get under control. I don’t want to parachute in the middle of that.”

“Why not? I’m so up for some action,” Jackson replies.

“‘Action’ is the thing we’re supposed to be steering clear of,” Stiles chides, “We can’t draw attention to ourselves.”

“Seattle,” Allison asks.

“We’re not allowed back in Seattle until 2030, as I recall,” Stiles reminds them.

They all glare at Scott.

“How many times am I going to have to apologize for blowing up that building?!”

“Oh, you mean their city hall,” Lydia spits out sarcastically at the floppy-haired boy.

“It was an accident,” Scott insists. Allison pecks his cheek, calming him.
“Can’t we go to SoCal? LA, maybe?” Derek and Laura exchange nervous glances that go unnoticed by everyone else at Boyd’s mention of going to SoCal.

Stiles, though, immediately shuts down that idea— “No. They’re too strict there. Too territorial and procedural. They want everything to be official and on the up and up. They won’t give us good shelter if they find out we’re going underground.”

“Which means they’d probably want to talk to Deucalion,” Derek adds.

“Don’t you guys have an aunt that lives in San Diego,” Lydia asks Derek and Laura.

“She’s human though. And not apart of a pack. She can’t provide protection.”

“I’m such an idiot!” They quiet at Stiles’ abrupt exclamation. He’s wearing his ‘lightbulb face’. “Valerie! Your sister! She’s pack, and runs Sacramento. We can lay low in her territory.”

“I don’t know about that Stiles,” Derek spoils. “Valerie’s all hellfire and war, but not when it comes to her girls. I don’t want to put my nieces in any danger. Plus, you know how Jason is. He doesn’t want anything we do, pack-wise, or supernatural, near the girls because they’re human.”

Stiles deflates a bit, but he gets it. He wouldn’t want anything to happen to his nieces and can see why Jason is so against anything of that nature near his children, especially given the business they’re in. “Makes sense. But I’m sure as hell not going to Fresno and staying on Peter’s goat farm.”

“Am I the only one that sees the obvious answer,” Laura asks with a lick of sarcasm in her tone. They all stare at her with clueless looks about their faces. “Our home territory. The territory you gave me to run, Derek— Beacon Hills.”

“Beacon Hills? Like where we went to high school, Beacon Hills,” Lydia asks with a look of disgust crawling on her red lips.

“Like where our parents live,” Erica grimaces.

“Like where I live,” Laura says with a raised brow, daring anyone else to scoff at her home. Their home.

“I don’t know, Laura. I don’t want your parents and Melissa and my dad mixed into all this.”

“Oh, because it’s not like they don’t know that their kids run a crime syndicate. The very crime syndicate they started and passed on to their offspring.”

“They’re retired. They’re out of this.”

“And yet you guys were willing to hop on a plane to France and let them run things with Peter, of all people, until you got back? Plus, they won’t be mixed up in anything, considering the whole objective is to lay low. Keep our heads down. And bonus— they can give protection if shit does decide to get real.”

Derek turns to Stiles, “She makes a good point.”

“I know. That’s why she’s such a badass attorney.” Laura winks at her brother-in-law.

“What about Scott and Erica’s probation? They can’t leave San Francisco,” Allison pipes up.

“They can if a family member is ill, or there’s a death or something. Scott, we’re going to say your
mom has MS."

“That’s horrible, Stiles! And a total jinx,” Scott tells him.

“Fine. Come up with something convincing to tell your PO ASAP. Catwoman--”

“I’ll think of something.”

“No bedroom eyes please. We don’t want him to fall in love and Boyd claw his chest open like the last douche-y PO you had.” Boyd cracks his giant knuckles with emphasis.

“Now everyone give Danny your cellphones so he can destroy the SIM cards and dump them in the pool.”

“Why,” Scott asks, dumbfounded.

Stiles sighs. He loves his best friend, like a brother, but sometimes…”How many times have I gone through this with you, Scott? The Feds can track our phones even if our phones are off.”

“That’s why we dump the phones every 3 months and have burners as backup,” Derek adds, with a little more patience in his tone than Stiles.

“Gotcha.”

“Do you? Because I’m not going over it again.”

“I got it! Jeez!”

They hand their phones over to Danny.

“Secondly,” Stiles lists, "No cars. In fact, don’t even get into your cars when you get home. They’re probably bugged and tapped with a GPS. We’re taking rental cars.”

“I can’t take my Porche,” Jackson whines.

Stiles pinches the bridge of his nose, irritated with his dim-witted betas. “No, Jackson, you can’t.”

“Or the Aston Martin?!”

Stiles shakes his head at him. Idiot. He’s dumber than Scott. “Danny. The Feds took all our computers--” Stiles starts, ignoring Jackson’s question.

“I put a self-destruct code in everyone’s computers that I activated when I saw the FBI outside my door. All evidence and dirty pics are burned. They can’t access a damn thing,” Danny assures.

“That’s my boy.”

“Are we really doing this? Are we really going back to Beacon Hills,” Lydia asks annoyed, despite knowing her question is rhetorical, clearly having already been answered.

But Stiles will oblige anyway, “Yes, Red Queen, we are. Get over it. Everyone: only grab one bag-”

“Oh, that’s not happening,” Lydia states plainly.

“--two bags of only essentials and some cash,” Stiles corrects, just for her, “We’ll meet up at
Erica’s place. She’s close to the freeway going south and the Feds won’t suspect us meeting there. Put on your big girl panties, kids. We’re going back home.”
The Road to Beacon Hills is Paved with Good Intentions

Chapter Summary

The center of the Hale Pack leaves San Francisco to head home where it all began...

Chapter Notes

I know that the link for 'Laura' is a current picture of Tiffani Thiessen from SAVED BY THE BELL. That is on purpose. When I think of Laura, I think of a fun and flirty kind of girl, and after looking at recent pictures of Ms. Thiessen on Google Images and catching her on an episode of WHITE COLLAR, she became my mental 'Laura' instead. I know everyone on the interweb loves them some Megan Ory as 'Laura' (ME, TOO!!), but her beauty and mannerisms were best thought of as Derek's other sister for this story.

Please leave comments and questions. I will answer, or simply respond to them all. Your feedback is much appreciated :)

Isaac’s in the driver’s seat of Derek's rental car as they make their way down the highway during peak morning hours. Laura sits beside him reading the front page of The San Francisco Chronicle.

Isaac’s curious eyes glance at the rearview mirror when a soft whimper escapes from the backseat: Stiles sits in Derek’s lap, cradled in his arms, as they make-out. Stiles’ hands card through Derek’s jet black hair as Derek’s hand runs down Stiles’ arm. It’s not the for-show tongue battle they gave Chris Argent days prior, but rather sweet, close, and gentle.

Isaac smiles. He likes their intimacy. Their connection. Having grown up in such a violent, unloving home, it’s not a wonder he’s grasped onto Derek and Stiles’ relationship as a paternal one. So, he likes when they’re together and endearing. It gives him a strong sense of pack. Of family. The very thing he needs to keep him strong. It’s his anchor.

Laura’s attention turns to the backseat as well, and a smile can’t help but grow on her lips. Derek had spent so many years since Paige being miserable that when she looks at him with Stiles, like this, she can’t but be happy the flailing, sarcastic younger man managed to make it into her brother’s life. And as his mate no less.

Laura and Derek had always been each other’s favorite. They were thick as thieves and understood one another as closely as a sister and brother could. They always turned to one other first in a crisis, or simply when they had joy to share. And in Derek’s case, he didn’t have anything happy going for him until Stiles. Laura was the first person he told about Stiles. She was the first to know when they had met, when they first kissed, the first time they made love, when Derek realized Stiles was his mate, when they moved in together, when Stiles became “pack mom,” and when Derek proposed.
Laura genuinely liked Stiles, and unbeknownst to Derek, was the catalyst in pushing them together after a very extensive talk with the Alpha-Mate about her brother and why he needed Stiles, and Stiles needed him. Laura and Stiles quickly became two peas in a pod, having an amalgam of things in common, and sharing the same sense of humor. She liked that Stiles was so brave; willing to venture into any fight to help those he loved. He had a sense of courage and devotion not found in most humans. Loyalty and protectiveness was big with him, and those qualities allowed him to fit in seamlessly with their werewolf family. His trustworthiness was never called into question, especially after the whole Jennifer incident, dubbed by the rest of the pack as: “Stiles 2.0.” He was fierce and highly intelligent. And willing to stand up to her brother when need be. He made a better emissary to Derek than she did, and she was non-too upset when Stiles took over her role in the pack. He deserved it, and should have been there all along.

"Can you believe there was ever a time when these two weren’t together, Isaac?"

"Hard to believe."

"We don’t talk about the 'before-Stiles' years," Stiles tosses out, breaking his lips from Derek's for a breather.

"Appropriately, initialed B.S.," Laura chuckles.

Stiles gasps at Derek, "Told you that sounded better!"

Derek rolls his eyes, "I don’t think I can handle the two of you together for very long."

"Well, you’re going to have to learn to try. Because there’s going to be a whole lot of Stiles/Laura time for the next few months."

"Months," Isaac asks with a slight panic in his voice, "We have to stay in Beacon Hills for months?"

"Probably. Hence the definition of ‘hiding’," Derek responds.

"I have so many bad memories of that place..." Isaac's voice falls and he slunks into his seat. Horrible memories move past his eyes in a flicker like a film reel, playing all the worst moments of his life.

Stiles climbs off Derek. He swats Isaac’s shoulder. "Hey! Don’t. Understand? Don’t go to that dark place. There’s no need. I’m here. Derek’s here. We’re all here; your real family, and we got you. No one-- and I mean fucking no one-- will ever hurt you. Not in San Francisco, not in Portland, not in Monte Carlo, and damn sure not in Beacon Hills. So you erase those shit memories from your head, because they don’t mean anything. Not with where you are now. With me. With us. Understand?"

Isaac knows he dotes on Stiles, and that Stiles obliges him, needing to mother someone just as much as Isaac needed to be mothered. So he liked the moments when Stiles would stay up late with him after he’d have a nightmare, just talking and drinking tea until Isaac felt better enough to try sleeping again. He liked when Stiles held him and listened to him cry after Scott broke his heart in two. He liked when Stiles would ask him to go grocery shopping with him, or run errands. And he especially liked when Stiles pushed through the cloudy, smoking haze of his past, and pulled him through the fog with blunt commandments of affection. Like right now. Isaac nods, "Understood."

"Good." Stiles ruffles Isaac’s hair affectionately before sitting back in his seat.

Derek and Laura share a smile. Yeah, Stiles is a pretty badass pack mom.
Lydia drives. Jackson beside her, with Cora and Danny in the backseat. Cora reads the latest issue of Vogue while Danny reads a well-worn, beat up copy of George Orwell’s *1984*.

"I’m just saying, why does Isaac always get to go with Stiles and Derek," Jackson asks no one in particular, with the tint of a childish whine in his voice.

"Because he asks," Lydia says, turning her voice up sarcastically in a mock question.

"No. He doesn’t. They just always bring him along."

"Well, you know, Isaac needs the most looking after," Danny says, looking up from his book.

"But yet they gave him the whole gaming sect to run. If he's such a baby that needs taken care of, then why do that? Makes no sense," Jackson crows.

"What do you want to hear, Jackson? That Isaac is their favorite," Lydia says with snide smile. It's these moments that make her grateful she and Jackson broke up years ago.

"There are no favorites in pack," Cora adds while silently coveting a Vera Wang dress in her magazine.

"Exactly my point! There shouldn't be! But yet...!"

"He just needs a different type of catering to than you do, Jackie." Danny has always been the only one with enough patience and overall goodness to deal with Jackson. Over the years, Jackson managed to at least let Stiles in. Mainly, at first, because he was Alpha-mate and it was his job to listen and kiss their boo-boos and make sure they ate enough, but Jackson grew to like Stiles and his tenacity to not give up on finding out who Jackson really was as a person. They weren't friends in high school. Practically enemies. But they both quickly found out that life is strange and the world is small, and the past quickly becomes the past when you need someone to understand you, or comfort you when you're scared. That's how enemies become friends and friends become family sometimes.

Derek was his Alpha. He listened, respected, and obeyed him, but he wasn't allowed into the core of him. Not even growling Derek Hale, or steely, Lydia Martin managed to penetrate past Jackson's emotional walls. So it meant a lot that when Jackson thought of 'family', his first thoughts were of his parents, Danny, and Stiles. Though he'd never say so aloud.

"I don’t need to be catered to by my Alpha and his mate." Lydia, Danny, and Cora collectively roll their eyes so hard you could hear it. "I don’t!"

"Yes, you do! That’s why you snark at Stiles sometimes. You’re like a playground bully, pulling on the girl he likes pigtails because you don’t know how to tell her you like her and want her attention," Lydia cuts into him.

"It’s also why you’re always so up for a fight; ready to prove yourself worthy in your Alpha’s stoic red eyes," Cora tacks onto Lydia's biting analysis.

"So far from the truth. Danny, back me up."

"Can’t. Kind of agree, Jackie."

*Traitor.* Jackson looks at the judgmental stares around the car directed at him. "Fuck you guys."
He puts his shades on, leaning against the door with his arms crossed in a pout.

Allison drives. Scott beside her. Erica and Boyd in the backseat. Boyd reads Camus’ *The Stranger* while the others sing animatedly to Kanye West’s “Gold Digger” playing on the radio. Right at the line: “*leave yo’ ass for a white girl*” Scott and Allison point to Erica, who in turn points to herself. Boyd shakes his head at their silliness, turning back to his book.

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It’s dark.

Muffled voices... then what sounds like someone attempting to open a jammed door.

The muffled voices sound again in a bickering tone.

Then a rhythmic banging...

A door swings open, illuminating the rectangular cutout by way of LED lights from the parking lot, and cheesy neon lights from a burger joint and gas station. Four shadowed figures stand in the doorway. The one in front leans into the darkness and feels along the wall...

Click! It’s Lydia. With Jackson, Cora, and Danny surrounded by their bags at their feet. Lydia and Cora look on in horror at the tiny, uninspiring motel room in front of them. It’s like something out of a Williams S. Burroughs novel.

"Unacceptable. This is like something out of a William S. Burroughs novel."

"More like Hubert Shelby, Jr. I feel like I should be drinking tequila from the bottle and hiding out with an overweight, 13 year old prostitute who doesn't speak English," Danny exaggerates.

Cora scowls at the room as though it personally offended her. "I can’t with this. Like ever."

"What the hell was Stilinski thinking?" Nowadays, Jackson only calls Stiles by his surname when he's irritable.

Erica drops her purse and make-up bag atop the bed furthest from the door. "So gross."

Boyd shrugs, "Could be worse."

Scott brings the rest of the bags into the room. "At least we’re all together. We could be rooming with Lydia...and Cora. She scares me more than Lydia sometimes."

"How is that even possible," Boyd questions. "Lydia's wrath is known through lands far and wide."

Erica lugs her cheetah-print suitcase atop the bed. "I’ll take bunking with you two any day."

Scott and Allison beam. "Glad someone likes our company."

"Everybody likes your company, Scott. You, too, Allison," Boyd reassures them as he dumps Erica's other two bags on the bed. Seems someone decided to ignore Stiles' 'two bags only' rule.
"It's just, we know we can be kind of...into each other."

"Yeah. Sometimes we forget other people are around," Allison blushes, her cheeks turning a soft pink.

"You’re bad, but not as bad as Stiles and Derek. I don’t know how Isaac can stand to be around those two so much sometimes," Erica shakes her head in wonder. She loves her Alpha and her Alpha-mate, but sometimes they're just...much.

"Could’ve sworn you told me you like watching Stiles and Derek when they’re all lovey-dovey," Allison smiles at hearing Boyd use the hyphenated adjectives 'lovey-dovey'.

"I do. It’s..."

"Comforting," Scott finishes for her.

"Yeah. Sometimes it feels like I need to see it. Need to see them so passionate about each other."

"Like you need to know, and see it with your own eyes, that they’re in love."

"Yeah."

"That they’d die for each other."

"Exactly."

"Do you feel that way, Boyd," Allison asks.

Boyd nods, "Sometimes."

"I know Stiles is my best friend, practically my brother," Scott says, "so it's going to sound weird when I say this, but it’s like I need to know ‘Mommy’ and ‘Daddy’ are in love. Because if they are, they’ll protect us better."

"Yeah. Sort of like that," Erica agrees, "...They’re still gross sometimes though."

Scott, Allison, and Boyd concur with a resounding 'Definitely'.

Stiles approaches the door.

"Where are you going?"

Stiles turns to Derek standing in the bathroom doorway in only a pair of black, boxer briefs, brushing his teeth. Derek’s gorgeous. And Stiles has thought so ever since he met him. Despite his attempts at trying to resist Derek Hale, and all the trappings that came with him and the Hale name, Stiles could have never stayed away long enough. And Derek’s physical form-- once on full display to Stiles-- was admittedly an albeit small, but significant part of that. From his pitch black hair, pale, green eyes like jade, dark beard shaped around pink lips and a square jaw. All the way down to his tan skin protruding with hard muscle, shown off in biceps, pecs, tight abs, and twin inguinal creases that point south like an arrow. He’s a walking fantasy.

"Jesus, you’re ridiculous."

Derek turns into the bathroom and rinses his mouth out. He steps back into the bathroom doorway,
arms stretching as he grabs the top of the door frame, making his biceps and abs flex. "Come here so I can show you how ridiculous I can be."

Stiles bites his lip, trying to quell the urge to sprint across the tiny room toward his husband, and fling himself on him. "I have to check on the pups."

"The pups are fine," Derek takes off his underwear. Stiles watches as he climbs into the bed beneath the sheets. Derek lies back against the headboard, arms crossed behind his head and burning a hole into his husband with his lust-filled gaze. "Now, daddy needs you." Stiles had never found it acceptable or even remotely sexy when someone referred to themselves-- or was referred to by others-- as 'Daddy'. But on Derek's lips, in his voice...

"Derek--"

"You can not make out with me all day and leave me like this," Derek’s hand disappears beneath the sheet, fondling himself, eyes still on Stiles. "I can smell you from here."

"Oh, my God," Stiles breathes hotly. He finds his way over to the bed and climbs atop Derek. They kiss. Stiles slides his wet tongue inside Derek's mouth, inciting a low moan from the wolf. Derek’s hand crawls from under the sheets to grab a handful of Stiles’ hair as he abuses his mouth in a rough kiss. Stiles pants and grinds atop Derek's lap as Derek continues to assault his mouth. Derek's lips leaves Stiles' red and swollen ones for his neck. Derek breathes wet and hot against a constellation of moles on Stiles' neck. Stiles' eyes roll back into his head. He wishes they were back home, in their own bed. Instead of here, in a dingy motel room with their betas-- The betas! That's what I was doing! Stiles breaks their kiss-- "5 minutes." Stiles hops off the bed, quick.

"Stiles!"

"5 minutes, I swear. And I will come back and take you all the way to the back of my throat and swallow every single drop of cum that coats the inside of my mouth as you lose complete control with my mouth around your dick."

"...If you are not back here in 4 minutes, 59 seconds, I’m going to sleep and I won’t touch you for a week." Derek’s made that threat before. He lasted only 3 days. Which was 3 days too long for Stiles as well.

"5 minutes. I swear." Stiles rushes from the room.

Stiles knocks on the door. Lydia answers, swinging the door open with an abrupt force that makes Stiles jump back. She's in an expensive, silk nightgown. Her red hair pinned up with a bandana and a green, cucumber mud mask smeared along the surface of her face. She’s wearing yellow cleaning gloves and holding a bottle of disinfectant and dirty rag. "Disgusting!"

"Lyds, I know."

"Then you’re aware of how utterly angry I am at having to spend the night here."

"Lydia--"

"Holiday Inn. Could we not have at least stayed at a Holiday Inn? La Quinta even! I would have settled for La Quinta, Stiles, instead of this roach-infested crime scene!"

"Lydia. We have to--"
"LA QUINTA," she shouts then slams the door in his face!

"--keep a low profile." Stiles sighs. At least all she did was slam the door in his face...

Stiles slides down to Scott’s room. The curtain is wide open and Stiles can see Scott and Boyd sharing a bottle of Jack Daniels while Allison and Erica drunkenly hop from bed to bed with childish glee while pop music blasts from the clock radio on the nightstand. Stiles smiles to himself, loving their goofiness. He wants to join them, but there’s a horny werewolf waiting for him in his room. *Derek! Shit. 5 minutes.*

He quickly makes his way to Laura’s room. He knocks. Isaac answers. "Stiles!" He’s only just seen him an hour ago, but the radiant smile on Isaac’s face is anything but offensive. He loves his ‘Goldilocks’.

"Hey, pup." He spots Laura sitting on her bed. She’s surrounded by legal documents and pieces of yellow legal paper with her notes scribbled on them. She’s wearing a pair of men’s boxers--probably her husband, Thomas’--and an old concert tee. Her hair is still damp from her shower and twisted up into a messy bun atop her head as she concentrates on the work before her. Stiles had always thought Laura was the most beautiful of the Hale daughters. While everyone thought Valerie was the beauty queen, he had always secretly thought they were wrong, and the real stunner was Laura. "Just checking on everyone. How’s it looking, Jim Garrison? Am I going back to the big house any time soon," he directs at his sister-in-law.

She looks up with him. "Stiles. I will never allow that to happen again. They don’t have a leg to stand on, and I’m going to eviscerate them."

"I love when you’re cold-hearted."

"Only happens when I’m being honest."

"I know. You two okay with sharing a room?"

"Couldn’t ask for better company."

"Laura's as awesome as ever. Jackson's been a dick since we left, and Erica keeps teasing me about my hair today. She said I look like a poodle." He does, but Stiles isn't about to agree if it clearly bothers him.

"I told those two to back off."

Isaac shrugs, "It’s cool. I’m with Laura. She can be scarier than you sometimes." Laura winks at Isaac.

"I’ve seen her as soft as a marshmallow. Especially with her girls."

"You’re confusing me with Thomas." She tries to level Stiles with her eyes.

"Doubtful." She sticks her tongue out at him. "You call him? And Talia?"

"Yeah. I used the pay phone in the parking lot. They know we’re coming. You call John?"

"Yeah. And no doubt Scott called his mom, too."

"Good."

"Alright. I have to get back to a very naked werewolf in my room."
"Have fun," she says with a wicked grin.

"Always."

Stiles heads back to his room. As soon as he approaches the door, Derek swings it open, grabs Stiles, sweeping him up so he can wrap his legs around Derek’s waist. Derek kicks the door closed.

A trio of rental cars pull through the black, wrought-iron gate that leads to a 3-story mansion. It’s majestic and regal as it sits proudly atop 500 acres of well-manicured green lawn, surrounded by woods.

Talia Hale, steps out of the front door, waiting to greet her family. She’s beautiful. Her smile is warm and inviting. She shares the same dark hair as her children, but her eyes are like amber diamonds.

The cars park just before the house. Doors open and a cacophony of chatter fills the quiet, drowning out the rustling wind and singing birds. As all 12 of them grab their things they continue their noise of laughing, bickering, teasing, and general back-and-forth as Talia waits patiently on the top step.

She politely clears her throat. You could hear a pin drop. All is silent just as quickly as it was full of noise. They stand frozen, waiting for the powerful Alpha to speak...


"Mom."

"I see you still have that ratty, old T-shirt." Laura is still wearing her Motley Crue concert tee.

"I love this shirt, mom."

"All it does is remind me of the night you and Valerie snuck out of the house to go to their concert."

"Best night of my teenage life."

"Always the rebellious one."

"Dirty job. Somebody’s got to do it." Talia shakes her head affectionately at her smart-alek daughter.

Talia runs a gentle hand down Derek’s face. She scent marks him as well. "My baby boy. How are you?"

"I’m good, mom. I’m more worried about you."

"You think I can’t take care of myself? After all, you are the one that’s come to home."

"Am I being given grief?"

"Not yet. We’ll talk later. Right now I just want to look at how handsome you are." Derek blushes. She pecks his cheek.
"Cora, angel."

"If ever an inappropriate pet name..." Laura mumbles under her breath. Cora glares at her sister.

"Hush, Laura. Let me look at my little cherub. My baby." Talia plays with Cora’s hair.

"You like it? The red?"

"I love it. And you have to show me how to do this braid of yours."

"Okay." Talia and Cora eskimo kiss.

"I will never tire of that."

"Me neither," Cora admits. Talia pecks her cheek.

"Alright, you three. Into the house. Go say ‘Hi’ to your father. He’s in his study." Derek, Laura, and Cora enter into the house. "Scott." Scott separates himself from Allison and approaches Talia. "My you’ve grown. You used to be such a small, little thing, and you’re such a man now. How’d that happen?"


"That it does. I’ve seen three my kids grow under it’s spell. No reason why it shouldn’t do the same for you." He smiles bashfully. "And yet, you’re still as endearing as a brand new wolf cub. Never lose that innocence. But never let it rule you either."

"Yes, Alpha Hale." Scott disappears inside the house.


"I am."

"Then accept the honor bestowed upon you."

"I do. With gratitude and humility."

"To be humble to superiors is duty, to equals courtesy, to inferiors nobleness."

"To become truly great, one has to stand with people, not above them."

"Beautifully said." He bends to peck her cheek, then goes into the house. "Lydia."

Lydia approaches. "Alpha Hale."

"How awful was the motel Stiles made you stay at?"

"Oh, God, the worst!"

"I can smell other people all over you...and some things that aren’t detectable."

"I knew it! I feel like I’m getting a rash, and a fever."

"You’re fine. Just in desperate need of a good shower."

"What I wouldn’t give for one."
"How about letting me play matchmaker? I believe you and Jackson are no longer an item...?"

Lydia blushes, "Alpha Hale....," but she leans in and whispers, "No. We’re not. But we do have this sort of... 'arrangement.'"

"Does it involve complete commitment?" Lydia tries to slyly shake her head. "Good. You get all the first dibs access you want to my shower-- the best one in the house-- in exchange for allowing me to set you up with the son of a good friend of mine."

"Deal." They shake on it.

"Hurry." Lydia scampers inside, running as fast as she can in her heels. "Erica. Jackson." They approach Talia. "The 'warriors'."

"Fucking right." Erica and Jackson fist bump.

"I only wish my betas were half as fierce as you two."

"If they were yours, I’m sure they were the most boss betas on the globe," Erica flatters.

"No. The most boss betas belonged to Miwa."

"Who’s Miwa," Erica asks.

"Miwa was Alpha of Japan. She had a crew of deadly assassins that she formed after becoming a werewolf during World War II. Before then she lived as a geisha. And after being bitten by her lover, an American soldier, she sought revenge for his death and turned every girl in the geisha house into a were. She trained them to be cunning, ruthless, to show no mercy, and that vengeance was always better than forgiveness."

"Whoa. We’ve never heard of her. And Derek tells us all the good stories. Must’ve left that one out."

"Miwa sounds like the shit," Jackson adds... eloquently.

"She never sought another lover again. When asked years later, when she was very old and frail, why she had never sought to find another to comfort her and rid her of her emptiness, she said: 'There was, and will always be, one man that has captured my heart. And when he left this world for the next, he took it with him. So I must fight, and spill the blood of others, and shed cold tears at night because I haven’t the thing I need to love again. However, should I ever have my heart again, I doubt I would use it for it’s purpose. What good is a kiss when it’s not a kiss from the one that has wrapped themselves around your walls and brought them all tumbling down?'"

"Wow."

"Seriously," Jackson agrees, with the same 'awe' face as Erica.

"You two are more than warriors. You are as deep as an ocean, and as thunderous as a storm. Much like Miwa." Erica and Jackson blush, flattered by her insight. No one usually compliments them like that. Except Stiles.

"Thank you, Alpha Hale."

"Thanks."

"You’re welcome. Inside, the both of you." Erica and Jackson go into the house. "Isaac." Isaac
approaches. She runs a gentle hand along his face... "I see you." Her simple statement speaks volumes to the timid were. "I see you. And all the wonderful things you are." Isaac is touched. He wraps his arms around Talia in an appreciative embrace. She hugs him back with just as much love.

"Thank you."

"Of course, sweet-wolf." Isaac practically skips into the house. "Daniel."

Danny steps up to her. "Thank you, for inviting me."

"How is this the first time I’m getting to see this adorable face? Are you shy?"

"No. Not really. I just try to fade into the background, for Derek, and the pack. Can’t exactly have your hacker running around getting noticed."

"Such loyalty and selflessness. I’m in awe...and disappointment. You shouldn’t have to hide. For pack or otherwise. Do not be afraid to let yourself go every once in a while. None of you are caged animals. Be free."

Danny chuckles, "That’s what Stiles keeps telling me."

"You should listen."

"Yes, Alpha Hale."

"Go. Clean that alluring face and eat something that didn’t come from a vending machine."

"Thank you, Alpha Hale." Danny exits into Hale House.

"Allison."

Allison timidly approaches Talia. "Alpha Hale, I would like to--" Talia renders her silent by raising her hand to ‘stop’. 

"Allison Argent, you are welcome in this home, if you can swear to me that you are beyond loyal to this pack. Not Scott, but this pack."

"I am. I am nothing but bound to this pack. This family. My family."

"Derek trusts you. He believes in your allegiance. As does Stiles. Trust means everything to them. To me. To all of us."

"I am trustworthy. I deserve to be in this pack. I want to be in this pack. And not just for Scott."

"I try to not allow the sins of the father to dictate the actions of the son. Chris is a good man, I know this, despite the opposite ends of the world we live in we so intensely fight on. But your grandfather and your aunt will never be forgiven for their actions. I would like for you to know that."

"I understand."

"If you are here today, then there is good in you. My son and his mate see good in you. They believe in your devotion. Do not make fools out of them...again. You wouldn’t like to see me volatile." Her eyes flash Alpha red.

"Yes, Alpha Hale."
"I am sorry, truly, about your mother. No girl should have to go through life without her mother."

"Stiles does the best he can." Talia smiles. "And I’m truly sorry about your mate; Derek’s father."

"I have him still. That’s what matters to me most." Allison nods, eyes on her shoes. "Welcome to my home, Allison Argent."

"Thank you, Alpha Hale." Scott is waiting for her at the door. They disappear inside together.

Talia turns her attention to the tall, lean boy in the backwards Mets cap with the duffel bag at his feet. He gives her an adorable smirk. "Saving the best for last?"

Talia descends the steps toward Stiles. They embrace. A loving, long hug that speaks volumes about their relationship.

Finally, Talia breaks their hold. She playfully smushes his face between her thumb and fingers. "Oh, you! You’re supposed to be looking out for him. Advising him on his mistakes and calling him out on his misdirection."

"This was not anyone’s doing."

"Then what is it?"

"Kate Argent grasping at straws."

"And you being sent to prison for 18 months," she reminds him with a rhetorical question.

"I was only there for 26 days. Thanks to your brilliant daughter and a few pulled strings."

"He was lost without you. I’d never seen him like that."

"However miserable he was, I guarantee you I was 10 times worse. I couldn’t breath without him, Talia. I thought I was dying."

"And Derek wanted to die. It’s because you’re mates. Your bond; it doesn’t let you spend large amounts of time apart without contact. His wolf will claw away at him from the inside, trying to get to you. And you’ll hear him howl, cry out for you until you answer."

"I heard him. In my head and in my heart, I heard him. I screamed for him every night. They had to move me to the psych ward and wouldn’t let Derek visit."

"I know. He was beside himself."

"Talia. I’m not going to let Kate Argent put us through that again. That’s a promise."

She smiles. "I know it is. Now get inside, shower, and make me some pancakes."

"Yes, Alpha Hale." She rubs her cheek against his, scent marking him, as she did her children.
**Blood. Bite. Love.**

Chapter Summary

What Stiles hates more than anything, is Derek keeping secrets from him.

Chapter Notes

There were some typos of the grammatical kind, and sentence structuring in the first two chapters that would have greatly angered, Mrs. Kopania, one of my (favorite) high school English teachers. And I know how much I can't stand reading someone's work and feeling like I spent the whole time trying to read it being more of a 'Grammer Nazi' than admiring reader. So, I went back over them with a fine-tooth comb.

**HALE PACK HIERARCHY**

Derek Hale -- True Alpha, boss of Northern California*

Stiles Stilinski-Hale-- Alpha-mate, boss/Emissary of Northern California*

Theo Hale-- Alpha

Talia Hale-- Alpha

Laura Hale-Pryce-- Beta, underboss of Beacon Hills ('home territory')

Valerie Hale-Mayworth-- Beta, underboss of the Sacramento metropolitan area

Peter Hale-- Beta, underboss of Metropolitan Fresno

Vernon Boyd-- No. 2 Beta, captain of Northern California*; magical drug manufacturing, trafficking, distribution, and sale

Lydia Martin-- Beta, captain of Northern California*; money laudering

Cora Hale-- Beta, captain of Northern California*; prostitution

Isaac Lahey-- Beta, captain of Northern California*; gambling and racketeering

Allison Argent-- Beta, captain of Northern California*; theft, fencing

Danny Mahealani-- Beta, of Northern California*; computer hacking and fraud

Scott McCall, Erica Reyes, Jackson Whittemore-- Betas, of Northern California*; 'muscle', protection

Alan Deaton-- Emissary, of Beacon Hills; supernatural medical physician

Sheriff John Stilinski-- Associate, of Beacon Hills

Melissa McCall-- Associate, of Beacon Hills

* Territory expands in later chapters

** Kira, Malia, and Ethan serve similar purposes under Peter in his territory. Aiden, Ethan's brother, is Valerie's "No. 2" in her territory

*** Lydia, Allison, and Danny are still human. Just referred to as 'betas' by other characters since they are apart of a pack

And also, thank you all for reading. More to come. And questions or comments, feel free to ask :)
The Hale House kitchen is a bright, warm open space large enough to house two elephants. Maybe three.

Stiles moves around the kitchen expertly as Laura’s daughters-- Soleil, 13, Star, 11, and Luna, 7-- help him cook brunch. "How’s those hash browns coming, Star?"

"Good, Uncle Stiles." The girl shreds what looks like an endless amount of potatoes using her claws with uncanny speed.

"And you, Luna? We doing alright?"

Luna, Laura’s youngest, looks nothing like her mother. She’s all pale skin and straight, golden hair, taking after her father completely. "We’d be doing better if you let me near the stove." Luna attempts to crack nearly three dozen eggs into two giant mixing bowl.

"Nope."

"Mom lets me at our house."

"That’s your house. Here, I will not be responsible for third degree burns on your gorgeous face."

"Doesn’t matter. I’d just heal anyway."

"I know, my love, but the thought of it scares Uncle Stiles anyway."

"You’re such a worrier." Stiles chuckles at the girl’s accusation.

"That’s why he’s such a good mate for Uncle Derek. He worries about everything, and Uncle Derek worries about nothing," Soleil offers her little sister as an explanation.

Stiles can’t help but to burst out laughing. "I wouldn’t say your Uncle Derek worries about nothing. He’s just a man of action. He likes to ‘do’ more than plan."

"And you do all the planning, right?"

"Not all the planning, but most. Keeps us safe. But your Uncle Derek does more than his share to keep things afloat."

"He has to, because he's a True Alpha, right," Star asks.

"Right. But also because he loves everyone and wants to keep them safe and happy."

"Uncle Stiles I need the bread for the French Toast," Luna tells him.

Stiles hands her the bread. "Sprinkle in a little nutmeg and add some vanilla extract, too."

"Is that the 'Stilinski secret',' she asks.

"Maybe," he winks.

Luna rolls her eyes. "Heightened senses. Figured it out the first time you made them." Stiles laughs. Luna is a trip. Laura and Thomas must have their hands full.

"Uncle Stiles," Soleil calls.

"Hm," Stiles responds, slightly distracted, adding perfect-looking, golden pancakes to a platted
mountain of equally perfect-looking, golden pancakes.

"When did you know you loved Uncle Derek?"

"Always. But it took me awhile to admit it?"

"When did you admit it?"

"My last year of college. He was seeing a girl while I was studying in London and it upset me. So I came back home to tell him I love him and wanted to be with him."

"Did you kill her, too," Soleil asks casually.

Stiles turns wide-eyed at his niece, "W-W-What?"

"Did you kill her? Like Jennifer Blake," she repeats with the same easy tone in her voice, as though she were asking him if he had a good night's sleep.

"Um...," he responds intelligently.

"Did you kill all of Uncle Derek's old girlfriends," Star asks.

Stiles looks at the three innocent, beautiful faces. They're staring at him, waiting for an answer. Their sweet, cherub planes asking blase questions about murder. And not only murder, but Stiles as said murderer. He's a tad more than taken aback by the whole line of inquiry.

He must have been catching flies with his open mouth, because Soleil decides to rescue him from the depths of stuttering cluelessness, "Mom told us you killed Uncle Derek's ex-girlfriend."

"Because she was a Darach and had Uncle Derek under a spell so she could sacrifice a bunch of innocent humans that were virgins," Star adds on.

"Laura told you that?"

"Mom tells us everything. She said she doesn’t like us kept in the dark."

"Yeah. She said grandma and grandpa used to treat her like that and she didn’t like it. So she tells us things," Star says.

"Like why you went to jail last year," Luna says dipping slices of bread into French toast batter.

"So did you? Did you kill all of Uncle Derek's ex-girlfriends?"

"...I don’t know how your parents deal with you three." All three of them simply shrug their shoulders at him.

"I heard there were three beautiful girls in here!" Stiles turns to catch Laura’s daughters run into his father’s open arms. "You’ve got a little flour on your face," John says to Luna, dusting off her cheek with his hand.

"The mark of a hard-working woman."

John lets out a boisterous laugh. "Looks like it. Wouldn’t expect any less for making brunch for almost 30 people."

"Would be quicker if someone let me use the stove."
"He just doesn’t want you hurt. That’s all."

Luna sighs and shakes her head. "Humans." Luna returns to dipping bread slices into French toast batter.

"You’re staying for brunch, right," Soleil asks John with the brightest optimism.

"Of course."

"Good." Soleil and Star return to their duties.

Stiles stares at his father. Tears nearly form in his eyes... John approaches and they embrace. Like the world is ending and they’re the only two left. He misses his father. Just as John misses his son. For so long it was only the two of them, but since joining the Hale pack, the increased likelihood of Stiles in prison or dead has risen exponentially beyond the usual parental worry. The last thing he wants to do is worry his father, but nothing ceases a parents concern for their child. Especially their only child.

"A year is far too long, kiddo. Sometimes weekly phone calls aren't enough, you know?" They weren't; since they spend the last couple weeks missing one another's call. Their busy lives forced them to play 'phone-tag'. Laura kept Derek and Stiles abreast of all criminal happenings-- natural and supernatural-- in Beacon Hills, it was her duty as an underboss to, but also because she knew how Stiles worried about his dad, despite being family and pack to the Hales.

Stiles grew particularly worried last month when Laura informed them of a series of bank robberies in Nevada by a werewolf pack from Vegas, that lead to them hiding out in Beacon Hills after killing three cops in a bloody shootout during their last robbery. Once discovered, John and a special task force were assigned to ambushing their den and arresting them. Stiles couldn't get ahold of his father, or Melissa, for a few days afterward and grew paranoid that something had happened and everyone was just not telling him. Derek spent all night trying to calm him down after he had a panic attack.

His father called in the morning to tell him everything was fine and the werewolves from Vegas were in police custody, on their way back to Nevada. Stiles cried on the phone for over an hour, with John repeating how sorry he was for not calling him right away and that everything was okay. Stiles felt guilty afterward, now knowing what it must have been like for his dad when he was sent to prison last year.

"I know. I’m so sorry."

"Tell me you’re okay."

"I’m okay." Stiles pulls his head from his father’s shoulder to look him in the eye. "I’m okay. I swear to you."

"I believe you. I want the full story later."

"And you’ll get it. Like always. I promise." John nods knowing a promise from Stiles is always kept. "What about you? How are you?"

"I’ve got werewolves in my corner. I’m fine." John affectionately cards his hand through Stiles’ hair. "You need a haircut."

"Derek likes it this long."
"I kind of miss the buzzcut."

Stiles smiles and pulls his father into a tighter embrace. "I really miss you."

"Then make sure there’s never such a long gap between us seeing each other. Ever again." Stiles nods. "Good. Your pancake is burning."

Stiles breaks their hug. "Oh, shit!" It’s too late. That beautiful, perfect-looking flapjack has gone to food heaven. Or food hell, by the looks of it. Stiles regrettably discards the thin, burnt cake.

"Should’ve let me use the stove," Luna furnishes smugly.

"You’re really not going to let that go, are you?"

"Nope."

"You are your mother’s child."

The expansive veranda spans the entire length of the house, with a complete view of the Hale property. At the center, just outside the door that leads into the kitchen, is a long table set for 24 people (12 on each side, and one at the head and the other at the “foot”). And a smaller second table near it; the “kids’ table.”

Atop the larger table sits a massive display of the most delicious and colorful-looking brunch ever witnessed.

Everyone funnels out of the house through the kitchen in a clamor of comforting noise. Joining them is Peter, Melissa, and Deaton, along with Malia, Kira, and Ethan. In addition to Derek’s older sister, Valerie. She’s stunning, with the trademark dark, Hale hair and light eyes. Her lips are thin and coated in bright, red lipstick. She’s tall, but her designer shoes make her appear even more looming and cosmopolitan.

Everyone talks over one another approaching the spread of food laid out for them atop the table. They take their respective seats at the table. Thomas, Laura’s handsome husband, sits beside her. He’s tall, with short blonde hair and a chiseled face that looks as though it were sculpted from marble. Malia frowns at being forced to sit at the kids’ table.

The talkative buzz continues circling the table...

Talia joins everyone on the veranda through the kitchen. Along with Derek’s father, Theodoric “Theo” Hale. Immediately, silence befalls the outdoor space at their presence and everyone stands in respect. Theo and Talia make their way to the head of the table. Theo walks with a limp, aided by a cane.

Theo takes his seat at the head, with Talia to his right. Everyone sits. Derek is at the other end, with Stiles to his right.

Theo leans his simple cane beside him against the table. He’s tall— noting who Valerie received her stature from— and very handsome, with a full head of thick, salt-and-pepper hair and matching beard. He looks more like a lion, than a wolf; regal and forthright. It’s still as quiet as a church, until:

"Stiles. Thank you. This feast is much appreciated by everyone here."
"You're welcome, Theo."

"We helped, too, grandpa," Luna says, not wanting to be left out of her grandfather's gratitude.

"So I hear. Gratitude is extended to you little cubs as well."

"You're welcome, grandpa," Soleil appreciates politely.

"I cherish moments such as these. When we are all together, happy, and strong in our union. And though there are some that are absent at our table--" He shoots Valerie a quick glare. Valerie’s eyes fall to her empty plate. Cora takes her hand. "--we are still connected, nonetheless. Not just by blood or bite, but by love."

Under the table, Derek takes Stiles’ hand into his.

"By a love that allows for an unwavering allegiance--" Allison receives a look in her direction from Theo. She nods. "--a healthy sense of pride and honor, and a devotion to our responsibilities. That is pack. That is family. That is what we are." Everyone hangs on the sovereign wolf’s words of what family and love mean to him. To them. "Now, I don't know about anyone else, but I am very excited to enjoy this amazing looking food. Please. Eat."

Everyone grabs a dish, passing it to one another, and filling the air once again with their comfortable conversation.

The sun is setting, casting a warm glow across the property and bathing them in hues of orange and fading yellow. Empty serving dishes of food litter the table, but adults remain, conversing over crystal glasses of white wine. The kids are gone, having disappeared into the house with Malia as their baby-sitter.

Theo finishes his glass of wine. "Cora. Isaac. Please clear the tables. Allison, Lydia, Danny would you mind washing the dishes?" The three of them nod. "Kira and Ethan will help with any other cleaning up. Scott and Erica, please check the perimeter of the house and the guest house. Boyd, Jackson, and Thomas will check the preserve."


"Would you mind relieving Malia of her baby-sitting duties? She may need a break."

"Of course."

"Thank you." Theo grabs his cane and stands. Talia stands with him. "Everyone else please come to the study."

Theo and Talia walk inside.

The table breaks up, everyone with their assigned task.

Theo and Talia are joined in the study by Derek, Stiles, Peter, John, Deaton, Laura, and Valerie. Valerie closes the door.

"Derek," Theo says plainly, waiting for an explanation.
"The FBI came to the house and arrested us, along with the rest of the pack," Derek answers his father.

"Jesus Christ," John vocalizes, rubbing the lines on his forehead.

"For," Theo asks.

"You name it, they charged us," Stiles says with annoyance.

"Laura," Theo calls on his eldest.

"Everything they’re saying we’re involved in-- we’re involved in. But they don’t have anything concrete, just a bunch of heresy from some rats and stool pigeons," she answers her father.

"Someone in pack," Theo asks her.

"No. Outsiders we’ve done small business with. I can argue that they’re spinning lies on a good family name for reduced sentences on their own charges," Laura says.

"Do we know who they are? Names? Faces," Theo asks openly.

"Danny might be able to find out, but he needs a new laptop and untraceable IP address," Stiles responds.

"Laura, get with Danny and see about getting him all the equipment he needs. Then you two find out who these rats are exactly and what we can do about them," Theo commands.

"Well, I know for sure once we find out who they are we can’t hurt them. It’ll look more than suspicious if the handful of guys that gave up intel on the Hales suddenly go missing, or turn up dead," John advises.

"Snitches," Stiles states. "We put it out there in the were community that they’re snitches once we find out who they are. Nobody likes a rat, especially one wondering their territory."

"What if they’re in protective custody," Valerie asks.

"That’s what Danny’s for. He’ll find out where they are and we’ll put their names out there," Stiles answers his sister-in-law.

"Then force them out into the open. Someone else will do our dirty work for us," Laura adds.

Theo nods thoughtfully. "I’m good with that. Derek?"

"Me, too," Derek tells him.

"I understand Chris and Kate Argent are working this case," Theo says, turning to Laura.

"Not anymore." Derek and Stiles turn to her surprised. "Got an email from my boss. They’ve been suspended. Case is in another agent’s hands," Laura informs everyone.

"We should flip him," Derek throws out.

"I agree," Peter chimes in.

"Me, too," Stiles complies.
"I don’t know about that," John hesitates. "He’d be an outsider with extensive pack knowledge and a bag full of bribe money. Sounds messy."

"I agree with John," Theo says after a beat of thought.

"Alright, then let’s get Danny to find out who he is, and see if there’s anything we can leverage him with. Erica and Scott can do some recon, too. Maybe he’s behind on alimony, or got a gambling habit," Stiles suggests.

"And what if he’s Dudley Do-Right," Peter drolls in his usual sarcasm.

"Then we don’t approach and go to Plan B," Stiles answers.

"Which is," Peter asks.

Derek and Stiles exchange nervous looks, knowing their underbosses won't like what they have to say. "...A temporary shutdown of operations," Stiles says.

"Fuck that!" And why wouldn't Peter hold back any disagreement he might have...?

"It's not like you're the Alpha of Las Vegas. You live on a goat farm in Fresno," Stiles criticizes.

"Which is my cover for selling vamp blood and wolfsbane wine to horny college kids and fucking hipsters. Plus, my 25% cut from Madam Kali's place," Peter reminds Stiles.

"A shutdown of operations is a little drastic, Derek. Even if it is temporary," Talia soft peddles.

"It’s just Plan B with an asterik. Until we can think a little more on it," Stiles tries to reassure everyone.

"Why not buy some judges and cops," Valerie suggests.

"We have. We do," Stiles says, annoyed again at the failure of their bribery not working for them at the moment.

"That’s how I got Stiles got out of jail after only two and a half weeks," Laura tells her sister.

"But since the arrest, they’re going to want to put some distance between us and them. Plus, I don’t think that’s such a good idea," Stiles adds.

"Agreed," John aligns with his son. "The Feds will first look for you, to where you could have fled-"

Deaton interrupts John, "I scattered their energies with a false presence around the state, and cloaked the house under a protection spell, but it’ll only last for a few weeks until I can locate a stronger spell."

"Until then though, they’re going to hassle every low-rung supe that’s ever come within a mile of you two, threatening them, scaring them into telling them something. Anything. That’s probably how they got the tattle-tales they arrested. Then, if they get nowhere, they’re going to circle back and hound every cop, judge, and security guard that was ever on your payroll."

"It’s a muzzle," Derek figures, "To show we can’t turn to anyone for help. That if they do get us we can’t hand some official a stack of bills and get off. And they’ll want nothing to do with us, facing their own shit charges."
"Exactly. Good news is that no cop or judge on your payroll will open their mouth," John says.

"They’d be incriminating themselves," Laura spells out.

"Unless they cut a deal with the Deputy Director," Valerie says sarcastically.

"Fucking Finstock..." Stiles grumbles like it's a personal offense.

"Shit." Peter snaps. "So we shut down because Derek’s ex still has a lady-boner for taking us all to hell?!"

Stiles’ blood runs cold as he turns stiff. Derek’s ex...? Derek’s ex?! Kate Argent?! Kate fucking Argent is Derek’s ex?!

Every were in the room feels Stiles tense up. Derek shuts his eyes tight, bracing himself for the ensuing fight bound to happen.

Stiles tries hard to remain calm as his brain pops of like firecrackers and a festering rage begins to boil in his chest. He fidgets with a hand over his mouth trying to suppress the volatile screams bubbling in his throat.

"Why don’t we work on what we discussed so far, getting Danny some equipment to work with, and we’ll talk a stronger Plan B tomorrow after lunch," Talia suggests, trying to diffuse the thick air of tension smothering the room.

John, Peter, Deaton, Laura, and Valerie leave the study. Stiles and Derek remain frozen in place by the loud hostility between them, booming like a bass drum.

Finally, Derek speaks, "Stiles--"

Stiles bolts from the room, slamming the door open with a bang as he goes!

"How could you not tell him? Your mate," Theo admonishes Derek. "Are you trying to lose him over something so trivial?"

"No," Derek answers pathetically, too busy hating himself at the moment to lift his lowered head at his father.

"Stiles is essential to this family. We can not face what is a head of us if you two are fractured," Theo tells him.

Derek finally meets his father's eyes, "I know, dad--"

"Don’t tell me you know. Fix it. Now, Derek," Theo says sternly.

Derek nods. He exits the study after Stiles. He follows Stiles panicked scent of anger and disappointment to the second floor. Stiles heated smell wafts into the hallway from the third room on the left. He pushes open the door to his childhood bedroom.

Stiles sits on the bed, angrily putting on his sneakers.

"Stiles--"

"Not here," Stiles says bitterly, before storming out of the room.
They're standing in the deep, dark woods, far away from the tender ears of other weres that could hear them. Stiles immediately lays into Derek: "Kate fucking Argent! You fucked Kate Argent! You had sex, were in a relationship with, the very woman who’s hellbent on destroying everything your family has built, and everything we have built since, and you didn’t tell me?!

"It wasn’t relevant."

"Bullshit, Derek! If it wasn’t then you would have said something!"

"It was years ago, Stiles! Before I even met you! I was only 17 years old!"

"It’s not about you sleeping with her, Derek. I know where your heart is. This isn’t a jealous rant. It’s one about secrets and lies! And how embarrassed I am that everyone in that room knew but me! Who else knows?!"

"Just my family."

"I am your family, you asshole!"

Derek’s got nothing. He’s completely wrong and he knows it.

"I’m not going through this again. Not the secrets and the hiding things and the lies."

"That’s not what this is."

"Then why not tell me? And if you say ‘it was to protect you’, I swear to God I’ll hit you."

"It wasn’t."

"So you just like lying to me?"

"No! Of course not!"

"But you do anyway." Stiles turns away from Derek, heading back for the house, leaving Derek in the woods.

Derek's screwed. He knows more than anything that Stiles hates secrets. He calls them "lies-in-waiting." And Derek knows how much it hurt Stiles the last time he kept something from him. So much so, Stiles threatened to move out if Derek didn't promise on his soul, his wolf, that he would never again keep something from Stiles. Even if he were just trying to protect him. But this, this is idiotic, to put it plainly. He could have told Stiles. He should have told Stiles. Not doing so, having Stiles angry at him, is distressing his wolf. It's making his skin itch and his wolf whine, feeling wounded. "Fuck." Derek takes off his shirt, his pants, and his shoes.

He shifts into his full wolf form and takes off into the darkness.

Allison sits atop the bed in the first guest room while Scott unpacks their suitcases. "I didn’t expect him to be so...powerful. Royal almost."

"Who? Theo?"

"Yeah."

"He does have that affect on you when you first meet him; being in such awe of him."
"The way he’s so commanding... He’s nothing like my family described him."

"To be fair, I think your family has a bias."

"Yeah, guess so." Her mind wanders a moment, creating a look of melancholy on her face.
Scott crawls onto the bed with her, lifting her onto his lap. "Penny for your thoughts?"
"My loyalties keep being called into question. And I deserve to have them be."
"Stiles and Derek trust you. I trust you. That’s all that matters."

"No. It’s not. I am beyond grateful that after everything, Stiles and Derek and you have faith in me, but Theo and Talia Hale are another story."
"They’re retired. Derek runs things now. Only his opinion holds water."

"Scott. We just spent 5 minutes talking about the essence that is Theo Hale. He’s Derek’s father. He counsels him when Derek needs advice. His opinion matters. To everyone. Including me."

"Not to me."
"Liar. Don’t say things like that."

"I know how I feel about you. And what you mean to me. I know who you are. I see you, Allison Argent."

"Argent. That last name holds so much venom. It’s poison. Especially here."

"Then let’s change it."
"To what?"
"…McCall."

"Scott... Scott are you asking me to marry you?"

"I always pictured it being a lot more romantic than being in a house full of werewolves on the run, and at our favorite restaurant, but, yes. Yes. I, Scott Roberto McCall, am asking you, Allison Jennifer Argent, to be my wife."

Tears fill her big, brown eyes. "Scott..." Scott climbs off the bed. He rummages through his suitcase and climbs back onto the bed. He presents a small, black velvet box. He opens the box— a sparkling round diamond with a **diamond halo on a white gold band**. Tears run down her flushed cheeks.

"Will you marry me?"

"Yes. Yes!" Scott puts the ring on her finger. She kisses the hell out of him, pulling him down atop her. Their kissing turns heavy. Allison changes their position so that she’s on top, straddling his thighs. She carefully removes her shirt. Scott leans up to kiss her sweetly. She pushes him back down. She takes off her bra and pulls her hair from her ponytail, letting her chestnut locks flow down her shoulders. Scott leans up, taking her breast into his mouth. She runs her hands through his hair as he continues squeezing her breast and covering them with his hot mouth. "Scott. I love when you do that."
He flips her over on her back. She helps him out of his shirt and runs her tongue from his navel to his neck. Scott’s eyes shift to their beta yellow. Allison opens his jeans and slides her hand inside, wrapping her it around his swollen cock. "I love how quickly you get excited for me, Scott."

"Allison..." he breathes out in a balmy whisper. She keeps jerking him off in his jeans.

"Put your mouth on me, Scott."

He doesn’t need to be told twice. Scott pushes her back down, lifts up her skirt and rips her underwear off with his claws. He hooks her leg over his shoulder and buries his face between her legs. He gives her one, long, slow lick right up the center of her wetness. Then another... Then another... And another... "S-Scott," she stutters. The tip of his tongue plays with her clit. "Oh, God!" Then another long, agonizing lick...

Scott lifts her other leg onto his shoulder and burrows his tongue in her slippery hole. Allison loses her breath, pinned to the bed by his deep tongue-fucking as his fingertip flicks her clit. She’s all garble and cut off words. "Oh. God. Scott. Pl-- I can’t-- You...just... Feels so g-good... S-So wet for you..." He moves up to suck on her clit, bringing his fingers to her mouth. She sucks his fingers as he continues sucking her budding tipping point. He takes his fingers from her mouth and slips them into the hollow of her wet pussy. He keeps sucking gently on her clit and his fingers curve inside her, grazing that special spot.

Her orgasm hits her like a tidal wave. Her thighs tighten around Scott’s head and her back bows off the bed as she screams his name and it bounces off the walls, echoing in her ears. Scott lifts his head from her legs. She shudders, watching as his yellow eyes burn through her. He wipes his lips with his finger and brings it to her mouth. She sucks on it, tasting her own excitement. He smiles a mischievous, fanged smile. "Make love to me. Now, Scott."

Scott quickly rids himself of the rest of his clothes as Allison lies on the bed, watching, wrecked by his fiance and the orgasm he just gave her. Scott kneels before her, naked. She runs a hand down his chest to his abs. He lifts her up with the greatest of ease, her legs wrapped around his waist. She reaches down between them, grabbing his cock, rubbing it up and down her dripping pussy.

A growl rumbles through him. "Allison..." he warns.

"You teased me at first. Fair is fair." Scott grips her arm, forcing her to stop. He guides himself to her pink hole and surges into her, slow. He keeps a slow pace, pushing into her. Her arms wrap around shoulders. "I love you."

"I love you, too."

"Mark me." She pulls her hair to one side of her head, presenting her bare neck to him. Her neck is peppered with healed scars from all the times before he’s claimed her as his, and only his. Scott’s incisors extend and he drags them along her skin, piercing, allowing trickles of blood to run smoothly down her shoulder. He laps up her blood. Her hands find his hair again, fielding through it gently.

Her shoulder clean of the red liquid, Scott’s pace picks up a bit. Their foreheads touch and Allison’s grip returns to his shoulders. The only sound is their breathy moans as Allison tries to meet him thrust for thrust. And she feels it again, the tidal wave ready to crash over her and break her into a million tiny pieces... "Scott! I'm going to--" He climaxes with her, crushing her mouth in a fierce kiss as he fills her up with his cum, and she coats him with her own emission.

They crumble in each other’s arms, falling to the mattress, trying to recover their breath.
Valerie opens her bedroom door. Derek on the other side. Clutching a pillow and blanket. Valerie
snickers.

"Please don’t laugh. It’s not funny."

"It’s a little funny, D." Valerie steps aside to let him in, then closes the door. "Stiles is that pissed,
huh?"

"He’s been angrier at me before. So I’ll take being kicked out of our room over what could be
worse."

"But what have we learned from all this?"

"That I should punch Peter in the face?"

"Don’t blame him for your fuck-up."

"I’m not. I want to, but I’m not. It’s not his fault."

"Well, good. That’s a start. Now, why didn’t you tell Stiles about Kate?"

"Can you grill me in the morning? I just want to go to bed and forget my husband is mad at me."

"Like you’re going to sleep. You’re going to toss and turn all night, worried about how angry you
made your mate over something so dumb."

"Did you disclose all your exes to Jason when you got married?"

"Well, none of my exes wants to throw me in jail and murder my family, but yes. Jason and I have
no secrets."

"Neither do Stiles and I."

"Except this one," she asks sarcastically.

"You’re a dick."

She laughs. He flops down on the bed, staring up at he ceiling. She flops down beside him; her feet
at his head. "I know I’m not Laura, but you can talk to me."

"What does Laura have to do with anything?"

Valerie scoffs. "D. Don’t. It’s okay. It doesn’t bother me anymore. I know you both love me. And I
love the both of you, too. But I also know you’re each other’s favorites, and it’s cool. You’re still
my baby brother, and you can talk to me." She can sense his contemplation. Probably just as much
as he can sense her eagerness. She isn't being nosy, or even curious. Just wanting him to open up to
her. Wanting him to treat her as a friend he can be honest with, and just 'Valerie, the other sister'.

"It took forever to get him. I knew the moment I saw him that he was mine, but it took 3 years, and
a bunch of screaming matches and some new-supe-of-the-week trying to kill us before he was
actually mine."

"You never told me how you two got together."
"He was with Malia when we met. So I held back. Until we went to New Orleans, to help Adelaide with some werewolves from Mexico trying to sell in her territory. We were up late, planning our strategy, when... I don't know. We just kissed. And it was everything. And I knew I couldn't give him up, but had to, because of Malia. Plus, he was scared. So he pushed me away. He tried to make us friends instead. I think that was more miserable than not being around him at all. It twisted my insides being that close to him all the time and not being able to claim him."

"Your wolf was clawing at you for him."

"I could feel him, itching to get at Stiles, desperate and crazed. It was like swallowing broken glass."

"God, D. I didn’t know you resisted like that."

"The wolf was pissed at first. He wouldn’t let me have anyone else. Even if it was just for a night. All he wanted was Stiles."

"Jesus. No wonder you’re a True Alpha. I could have never done that. When I met Jason I practically raped him."

"Eck."

She swats his leg. He grins a little at her irritancy.

"How’d you finally get him?"

"Braeden. Scott told him I was seeing someone while he was in London that I was getting serious with, and was coming to pack meetings," he snorts at the memory of the whole ordeal. "He flew all the way back home, told me he loved me, and made me break up with her."

"Then what was the deal with Jennifer?"

"That was before Braeden. She put me under a spell. Stiles hated her from the beginning, before he even figured out she was a Darach. He kept saying that she was bad news, and up to something, and he didn’t trust her. I told him he was just jealous that I didn’t want him anymore and that Jennifer was my real mate."

"Was that true? Did you really feel that way?"

"The spell made the human part of me feel that way, but the wolf--"

"Wasn’t having it."

"No," Derek says with a smile. "We got into a huge fight. Huge. Low blows and throwing things, screaming at the top of our lungs, lobbing insults back and forth; it was terrible. But the next thing I know, I’ve got him up against the wall and we’re kissing, tearing at each other like it was our last day on Earth."

"I love when sex is like that. Wild and open and uncaring. It’s--"

"Intense."

"More than intense."

"...primal."

"Good words," he says. He shifts so that he and Valerie are facing the same way on the bed now. She takes his hand. "I don’t talk about sex with Laura."

"Really?"

"Not in detail. Not about how it feels. Just that it happened."

"I don’t talk about sex with anyone."

"Really? Why?"

"Didn’t think anyone would understand. Or that I could put it into words."

"Or that trying to would oversimplify it. Not do it justice," Derek better explains.

"Exactly. It’s because we’re mated."

"Maybe," he shrugs slightly.

"No. That’s definitely what it is," she says confidently.

"Laura’s mated."

"Not to a human. I think sex is more emotional when your mate isn’t a were."

"I think it’s hard for anyone without a mate yet to understand. Mom knows what I mean."

"You talk about sex with mom?! Ew, D!"

"I had to! When I met Stiles I didn’t know what it was I felt, so I had to ask her. And she went into detail. More detail than I cared for. But then it just happened. Every time I had a question, I’d go to her and ask."

"But still, mom?"

"Who was I supposed to ask? Peter?"

They both shudder at the idea of discussing sex with Peter.

"Hey," she whispers, "Did you know Peter and Chris Argent had sex when they were teenagers?"

"What?! I thought that was just a rumor Laura started to piss him off," he whispers back.

"Nope. Heard him and mom talking about it years ago."

"Stiles is right, there is no privacy with werewolves."

They laugh loudly together.

A bang on the wall stops their giggle fit. "Will you two assholes shut up so I can sleep please," Laura begs through the wall.

Derek and Valerie snicker. "Sorry, Laura," they shout simultaneously.

They lie quiet a moment, coming down from their humor-high. Valerie cuddles against his side.
She wants to asks. She wants to know. Because she's mated too, and she needs to know how broken a wolf can be without their mate. How lost, and fading. "I remember what you were like when he went to prison."

He squeezes her hand. "I don’t want to talk about that."

"Does Stiles?"

"No. At least not with me. He does with mom."

"Does everyone go to mom about deep shit," she asks.

"Seems like it."

"Stiles is a lot like her." Derek's eyes jump up his forehead. "I’m not implying there’s anything Freudian about it. Just saying there's things about mom I see in him."

"I thought we were talking about sex."

"We were talking about you not telling Stiles about Kate Argent, but then we started talking about sex. Way to deflect."

"Stiles hates when I do that," he smirks.

"How do you get to? That kid’s mouth moves as quickly as his mind."

"He has ADHD, Val."

"Oh. I didn’t know that... Explains a lot."

"Fuck you." He lightly kicks at her feet.

She chuckles.

"I told Jennifer I slept with Stiles the next day," he continues, remembering what they were discussing. "I should have known something was up then, because she was so cool about it. Wanted to talk about it with Stiles and everything. 'Discuss the whole thing like adults.' Of course Stiles was furious and refused, but that spell had such a hold on me, and I got angry at him for not wanting to, and told him never to talk to me again. Meanwhile, John’s trying to help me find out who the fucking Darach is, and the whole time it was her. And Stiles being the genius he is, figures out that it’s her and that I’m under a spell. Scott threw mistletoe in her face, and Stiles slit her throat, right in front of me, without even blinking."

"And then?"

"And then he ran off to London for a year. And I got angry. Which is how Braden happened."

"Why didn't you make him stay?"

"I tried, but I didn't want to hold him back, either. Besides, what do you say to someone after something like that happens?"

"How about: 'Thanks for saving the lives of so many innocent people from being slaughtered, including myself, from a crazy bitch that put me under a love spell. And to show my gratitude I will now get on my knees and blow you until you pass out.'"
Derek laughs. In this moment he realizes he should have spent more time with Valerie growing up. He was closer to her in age than Laura and Cora, but somehow overlooked her in favor of Laura. She’s fun and uninhibited in the things she says. Laura is to, but Valerie seems more at ease with what flies out of her mouth, whereas Laura always seemed to say things shocking in order to obtain a reaction from whoever she was talking to. Maybe Laura really isn’t the rebellious one after all. Maybe it’s Valerie and she’s just always been smart enough to fly under the radar. Or willing to let Laura hold that particular title so she could rebel sight unseen from their parents. If so, she’s a genius.

"I couldn’t. I was too embarrassed to say anything meaningful."

"Is that why you didn’t tell Stiles about Kate Argent? Because you’re embarrassed of everything that happened, especially with dad?"

Derek turns quiet. Stoic.

"D? Derek?"

"...I’m tired."

Valerie knows she might have pushed on a nerve. She doesn’t want to push any further. They were connecting. She doesn’t want to ruin that. "Me, too. You want the head or the foot?"

"Foot’s fine." He remains at the foot of the bed. She throws him his pillow. The quiet, stoic look he had a moment ago still plastered on his contemplative face.

It’s dark. But the bright first quarter moon shines into the room, letting in shadow-y white light from the open balcony doors. A soft night breeze bellows the lace curtains like a ghost.

Derek stares out the doors at the moon as he twirls his wedding band on his finger. It’s a Tungsten carbide ring, with two red grooves running along the edges, symbolic of both their blood and both their hearts.

He closes his eyes and listens, finding Stiles' heartbeat. The steady rhythm of it's beats suggests Stiles is awake...

Stiles is awake. Twirling his wedding band around his ring finger. It’s identical to Derek’s wedding band.

He glances at the clock on the nightstand. It’s 2:17AM. Stiles sighs. Fighting with Derek never allots him any sleep.

Suddenly, the covers are thrown off him and he’s yanked from the bed!

Derek drags Stiles out the kitchen, to the far-end of the veranda where there is a cozy patio area with an outdoor fireplace. "What," Stiles snaps at him.

"I didn’t tell you about me dating Kate because I was embarrassed. Because my relationship with her lead to a lot of horrible things happening afterward with my family. A lot of which I still blame
myself for, and to be perfectly honest, will always blame myself for. And I didn’t want the person I love most in this world, the man I live and breathe for, and wouldn’t hesitate to die for, to blame me either."

Stiles merely stares at him, silently for a moment... "Man, you have got this martyr thing down pact. I should build you a cross."

"Fuck you, Stiles. You asked me to be honest and I was." Derek turns back toward the house.

"So you just walk away?!"

"You’re pushing me away!"

"How am I now the asshole?!"

"Because I gave you what you needed and you’re still not satisfied!"

"What I need is for my husband to be completely honest with me," Stiles shouts back.

"And that’s what I did! Sorry the timing was off!" Derek turns back toward the house again.

"I hate fighting with you! It’s just as bad as being without you," Stiles confesses.

Derek turns back toward Stiles. He sees the desperate, sorrow look on his boy’s face. It really does tear him up inside. "I hate fighting with you, too."

"I can’t sleep when we’re like this. Apart and not talking. Even when you’re in the room next to me."

Derek pulls Stiles to him. They hold each other for a moment.

They kiss. A soft, forgiving kiss.

"I hate feeling like I don’t know you. When you keep things from me, even if you think they don’t matter, it makes me feel like you’re a stranger. That I don’t really know the man I share a bed with."

"Stiles, baby--"

"I know it’s dumb, but I can’t help it. I tell you everything, Derek. I leave nothing out. I need you to do that for me. You promised me the last time that you would, and now this."

"I know. I’m sorry."

"Don’t be sorry, Derek. Just don’t hide things from me. There’s nothing you can’t tell me." Stiles runs his hand through Derek’s hair. "I’m yours. I’m not going anywhere."

He doesn’t deserve Stiles. He knows that. He’s found the perfect person and all he does is keep secrets from him, and walk away when it gets too hard. But here he is. His Stiles. Asking him to do one simple thing; to not keep secrets. There should be no reason he can’t do that for him. "I didn’t mean to hurt you. That’s never what my intentions are."

"Then let’s change your intentions. From now on, your intentions are to trust that Stiles will understand. Because he knows me better than anyone. He knows who I really am."

Derek runs his thumb along Stiles lips. "I love you."
"I love you, too."

Derek takes Stiles hand and leads him back to the cozy sitting area. They sit. "You’re going to ask me anything you want to ask me. And I’m going to answer every single question, honestly. No filter. Just complete truthfulness."

"Really? Anything?"

Derek nods. "And we won’t stop until everything you want to know is answered."

"We could be here until sunrise."

"I got nowhere to be but here."

Stiles kisses him. He breaks their kiss just as quickly as he had offered it, eager for his first question. "Were you really in love with Braeden?"

"I thought we were starting with Kate questions. Is this something that has seriously been bugging you for the last 5 years?" Stiles nods. "Fine. No. But I did like her a lot. And if you weren’t my mate, and I weren’t hopelessly in love with you, we’d probably still be together."

"I knew it!"

"Stiles, don’t."

"I can’t help it! She’s the only girl you’ve been with that makes me so jealous I can’t breathe!"

"You’ve only ever seen me with two girls-- Jennifer and Braeden."

"Doesn’t matter. Braeden was normal--"

"For a druid and a mercenary."

"--smart, a total badass, really fucking hot, and the whole pack liked her. She’s like the lovechild of Olivia Pope and Indiana Jones. All that equals jealous Stiles."

"But she wasn't funny," Derek smiles. But he knows someone that is... He grabs Stiles for a kiss.

"You’re trying to distract me."

"I don’t have to try that hard."

Stiles pulls away from Derek. "Cheater. Alright. Next question. It’s a Kate question."

Derek takes a deep breath. "Okay."

"How did you start seeing her?"

"She found me. Playing basketball at the park. She started talking to me, flirting with me. Then she started coming to the park every Sunday after I told her that’s where I am every week. She came on to me, kissed me, and that was it. I fell for her. She was this hot, older woman and I was a dumb 17 year old kid who thought he was in love. I wanted her to be my mate so bad that I thought I could will it to be true, simply by being so gone for her. I told her I was a werewolf the night she took my virginity. And then afterward she started asking me these questions about my family. What my dad did for a living, what was my mom like, who are my parents’ friends, stuff about Peter and Laura, and what they did all day, and things about werewolves; their powers and their
weaknesses. And, like an idiot, I told her."

"Oh, shit, Derek."

"Not everything, but some things. It was enough."

"For what?"

"For the Argents to come after us, namely Kate, Victoria, and Gerard. They weren’t apart of the FBI yet, so it was just them and their psychotic need for a were-genocide. According to Peter, Chris had never really felt as strongly about killing weres as his sister and wife, but there was little he could do to stand in their way."

"Because hunters have a matriarchal system." Derek nods.

Derek grows quiet. What he has to say next is hard. Explaining Kate and all the horror she caused, and all due to him spilling secrets, over lusty nights in a motel room with her... Stiles squeezes his hand. He’s here. And it’s okay... "I told Kate about wanting her to be my mate, and explained to her what I knew at the time about mates," Derek continues. "I told her how I’d given up the idea of a mate after Paige. But then she came along and it seemed like something real, something that could actually happen to me, especially when Laura met Thomas. I’d never seen Laura so gone over a guy before. She never had to tell me, but I knew she’d die for him. She’d kill for him. And I told Kate that’s how I felt about her. She seemed flattered, like she thought the same thing and wanted the same thing. But she said she didn’t quite understand and asked me to tell her more about mates and their connection. I didn’t know much, and couldn’t go to my mom, because then she would know I was seeing Kate, and I was only seventeen and she was in her twenties. So I told her everything I saw between Laura and Thomas, and everything Laura said she felt for him. And Kate used that. She used my sister’s love for her mate to lure her into a trap."

"How," Stiles asks.

"She made Laura think Thomas was in danger, and vice versa. Thomas escaped the trap and made his way to my sister, rescuing her. When Laura recovered, she said Kate Argent is the one that tricked her, and trapped her in an abandoned train car. Kate knew Thomas clerked at the same law office as Laura and slipped in unnoticed. She stole his jacket to leave his scent in the train car and make Laura think he was inside. Then she locked her in there, and set it on fire."

"Jesus, Derek..."

"She tried to poison Thomas with desert wolfsbane and leave him for dead in the woods, but he could feel Laura in danger, calling out for him. He forced himself to puke up the wolfsbane. He was still hallucinating when he came out of the woods, but he could hear her, and the danger she was in. Thomas ran through fire to save my sister, and I was the one that put her there."

"Derek, you know that’s not true. So far from the truth it’s on another planet."

"I confronted Kate about what Laura and Thomas said. And she laughed. She laughed and told me I was a dumb kid that didn’t know his ass from his elbow. She told me she was a hunter and that it was her life’s mission to see every were on the planet dead. She seemed more pissed than anything that Laura and Thomas survived and said that she’d settle for an easy target at the moment, and attacked me. I fended her off and made it back to my house. I told Laura everything and she... She was so understanding, and so forgiving. She convinced me to tell mom and dad, so they could do something about Kate and her demented family. The Argents and the Hales have a centuries-long history of bloodshed between them. Had I been honest with them about Kate, I would have known
"You were young. And thought you were in love. You didn’t know who Kate was or how fucked up she is."

"My dad could barely look at me."

"That wasn’t about you. It was about Kate. I didn’t have to be there to know that. Theo could never be that angry with you. Any of you."

"But he could be hurt. And when my dad’s hurt, he goes still. And quiet. You can’t read him, so you spend the silence losing your mind over what it is he’s thinking."

"Sounds like someone I know," Stiles says with a teasing smile. "Then what happened?"

"My parents were enraged and they went after the Argents with Peter and Val. Val killed Victoria, Allison’s mom. Gerard sliced my dad’s leg with a bowie knife covered with some sort of hyper-wolfsbane liquid. It's called 'Pluto's Oil'."

"Is that why he has the cane?"

Derek nods. "He couldn’t heal as quickly and some of it got left in his leg, like shrapnel."

Stiles sees Derek’s eyes turn glossy; tears forming. "You didn’t do that, Derek. Stiles turns Derek’s face to look at him. "Do you hear me? You. Didn’t. Do. That. You're not to blame. No one thinks that but you, and you need to stop. You think if your father blamed you he’d hand over his whole empire to you?"

"He did that because it turned out I’m a True Alpha. Not because he wanted to."

Stiles kneels before his grief-stricken husband. "That...is bullshit. You know that. Deep down, Derek Hale, you know that. No one could have brought everything together like you have. Laura is smart and cunning, but she’s not as strong as you. And I adore her, but she’s not as selfless as you either. Val is all brawn and action. She doesn't have patience, and she wouldn't know how to utilize her pack; how to use everyone’s different strengths to her advantage. And Cora... Well, Cora doesn’t want to be Alpha. She knows she’s not all the things Theo is. Or Talia. Or you. You’re Alpha because you deserve to be Alpha. Because it called to you. And given the raw awesomeness that is Theo Hale, I’m willing to bet he knew you were a True Alpha before it even called to you."

Derek stares at the boy at his feet, looking up at him with hope in his eyes. Hope that he’s fixed the hurt in his mate’s heart. Hope that he’s fixed the hurt in his mate’s heart. Hope that his husband understand just how much he loves him. Hope that his Big Bad knows just how special he is, and how much he’s loved. Derek runs his hands through Stiles’ hair. "It’s hard being with you sometimes."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean, it’s hard to believe you’re mine. It feels like I’m hallucinating, or dreaming. That at some point I’m going to wake up, and you’ll just be some fading memory I can’t get back. That’s why every morning when I wake up I count to three before opening my eyes."

"Why?"

"In case today is the day I turn over in bed, and you’re not there."

Stiles doesn't know if that was the saddest, or most romantic thing he's ever heard. Maybe it's both.
But what he does know, is what to say in response. "This is the first, and last time I’m going to say it, so listen carefully: what we have, isn't like you with Paige; you’re not going to hurt me. We are not you and Kate; I’m not going to hurt you. I am not Jennifer; I won’t use you. And we’re not you and Braeden; I won’t give you up without a fight. We’re Derek and Stiles. And there’s nothing else. We are going to grow old and die together with a hundred grandchildren around us when we do. You got that?"

"Yes."

"Now kiss me." Derek kisses Stiles with every bit of love and passion he has in him. Stiles returns his hunger with just as much greed as their mouths crush against each other.

"I want you," Derek tells him.

"We can’t. Everyone will hear."

Derek doesn’t stop kissing Stiles between words. "I don’t care if everyone hears."

"I do. The whole house heard Scott and Allison earlier."

"Then you’ll have to be quiet."

"I can’t be quiet with you. You know that. And there is no ‘quiet’ in a house full of werewolves. They probably heard us fighting."

Derek growls, wanting Stiles but he’s refusing.

"Calm your wolf."

"I can’t. He wants you."

Stiles breaks their kiss and moves away from Derek. "I’ll go to your room then. And you go back to Valerie’s."

"I’m not sleeping next to my sister with a hard on."

"Then sleep on the couch in the living room."

"Are you punishing me?"

"No...and yes."

Derek wants to fuck the smirk right off his smug face. "If you’re not going to let me fuck you, then the least you can do is sleep next to me."

"Okay."

"Here. Outside." Derek lies on the cushioned, wicker sectional, pulling Stiles with him. Stiles lands atop Derek, tucked under his arm with his head on his shoulder.

He listens to Derek's heartbeat for a minute before his curious, wandering mind decides to speak, "Where was Chris Argent?"

"Peter said he came to the fight late. Was taking care of Allison at home. Kate escaped the brawl and called him. She told him we killed Victoria and that Gerard was alone. Chris went back for them. He used sonic emitters to corral my family so he could get Gerard, and Victoria’s body. He
took them and left, forcing Kate to go with him. Deaton showed up and destroyed the emitters then took everyone back to the house."

"Laura said Chris and Peter dated in high school."

"I don’t know about dated, but they definitely had sex."

"That. Is. So. Weird."

"Very."

"The ever-growing mystery that is Chris Argent."

Chapter End Notes

Just a story note, that doubles as a head cannon note as well, Scott will never be Alpha, or True Alpha in anything I write. I can't accept it. He's just too... 'Scott-like' to ever hold such a powerful position I think. Also, in reference to Mr. McCall again, this is the only series, or story, I will write with Scott and Allison being together. I prefer Scott with Lydia; makes for a better dynamic and creative writing influence, in my opinion.
The pack must figure out what to do when Danny drops a bad news bomb in their laps.

THEODORIC is a widespread Germanic given name. First attested in the 5th century, it became widespread in the Germanic-speaking world, not least due to its most famous bearer, Theodoric the Great, king of the Ostrogoths. The name was Latinized as Theodoricus or Theodericus, originally from a Common Germanic form *þeudo-řiks ("people-ruler").

As the name survived throughout the Middle Ages, it transformed into a multitude of forms in the languages of Western Europe. These include the High German form Dietrich, abbreviated Dieter, the Low German and Dutch form Diederik, or Dierik, abbreviated Dirk, Diede, the patronymic Tietjens derived from the personal form Tietje, the Norwegian Tjodrik, and the French Thierry. Italian, Portuguese and Spanish have Teodorico.

The English forms DEREK, Derrick and Terry have been re-introduced from the continent, from Low German, Dutch and French sources. The Welsh form Tudur is the origin of the name of the British Tudor dynasty.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theodoric

And why yes I did use a picture of George Clooney with a beard as my 'mental image' of Theo Hale. Because come on. Who else can you picture as Derek's father...? Okay, maybe Tom Hanks. But that's it.

Feedback is ALWAYS appreciated :)

The fire in the fireplace has died out. Derek and Stiles are asleep on the sectional on the veranda. Stiles being ‘little spoon’ to Derek’s ‘big spoon’ as the early morning sun crawls awake.

A hand comes down, shaking Stiles’ shoulder.

"Yes, Isaac," Stiles mumbles sleepily.

"It’s not Isaac. It’s Scott," Derek tells him, head tucked in Stiles' neck.

Stiles groans. "What, dude?"

Scott and Allison stand over Derek and Stiles. Neither of them have bothered to open their eyes just yet. "We need to talk to you. Both of you," Scott says with a bright smile.
"And your parents, Derek," Allison chirps.

"Why," Stiles asks with another groan.

"Come on, man. It’s important," Scott says with a plea.

"What time is it," Stiles questions.

"Seven in the morning."

"We’ve only been asleep for an hour," Stiles addresses to Derek.

"Until we were awoken by a lovestruck couple... Let me go for a run with my sisters, eat, and shower. Then we can talk all day about anything you want to," Derek promises.

"That sounds like a plan," Stiles adds. "Gives me time to get back to sleep."

"Okay. But hurry up, dude. I really want to talk to you," Scott agrees with an eager sigh. Scott and Allison leave them, walking back into the house through the kitchen.

"They sound excited," Stiles says, half curious, half annoyed.

"Something's up. They smelled like cotton candy," Derek says.

Stiles yawns, then finally opens his eyes. "Then we should see what they want. Will you carry me to our room?"

Derek chuckles. "Yes."

Derek reluctantly stands, not wanting to remove himself from Stiles' side. He puts his arms under Stiles. Stiles arms wrap around Derek’s neck. His head leans onto his shoulder as Derek brings him close to his chest, cradling him. Derek carries Stiles into the house.

Derek exits the adjoining bathroom with a towel wrapped around his waist. Sprinkles of water glisten his hard chest and abs as he uses a smaller towel to dry his wet hair. Stiles sits on the bed scribbling in a notebook and sifting through a very old, dusty encyclopedia. His attention shifts to his husband dripping with water and half-naked. Derek let’s his towel fall to the floor as he rummages through a suitcase for clothes. He’s giving Stiles a show, teasing him, knowing he loves Derek’s nakedness and watching him meander around without any clothes on...

Stiles finally snaps out of it-- "How was your run?"

"Great. All the wolves came with. Minus Scott."

"Your dad didn't go either."

"His leg’s been acting up today."

"When he’s in wolf-y form, does his leg bother him," Stiles asks, curious.

"Not really. It’s the only time the pain and the limp are gone. It’s like his human is wounded, but not the wolf." Derek slides on a pair of dark blue jeans sans underwear. Stiles is practically drooling. Good. Serves him right for denying me make-up sex last night. "I’m surprised you’re up. And dressed."
"Once Scott woke us up I couldn’t get back to sleep. I might crash in the middle of lunch."

"At least you don’t have to make it. It’s my sisters’ turn. What are you looking for in there?"

"Something to turn Kate into a fly. That way I can swat her and she’d be dead."

"Transformation spells are hard. They drain you. Even some of the most powerful agents of magic have a hard time mastering it."

"I know. Doesn’t hurt to try though."

"It does if it literally hurts you, or takes you down a dark, hollow path."

"We talking about magic spells, or heroin?"

Derek approaches Stiles and pulls him by his shirt to his lips. "You’re an idiot. I love you."

"I love you, too." Stiles puts his books down. "But we should probably go hear whatever it is that Scott wants to tell us now."

"To be continued?"

"Absolutely."

Scott and Allison hold hands, 'cupcaking' over each other.

Stiles and Derek walk into the parlour. Followed by Theo and Talia. Scott and Allison stand. Everyone waits patiently for Theo to sit before they take a seat.

"Alright, Scottie-boy. We’re all here," Stiles says, his hands tapping on the armrest of the chair he’s sitting comfortably in.

"I just want to say that being apart of this pack-- a member of the Hale Pack-- means everything to me," Allison starts. "Especially considering the long, violent history my family and your family share."

"Ally. Princess Jasmine--" Stiles tries to interrupt.

"No. Let me get this out. Please." Stiles nods, letting her continue. "I’m not just here because of Scott. He is a big part of it, and he was the only reason in the beginning, but I have really grown to love everyone here, so much..." She chokes up. Scott takes her hand. "Especially you Stiles, and Derek. You trusted me, and I ruined it, and then you gave me another chance. You saw something in me that was worth a second chance, and I want to say ‘Thank You’. For letting me stay, and letting me be with Scott. Because I don’t know what I’d do without him."

The room falls quiet, touched, but unsure about what to do with Allison's speech and where it's coming from...

"...One of you better not be dying," Stiles chides, breaking the quiet at her beautiful words.

"Dude, so not dying," Scott tells him with raised eyebrows. He looks at Allison with a fond smile, "But with yours and Derek’s blessing, we will be getting married."

Derek and Stiles look to each other then nod agreeably.
"Yeah, sure," Stiles says easily.

"That's fine," Derek offers with the same unenthusiasm as Stiles.

"That... That’s it," Scott asks.

Stiles and Derek look at one another for reassurance. They shrug. Yeah. That’s it.

"I tell you Allison and I are engaged and that’s all you have to say," Scott asks, his voice rising a bit, taking a harsher tone at his best friend.


"Was bound to happen, right," Derek says. Stiles nods in agreement.

Scott and Allison are a little slack-jawed at the Alpha and his mate. Scott turns to Theo and Talia, "Alpha Hales. I apologize for what I'm about to say." Scott turns back to Derek and Stiles, "You two suck."

"So suck," Allison chimes in.

"What? We didn’t do anything," Stiles protests.

"Exactly," Scott snaps.

"You’re getting married. And we’re happy for you. You have our blessing," Derek says, confused about Scott and Allison's reaction.

Talia decides to help her son and son-in-law out a bit, "I think Scott and Allison were looking for their friends to be a little more excited about their engagement."

"When Derek proposed to you, you three-way called me with Lydia at one in the morning, and we cried on the phone with you for an hour," Scott reminds Stiles angrily.

"Lydia cried. You kept telling me to calm down."

"Because you were having a panic attack!"

"Derek just asked me to marry him!"

"Exactly, Stiles!"

"Okay. Let’s be real here. There was much more of a reason to be excited for me and Derek getting engaged."

"Why? Because he’s an Alpha?"

"No. Because no one thought we’d get our shit together." Derek's eyebrows shoot up to the ceiling at his husband. "Come on, sourwolf. We were a mess 6 years ago."

Theo laughs. The room goes silent, hearing his unexpected chuckle. Theo turns to the beta and his fiancee, "I do not doubt that your happiness, Scott and Allison, is not shared by your Alpha and Alpha-mate. As I also believe my son and his mate could show a little more enthusiasm for two members of their pack embarking on a very important path together. As partners, lovers, family, and mates. The very things they already are, no matter how predictable they feel the road their betas were on."
Derek takes Stiles’ hand, his father's words hammering into him. "I can not imagine with life without Stiles. And during the few years I didn't have him, it torn me in half. Mates just aren’t this other person you love. They’re the other half of you."

"Very true," Theo agrees, then takes Talia’s hand and kisses it.

"We’re all ecstatic that you two found each other. Your other halves. And we’re sorry we didn’t convey that to you in the beginning," Derek apologizes.

"I’m sorry, Scott. I’m sorry, Allison. It means a lot to find your soulmate and to know you want to spend all your days with them. Congratulations. You have our blessing," Stiles adds sincerely.

"And ours as well," Talia smiles at the happy, engaged couple.


"Well, I think a celebratory dinner is in order. Scott, have you told your mother," Talia asks.

"No, not yet."

"You told us before Melissa? Dude..." The heaviness of Scott's news finally weighs on Stiles the way Scott wanted it to.

"See why I wanted you to be a little more crazy about it than you were?"

Stiles hugs Scott again. A tight, brotherly embrace. "You’re my brother. And I love you."

"I love you, too. Idiot." They pull apart. Scott gives Stiles a nod, accepting Stiles apology, taking note of the tears Stiles refuses to let fall from his wet eyes.

"Scott," Talia calls, drawing him out of his bromance moment with Stiles. "You should invite your mother over, then we’ll celebrate," she suggests.

"She has to work tonight unfortunately."

"Well, that’s unacceptable." And with that, Talia Hale is out the door.


Stiles laughs. "Your mom’s coming over for dinner tonight. That's what just happened."

"If my wife has anything to say about it. The Chief of Emergency Medicine at Beacon Hills General is a werecoyote, and a friend of the family. By the way, I’m sure she expected you two to follow."

Scott and Allison scramble out of the room after Talia.

"I will never miss an opportunity to watch Talia Hale put the fear of God into someone." Stiles and Derek turn to leave the room--

"Derek," Theo calls.

Derek nods to Stiles to give he and his father some privacy. Stiles leaves the room, closing the doors behind himself.
"Stiles is right. There is very little privacy in a house full of werewolves."

"You heard us last night."

"I wasn’t attempting to invade a personal conversation between you two, Derek. But I’m a parent. And I was concerned. Not to mention, Stiles is not very good at whispering."

"I know."

"And I was especially concerned about a particular part of your conversation. The part about you blaming yourself for my leg, and me never wanting to hand over the business to you because of it."

"Dad--"

"Do I need to tell you how ridiculous a notion that is, and how shocked I am that my son, my only son, thought that of me?"

"...With everything that happened with Kate, before and after, it was kind of hard not to blame myself. Especially when you got hurt."

"The only thing I was ever angry about, Derek, was that my son was hiding things from me. Mainly, him having an affair with an older woman when he was only 17 years old."

"I’m sorry."

"I don’t want an apology, Derek. I want you to know, to understand, that you and your sisters mean the world to me. And that I would gladly give my life for each of you. And I can’t even put into words for you what I’d do for your mother. Having to use a cane for the rest of my life because I was defending my children means nothing to me. Am I clear?"

"Yes, sir."

"Let me also make something explicit for you: I always knew you were a True Alpha. Nothing has filled me with the greatest sense of pride than you finding out what I already knew. I am in awe of you. Always." Derek wraps his arms around his father, nearly brought to tears by the older man’s words to his grateful son. Theo’s arms come around the grip his boy, holding him.

"That’s all I want."

"You’ve always had that, Derek... Give or take a few stumbles." They chuckle lightly. Derek moves to break their embrace, but Theo holds on. "Just a minute more. Haven’t really held you like this since you were a kid."

Theo scent marks Derek, rubbing his salt-and-pepper cheek against his son’s dark black one.

Senior pack members--Derek, Stiles, Laura, Valerie, Peter, Theo, and Talia-- and Danny, occupy Theo’s study.

"What did you find out, Danny," Theo asks.

"I know who the rats are, and where they are."

"Brilliant," Theo says gratefully.
"How," Talia asks.

"I hacked into the FBI’s database. And let me tell you, since 9/11 they have gotten a little smarter in terms of protecting themselves. Wasn’t an easy task," Danny says.

"Really," Laura asks. "Because every time I open the newspaper the NSA has fucked up royally."

"That’s because they keep putting hackers like Danny in jail instead of employing them," Stiles winks Danny.

"Like I’d ever work for the government," Danny says with an arrogant smirk.

"Where are they," Theo asks.

"Fort Worth, Texas," Danny answers.

"We know the Alpha there," Stiles says of he and Derek. "He’s a rancher. That doesn't like trouble. He's adamant about that but he likes me--"


"Yes. I know the agent assigned to our case. Several of them are, but the lead go-to guy is some brown-noser named Kenneth Haigh."

"Alright. We need to get something on Agent Haigh that we can leverage him with. He can’t be that much of a girl scout," Derek says.

"Chris and Kate sure aren't," Stiles scoffs.

"I’m sure that whole agency is crawling with douchenozzles," Laura tacks on.

"Yet, they want to throw me in prison," Stiles scoffs.

"Speaking of the Argents..." Everyone’s undivided attention snaps to Danny. "Laura was right. They were thrown off the case. Kate let her vendetta against the pack--"

"And were’s in general," Stiles interrupts.

"--clouded protocol. Even though she knows we do everything she busted us on, all she had mostly was suspicion, with nothing concrete. They’ve got nothing solid to take to court. I read their briefing with Finstock," Danny continues.

"Told you," Laura gloats. "I can’t wait to argue dismissing the charges. She’s so fired."

"Actually, she’s suspended,' Danny says. "Apparently, she was intimidating and lying to her informants about turning state’s evidence against us. Finstock told her to wait until they had something tangible against us, but she jumped the gun and got desperate and now Finstock knows Laura’s going to succeed getting the charges dropped because Kate’s a single-minded, crazy bitch. They’re going to have to start from scratch to rebuild their case."

"With this Haigh guy," Valerie asks.

Danny nods. "Chris is suspended, too. Finstock didn’t think he and Kate could be objective enough to take us down with Allison in the pack. That’s all the good news."

"Shit. What’s the bad news," Stiles asks.
"They’re here, aren’t they," Peter figures out before Danny can utter a syllable. "They came back home. To Beacon Hills."

Danny nods.

"Fuck," Stiles shouts loudly.

"The Argents, detached from a government agency and pissed they lost their jobs over us, are now 10 miles away," Valerie asks angrily.

"Goddamnit," Laura snarls.

"How do you know they’re here," Derek asks.

"I checked their bank accounts. They bought plane tickets headed here. And so are a few of their ‘friends’. Other hunters. Rouge hunters. I checked their phone records, too."

"War," Laura says out loud what everyone else is thinking. "They’re going to start a war with us."

"We don’t know that," Talia tries to tamper down.

"With batshit-crazy, Gerard whispering in psycho-Kate’s ear all day and all night now?! And calling in a posse?! Mom, they’re gearing up for a fight," Laura yells, her eyes turning gold.

"I thought Deaton scattered our energies. They don’t know we’re here, or can’t track us at least, right," Danny asks nervously.

"They’re crazy, but not dumb. They came home for a reason. They know we’re here," Peter says.

Silence befalls the lot of them, not knowing what to do with Danny’s bad news.

"We can’t leave anyone on their own," Derek says. "Val, you have to bring Jason and the girls. We’re going on lockdown."

"Why can’t I just go home and protect them there?"

"You’re safer here. All of you."

"I can protect Jason and our girls."

"No one said you can’t, Vee. It’s just better if you, Jason, and the girls were here, with us," Laura tells her sister.

"Who the hell is going to run my territory," Valerie asks.

"Your second-in-command, Aiden, Ethan’s brother," Derek tells her.

"My emissary, Braeden, can run my territory," Peter says. Derek and Stiles turn wide-eyed at Peter with the mention of Derek’s most recent ex-girlfriend. The sly, older wolf winks at them.

"That’s a discussion later," Derek growls. Peter shrugs with a smug grin at the Alpha.

"Jason is going to pitch a fit," Valerie says to no one in particular with a shake of her head, already regretting the conversation she’s to have with her husband.

Derek takes notice of the slight eye roll his father gives at the mention of Valerie’s mate.
"How long is lockdown," Danny asks.

"Until we no longer feel the Argents are a threat," Derek answers the hacker.


"No," Stiles says matter-of-factly.

"Stiles--" Derek starts, curious to his husband's objection and the critical look on his face.

"They're coming after us, but not to attack necessarily. At least not in their first stage."

"First stage," Valerie asks, confused.

"We have something they want."

"Allison," Theo figures out.

"First stage-- divide and conquer. They're going to try to separate Allison from us and kidnap her,' Stiles says assuredly. "That's one of the many reasons we need to go on lockdown. If we're all together we can protect each other and it'll make it harder for them to get to her."

"I'm sure Scott will no doubt glue himself even closer to the Disney Princess now," Peter remarks with his usual snark.

"No. Scott and Erica have to go back to San Francisco. Probation. Plus, they can do recon on Agent Haigh while they're there," Stiles says, before turning to Laura, "You go with them. You have to appear before the judge anyway."

Laura nods. "Then what?"

"When they realize we're not coming out of hiding, and we won't let Allison out of our sight, they're going to go to their plan B-- prisoners of war. They're going to take my dad, Melissa, and Deaton hostage to bargain for Allison."

"I won't let that happen," Derek says in his best Alpha voice.

"It has to," he tells his husband.

"What?"

"So we have eyes inside and know how to attack them."

"I fucking love this kid," Peter exclaims, referring to Stiles and his brilliant strategy planning.

"Dad and Melissa can tell us what's going on inside so we can prepare a plan of attack."

"How," Laura questions.

"Deaton. He can use a spell to communicate with us. With me," Talia says, her mind moving along with Stiles'.

"From there we come up with a battle plan and we hit those motherfuckers hard," Stiles states, his fist meeting the palm of his opposite hand with emphasis.

Peter turns to Derek, "Can I borrow him for a night?"
Derek’s eyes flash red. Stiles answers for Derek, "Not a chance in hell, pedo-wolf. Val. Get Jason and your girls here as quickly and as stealthy as you can. Tell Jason not to fly and rent a car, sticking only to main roads and only stopping for gas and food."

Lydia squeals with glee as loud as humanly possible as she ogles Allison's engagement ring with every other female within the house.

Isaac, Danny, Jackson, and Ethan sit around the fire pit with their beers. "I don’t get it. It’s just a ring."

"Chicks love jewelry," Jackson shrugs.

"It’s not the ring itself. It’s what it symbolizes," Danny says, trying to educate his best friend.

"An overly-expensive party for a piece of paper with both your names on it that grants her access to the bathroom while you take a dump?"

"Someone not so eager to marry Lydia I take it," Ethan teases.

"Lydia?! Never."

"But you two still have sex," Danny says.

"Every now and again, but there’s no real commitment. We dated in high school and broke up after. Kid stuff. Puppy-love. Now, we have an agreement: if she’s feeling horny and not in a relationship with anyone else, she can give me a call. When the full moon hits, and I need some release, I can give her a call. But there’s nothing serious between us."

"Sex is always serious," Isaac offers.

"You’re such a girl. I’m surprised you’re not over there cooing with the rest of them," Jackson teases.

"Maybe I’m just not a soulless dick?" Isaac’s attention turns to Stiles and Derek talking to Thomas and Boyd. Derek’s arm is around Stiles. Stiles puts his head on Derek’s shoulder. "Maybe I want something deeper."

Danny follows Isaac’s eye-line, catching their Alpha and his mate in a sweet moment despite all that’s going on. "I know what you mean."

A forlorn look sweeps across Ethan’s face at Danny’s agreement with Isaac.

Valerie sits on the sofa in the sunroom, looking very pitiful at her cellphone in her hand. "What," she asks, not even looking up, knowing he’s there.

Derek stands in the doorway. "Noticed you were the only woman not out there ambushing Allison and Scott." Derek moves further into the room and takes a seat beside his sister.

"It’s different being mated to a human instead of another were."

"You’re telling me like I don’t know."
"You worry more. They worry more. Because they're as invulnerable as you. It’s such a cruel joke."

"Yeah. Feels that way sometimes."

"I mean, why would your wolf pull you toward someone that you could lose so easily?"

"I don’t know. I can’t answer that. I don’t even think mom could."

"Well, I want an answer! I want a goddamn answer from someone!" Valerie takes a breath, fighting back the tears forming in her eyes and the shaky anger bubbling in her throat.

Derek squeezes her shoulder. "Val..."

"It’s not that Jason doesn’t want to be pack, or he has some self-righteous moral indignation about who our family is and what we do. I mean, he did at first, but that changed when we agreed that the girls wouldn’t come near anything that had to do with the business. But then there was always something that we had to get involved in. Some omega, or a witch, or faeries, vampires, daemons, rouge hunters, fucking mermaids! Thomas almost died because of a fucking mermaid! It got to be too much for him, Derek! There was always danger! And with the girls turning out to be human... He’s not Stiles. He’s scared. For me and the girls. He can’t be apart of this. What if something were to happen to the both of us? That’s what he asked me."

"First, no one expects him to be Stiles."

"Dad, does."

"I’m learning a lot lately about what it is we expect of dad, and who he really is." She gives him an incredulous look. "He’s just old school. He thinks Jason is rejecting us. That he’s rejecting pack."

"He’s not. He just doesn’t want anything to happen to the girls, or the both of us, or anyone!"

"Which brings me to my second point: Stiles is brave. One of the bravest humans I know. I’m lucky he’s mine and can handle all that comes with being mated to me. But he’s scared a lot of the time, too. No one wants to die. And no one is prepared for death. We’re all scared, but we still fight to keep this family afloat. It’s okay for him to be scared. No one will misunderstand that. And third, if something were to happen to both you and Jason, I’d first make it a vow to kill whoever took the both of you from me. Next, I’d take your girls and raise them as you would have. I’d protect them like my own children, and give my life just to keep them safe. Your girls, Rose and Cee, would have me. Would have us. Because we’re pack. They’re pack. I understand Jason’s fear, but he has to trust us. He has to trust that we will never endanger the life of anyone in this family. We do the opposite-- we protect. We’ll get him to see that, Val. I promise."

She hugs him with all the strength of love she has. "I’m sorry."

"For what?"

"I don’t think I’ve ever really acknowledged you as a True Alpha until now. You’re so good at this."

"Not good enough. I’m not dad."

She breaks their hug. "And you shouldn’t be. Be your own Alpha, Derek." She scent marks him, quickly smudging her cheek against his.
"I love you, Val."
"I love you, too, D."

"Why am I so exhausted," Stiles undresses.
"Because we got an hour’s sleep remember?"
"No. I don’t. The entire day is hazy, like a bad acid trip." Stiles climbs into bed as Derek strips out of his clothes.
"Well, hopefully, you remember that Scott and Allison are now engaged."
"That is a very vague memory at this point." Derek climbs into bed. He pulls Stiles closer to him; big spoon around the little spoon. Stiles yawns. "We have to tell Scott tomorrow, don’t we?"
"Yes."
"That’ll be fun," he says sarcastically. "Wonder how he’ll take having to be forcefully separated from his fiancee for the next few weeks."
"Guess we’ll find out tomorrow."
Stiles nods and crash lands into slumber.

Derek yawns. He reaches behind himself and turns the lamp on the nightstand off.

"NO!"
"Scott--"
"I said ‘no’! How would you like it if you and Derek had to be separated for weeks on end?!"
"I’d hate it, but if it meant protecting my fiancee, my mate, and ending the Argents once and for all, I’d accept it!"
"Wait. Wait. ‘ending the Argents?’ You’re... We’re going after them? To kill them," Allison asks, stunned.
"We think they’re planning something," Stiles says as soft and easy as he can.
"We know they are," Derek says.
"And we think their first order of business is to get you back."
"I’ll protect her," Scott says.
"You and Erica have to go back to San Francisco," Stiles reminds him.
"Screw probation!"
"So you’d rather go to jail, where you won’t see her for 18 months, versus just spending a few weeks at home in San Francisco while we protect her here? In a house full of werewolves?" Scott keeps quiet. Not wanting to feel dumb that Stiles may have a point.

"So you’re going to kill my father," Allison asks with wet, teary eyes turned up at Derek and Stiles.

The room falls silent at her blunt question. Allison tries her hardest to fight back the lump in her throat.

"We don’t want to, but we will if we have to. I’m sorry, Allison," Derek apologizes.

Stiles looks at her. He’s known her for years. He’s seen when she’s scared. When she’s hesitant. When she wants to say something, when it’s burning a whole in her... "Allison. Have you been contacting your father?"

Her breath catches in her throat, stifling her answer. But she doesn’t need to say a word, her rapid heart beat is what betrays her.

"Ally..." And it seems Scott didn’t know she was either.

Tears run down her face. "It was before we were arrested. Months before. He wrote me a letter, telling me he was sorry that he failed me as a father and that he just wanted to see me, to talk. He said he missed me and that my mother wouldn’t want for us to be this way."

"Jesus Christ," Stiles says, pinching the bridge of his nose, trying to will an on-coming migraine away.

"Did you go see him," Scott asks, shocked.

"No! I swear I didn’t!"

"How’d he get your address," Derek asks.

"I don’t know. I guess they were casing us at that time and he followed me home one night, saw where Scott and I lived. He said in the letter that Aunt Kate didn’t know he was writing me, and that she had been so far gone on the whole investigation that he wasn’t sure he trusted her anymore, but he wanted me safe and away from the pack and offered to come get me, to take me away." Allison looks around the room at the harsh stares in her direction: Stiles, Derek, Theo, Talia, Erica...and even Scott. "I didn’t write him back. I didn’t call him, email, or anything."

"Where’s the letter," Stiles questions.

"I burned it."

Stiles looks to Derek. Derek nods, listening to her heartbeat. She’s telling the truth.

"I’m sorry I didn’t say anything. I didn’t think it mattered, but now, hearing what’s going to happen next... I am loyal, and bound to this pack, for life, but--"

"He’s your father," Theo says with a minute hint of understanding.

"I barely remember my mother but the memories I do have of her are good, and I am fine with that, but my dad... I know him. And I still love him. So I’m scared for him." She turns to Scott with pleading eyes... He could never hate her. Never stay mad at her. And never see her hurt, or scared, or in pain. His thumb sweeps across her cheek, wiping away her tears. She let’s out a deep, breath
she didn’t know she was holding.

"The plan goes on as follows," Derek snaps.

"I understand," Allison responds in a low, hushed voice.

Scott’s hand tightens around Allison’s. "When can I come back?"

"When it’s over. We’ll send for you both," Derek says, a bit evasive.

Scott and Erica nod.

Laura hugs her brother and Stiles, then gives her husband a searing kiss ‘goodbye’ before scent marking each of her daughters.

Erica jumps atop Boyd, wraping her legs around his waist and ramming her tongue down his throat, forcing him to fall back into Derek’s rental car.

Scott and Allison have taken the more romantic route, and settled on a sweet, longing kiss that could go on for days. Scott pulls back to scent mark her. Stiles sees them mouth ‘I love yous’ to one another.

"Alright, lovebirds, let’s go. We’ll see each other soon," Laura teases.

"How can you be so cool about leaving your mate and your children," Scott asks, curious.

"Because I know he’s mine and only mine and our girls are protected by him." Laura climbs into the driver’s seat. Scott gets in the passenger’s seat.

Laura honks the horn at Erica! Erica slides down Boyd and gets into the backseat.

Scott waves back to Allison as Laura pulls away from Hale House toward the gate.

Erica sticks half her body out the window: "Show those bastards we’re not to be fucked with anymore! Kick some ass!" She blows them all a big kiss then disappears back into the car as the gate opens and Derek's rental takes off down the road.

"Wait. I’m confused," Jackson says.

"Words I’m sure you’ve uttered many times before," Isaac states.

Lydia snickers. Jackson glares at her. "What? Is was a good burn."

"I'm confused, too," Cora says.

"Glad I'm not the only one. As I was saying, are we just going to stroll past the Argent’s house with Allison like a piece of candy in front of a toddler?"

"No. She’s not bait and we’re not instigating a conflict. If we did, it’ll draw negative attention our way and fuck up the plan," Derek informs him.

"So, we’re just sitting here, hoping, waiting, for them to come at us? To come take Allison?"
"Essentially...Yes."

"That’s dumb."

"You got a better idea, were-lizard?"

"...No."

"What I thought, so hush." Isaac smirks at Jackson being reprimanded by Stiles.

"What if you’re wrong about them coming for Allison," Lydia asks.

"Then I’m wrong. But at least we would’ve taken precaution to keep everyone safe," Lydia nods in agreement.

"When can Scott and Erica come back," Danny asks.

"When the Argents are all dead." Boyd takes notice of the sorrowful look on Allison's face. "I’m sorry, Ally. I didn’t mean to be so callous. Jackson-goof."

"Hey," Jackson exclaims, insulted.

"It’s alright. They aren’t my family anymore. Haven’t been for a long time. You all are."

Lydia moves to embrace her. "That’s right. We’re your family. We’re protecting you."

"I know."

"Come on. Bring it in, guys. Group hug." They all groan, not wanting to do it. "Now," Lydia snaps. And with that: Derek, Stiles, and their betas join Lydia and Allison in a group hug.

Derek sits on the sofa in the sunroom, reading a book.

"I’m booooomered!"

Derek looks up at the doorway and can’t help but half-smile at the ridiculousness that is his childlike husband. "Read something."

"I’ve read everything. And most of my books are e-books on my laptop. Which is at home...with a shattered hard drive...because Danny blew it up."

"I’m sure my dad’s library has a book or two in there you haven’t read."

Stiles flops down on the sofa beside Derek. "I’m in more of a video game-playing mood. Something the Hale House lacks. How do you people live?"

"Quietly. Without superficial, brain-rotting technological distractions."

"Wow. That was a mouth-full, grandpa."

Derek puts the book down. "Should we trust Allison?"

Stiles is thrown by the abrupt, serious question. "You don’t?"
"I don’t know."

"She loves Scott. I feel it vibrate off the both of them. They’re mates."

"The pack is not Scott. It’s all of us. She can’t care about just one person in it. All of us, or nothing."

"Derek. You heard her heart."

"But I also didn’t know she was keeping it a secret her father contacted her."

"She didn’t write back and she didn’t even tell Scott. He’s her dad. She’s his only child and she turned her back on her family, her legacy, for the man she loves and his pack. The same pack that killed her mother. That’s not an easy thing to do, Derek."

"She lied before. She tricked us before."

"When Gerard and Kate were spoon-feeding her lies and hate. Then she got to know us."

"She got to know Scott."

"I trust her. I believe her. I know what’s going on must be eating her alive. And with Scott not here..."  
Derek lets out an exasperated breath, then pulls Stiles into his lap. Stiles straddles him, facing Derek. Stiles runs his fingers through Derek’s hair as Derek puts his head back and closes his eyes. "Poor, Big Bad. Being Alpha is hard."

"Very." Stiles kisses Derek. Their kissing turns heavy. Derek’s tongue explores Stiles mouth, setting sparks off his Stiles’ brain. Derek’s hands roam all over Stiles’ body, eventually tearing the boy’s flannel shirt off his back. His hands slide up Stiles’ T-shirt. He nuzzles Stiles’ neck then runs a long line from his collarbone to his jawline with his tongue.  
"Fuck..."Stiles moans, hot and breathy.  
Derek’s hands find Stiles’ fly and--

"Uncle Stiles."

Stiles turns to the little girl in the doorway with the biggest, fakest smile he can muster at the moment. "Yes, Luna?"

"It smells weird in here. Like--"

"What do you need, sweetie?"

"Are we making dinner soon because I’m hungry."

"Can’t your daddy make you dinner," Derek snaps at his niece. Stiles swats at him for it.  
"No. He and mommy always make the same boring peanut butter and jelly sandwiches. I’m sick of it. I need variety!"

Stiles laughs. She is Laura’s child. "Yes, young lady. We will go make dinner."

"Stiles." Derek tries to level Stiles with glare. He's not leaving him with an erection just so he can
go make a casserole.

"I have to make dinner."

Derek growls.

"Did you growl, Uncle Derek?"

"No, Luna. Your uncle did not growl," Stiles says as Derek admits he did simultaneously.

Stiles slides off Derek and stands. Derek covers his hard on with a throw pillow. "We’ll finish 'talking' later," Stiles tells him.

All Derek can do is glare at his mate as he leaves holding Luna’s hand. "...Yup. There’s no fucking privacy in this damn house."

Chapter End Notes

My favorite scenes to write in the last chapter were Derek and Valerie talking in her room, and Stiles and Derek fighting on the veranda.
The large room is packed with nearly everyone in the house: Derek and Theo play a concentrated game of chess. Stiles and Malia sit before the coffee table coloring with Laura’s daughters. Isaac, Boyd, Danny and Thomas play a card game at the game table. Peter and Kira play pool, while Ethan reads a book quietly in the corner. Cora braids Talia’s hair into the fishtail braid she admired in Cora’s hair earlier. And Jackson dozes off on the couch behind Stiles and Maila.

The doorbell rings! Everyone freezes, on high alert.

"Relax everyone," Stiles tells them. "I doubt the Argents would ring the bell."

After a moment, Valerie enters the room with a man and two young girls: her husband, Jason, and their daughters, Rosalind “Rose,” 9 years old, and Celia “Cee,” 6 years old. Jason is just as tall as his statuesque wife. He’s lean, with pale skin and boy-next-door looks. The two girls at his sides resemble him more than Valerie; all sweet smiles and doe-eyed innocence.

"Rose," Star screams with excitement.

"Star," Rose shouts back. Star scrambles to her feet and runs to her cousin. They collide in a tight hug, obviously missing one another like crazy.

"See? Told you it was a good surprise," Jason tells his daughter in a sexy British accent.

Derek and Stiles approach them. "Hi, Jason."

"Hello, Stiles. How are you?"

"Good. You?"

"Good. Considering," Jason says. Valerie squeezes his hand tightly, silently asking him to dial
back his snark before its offensive. Derek and Jason shake hands. "You got a little dirt on your face, mate."

"That’s not dirt, daddy. That’s his beard," Cee informs her father.

"You’re stepping on my joke there, love."

"Maybe you should get better ones then."

"Definitely your daughter," he tells Valerie.

"Definitely," she admits. Jason kisses her cheek. Valerie smiles bright and wide. She’s missed her husband, and the awkwardness of him now at the Hale House seems a little more bearable with his affections.

Talia approaches Jason. "Hello, Jason."

"It’s lovely to see you, Talia." They hug.

Theo stands and all eyes move in his direction as he approaches. Seems Derek and Valerie aren’t the only ones who’ve picked up on Theo’s hesitation with his son-in-law. "Well, would you look at these two adorable cubs!" Rose and Cee rush to Theo and grip at his legs excitedly, causing him to stumble a bit.

"Girls. Don’t topple granddad."

"It’s alright, Jason," Theo chuckles. "I’m not made of glass."

"Right." Jason nearly forgot. Werewolves. He simply nods as his daughters hold on to Theo’s legs with a vice grip.

"Good to see you, Jason."

"You, too, Theo." They shake hands. It’s all very formal and taunt. There’s nothing relaxed and open and familial about their interaction. Or anyone else's and Jason’s interaction for that matter. He’s kept his distance too long, been too standoffish and unfriendly. That’s not how a pack member is, or how they’re supposed to be. "So, uh, there’s some faces in here I’ve haven’t seen before."

"You would if--" Peter starts with a scoff. Derek, Talia, and Valerie all flash angry wolf-colored eyes at him. Now is not the time, nor the place. Peter holds up his hands in surrender. Alright. Alright. I’ll back off.

"Uh, so, I don’t know if you remember my pu-- wards," Stiles catches himself, mindful of Valerie and Jason's daughters, "Isaac, Boyd, Danny, and Jackson. Lydia and Allison are upstairs."

"Allison? Wasn’t she the one dating Scott?"

"Yes. They’re engaged now."

"Fantastic! I should congratulate them."

"Scott is in San Francisco. With Erica."

"The blonde with the kitten-smile?"
"That's the one."

"And these are Peter's wards: Kira and Ethan," Derek says pointing to both of them. "And you remember his daughter--"

"Malia," he says. A tinge of happiness sparked in his chest at knowing her name and not feeling like such a stranger. Malia nods a smile at him. "Wow. Full house."

"Unfortunately," Derek grumbles under his breath, sure the weres in the room heard him.

"Daddy. Can me and Star--"

"May Star and I...," Jason corrects his eldest.

"May Star and I go upstairs and play," Rose asks.

"After we say 'Hello' to everyone."

"Oh, I think that's alright," Talia chimes in, knowing Jason probably wants to get down to the business of why he and his daughters were told to come to Beacon Hills. "In fact, Malia would you please go upstairs with the girls."

Malia rolls her eyes. *Always the designated baby-sitter; never privy to the gossip and crazy.* She leads both Laura and Valerie’s daughters, out the room.

"Have you eaten," Talia asks Jason.

"Um--"

"I’ll take that as a 'no'. Thomas."

"Yes," Laura's husband answers.

"Please get something for Jason to eat." Thomas leaves the game room to head upstairs to the kitchen.

"Thank you," Jason says.

"Of course." Jason has always liked Talia. She's patient and understanding. They've talked plenty about Jason's misgivings about raising human children amongst weres, and whether or not it was a good idea, or bad idea, not telling Rose and Cee their mother and her family were in fact, werewolves. In the end, Jason had convinced Valerie they shouldn't their daughters, despite werewolves and other supernatural creatures being ubiquitous and out in the open for the last 100 years. But Jason's concern was always his daughters safety, and about just how well he believed they could handle such heavy information at such a young age. Talia had tried to make him see different, in her usual, informative, but warm and motherly way, but Jason had already made his decision, and brought Valerie around to his side of things. Doing so meant having to lie, and not just them, but the whole pack; everyone had to lie and cover things up when Rose and Cee were around, something Theo and Peter particularly hated.

The two men were proud of being werewolves. Proud of being in a pack, and not just a pack, but renown and feared pack with an extensive amount of territory to show for it. And thus began the rift between Theo and Jason. No longer wanting to argue and fight, Jason began keeping his distance from the pack, and in turn keeping Rose and Cee away as well. Which only added more distrust and dislike to Theo's opinion of his son-in-law.
Jason sits on the couch guzzling a large glass of white wine. His plate on the coffee table empty with the exception of a few crumbs left on it. He finishes and puts the glass down beside the plate. "So, the plan is for 24 people to stay locked inside a house-- albeit, a very large and gorgeous house-- and wait for a clan of psychopathic werewolf hunters to attempt at kidnapping their daughter/niece who is now engaged to a werewolf who was sent back to San Francisco in order to avoid jail time for violating his probation. After werewolf-fiancé fails to be kidnapped by psychopathic werewolf hunters, it is expected that psychopathic werewolf hunters will retaliate by kidnapping the sheriff of the town-- also known as Stiles’ father-- the local veterinarian, and the aforementioned San Francisco-bound werewolf’s mother. All three of which will make an attempt to contact us via magical spells to where their location may be, thereby also giving us the proper location of where psychopathic werewolf hunters are hiding. Therein, we will rescue the sheriff, veterinarian, and werewolf’s mum, then attack said location, hopefully killing the psychopathic werewolf hunters and ending a blood-fued that has apparently been occurring over the last 400 years. Have I missed anything?"

"Jason...," Valerie pleads. His sarcasm and condescension doesn’t help the strain already felt between him and her family.

"Well, at least he got it on the first go-round. We had to explain it to Jackson three times," Isaac tosses out. Burn. Jackson flips Isaac off. Isaac blows him a kiss.

"Enough, you two," Stiles chastises his betas. "Jason. I promise you that these people are not innocent, and deserve what’s coming to them."

"As I’m sure there are others who have said the same about you," Jason throws back. Touchè.

"You’re absolutely right. There is not a man nor woman in this very room who is not guilty in some fashion of what we have be accused of numerous times before. No one’s hands in this room have not had blood on them. Including your wife’s," Theo says. "The difference being no one in here has ever lied to you either. From the beginning you were told about who we are and the life that we lead, and you still wanted to marry my daughter, knowing all that came with her. And then the two of you decided to bring my two granddaughters into this world, knowing what you know of our kind, despite the resurfaced misgivings you were having about werewolves, werewolf hunters, vampires, witches, ghosts, and alike; in addition to the mysterious way your wife makes money for a living. You were aware of this Jason. Of all this. You accepted it the moment you laid eyes on my child and wanted to spend the rest of your life with her, making her happy. And part of that is getting rid of the pompous tone in your voice when your family tells you that they need you close, to keep you safe, and that as a member of said family, you are needed when things become too uncomfortable for your liking!"

"My daughters are human. I’m human. Stiles is human. Allison and Danny are human. Lydia is human--"

"Actually she’s a banshee," Peter corrects smugly.

Jason chuckles wryly. Of course she is.

"Do you think for one second that I would ever put my mate, my pack, or my nieces in any sort of danger," Derek says. "I am very well-aware of who could get hurt and bounce back, and who can’t. And as brave and as courageous as Stiles is, the thought of him getting hurt, or worse, is terrifying
to me. So as his mate, his Alpha, it is my first priority to protect him and the rest of my pack. I, will never, let anything happen to those girls."

"None of us would," Stiles adds.

Jason stares long and hard at Derek, searching for something, anything, that’ll tell him that Derek is wrong, he’s not to be trusted, he can’t protect them... But there’s nothing. There’s nothing there telling him those things. There’s nothing in Derek’s eyes that tells him he wouldn’t die for Stiles, that he wouldn’t sacrifice himself in order for his pack to live. He meant every word out of his mouth.

Jason looks to Valerie beside him. Her pleading eyes begging him to understand and to know that this is her family, and they will protect them. With everything in them, and to the death. "Okay... Okay..." He caresses Valerie’s face. The beautiful face of the woman he loves. The woman he’d give his life for, in a heartbeat. "I’m sorry. To all of you." He turns to Derek, "I believe you. We are family. We’re a pack."

Valerie kisses the inside of Jason’s palm, still holding her cheek as a single tear falls down her face.

Derek walks past the first guest room toward his room. He doubles-back hearing Lydia call his name.

Lydia comes out of the room and approaches him.

"How is she?"

"Not so good. She’s missing Scott a lot. And this thing, this plan, against her family..."

"I know."

"Do you? What if it was Stiles’ dad?" He doesn’t know how to answer that, thrown off-guard. Lydia does that sometimes. She likes to throw bricks and then step back and look at the damage, knowing she's got you. It helps her bring you over to her side; that stunted moment when you've got nothing but stuttering shock on your face. Because chances are, she's already known what you need to be pushed in the right direction. "Please. Talk to her."

"And say what?"

"That you don’t hate her. That you trust her. That Scott will be back and they’ll get married and have lots of cubby-cheeked babies that’ll be nothing like the ass-clowns that raised her. That she’ll be a good mother, and wife, and pack-sister. I'm pretty sure a few words from her Alpha will probably do her some good, instead of you avoiding her. It might even help her sleep better."

Another brick. She’s right. He has been avoiding her, since she confessed about the letter. He’s her Alpha. He should be able to confront the tough parts about being one, including consoling a grief-stricken young woman.

Derek enters the room. Allison lies on the bed in the fetal position, her back to the door. Her body shakes with her soft sobs.

Derek looks at the poor, broken girl on the bed. Stiles is always better at this stuff than him...
He takes off his shoes, then climbs on the bed. His back against the headboard. Allison turns her head, looking at him. She turns completely, wrapping her arms around Derek’s torso, and sobs into his shirt. Derek holds her comfortably. His hand rubs soft circles on her back. Stiles does that form him when he needs it, and it always eases whatever's troubling him a bit more. "It’s okay. It’ll be okay. I promise."

Lydia closes the door.

A hand comes down and places a mug of coffee on the nightstand. It’s Stiles. A warm smile lifts onto his face as he looks down at Allison, asleep, wrapped around his also sleeping husband.

Derek’s eye flutter open. He sees Stiles standing over him. They whisper:

"Hey."

"Hey. When’d she get to sleep?"

Derek glances at the clock/radio on the nightstand. "About an hour ago."

Stiles affectionately moves the hair from Allison’s face. "She looks tortured even in her sleep."

Derek carefully slides out of Allison’s grasp and off the bed. He covers her with the blanket. He grabs his coffee and takes a sip. Black and strong. God bless, Stiles.

Stiles nods at Derek toward the door. They should leave and let her rest.

Derek quietly closes the door as they leave. "I’m fucking exhausted."

"You? At least you slept. I just got off the phone with Scott."

"Jesus."

All the weres-- minus Theo and Talia-- enter the hallway in a clamor. Stiles immediately shushes them to be quiet in regards to Allison. They shut up.

"We’re going for a run. You want to come Derek," Kira whispers.

Derek nods. "Give me a minute."

They leave the hall, descending the stairs.

Derek quickly downs his mug of coffee. Stiles considers black coffee a sin against nature. He likes his sweet with lots of cream and sugar. Watching Derek guzzle, steaming hot, black coffee makes his nose scrunch up, disturbing his face. "So disgusting." Derek hands Stiles the empty mug. "Your mother is making breakfast."

"I just want eggs and toast."

"You think your mother is the type of woman that takes requests?"

"No. But she listens to you. For whatever odd reason." He kisses Stiles.

"Have fun." Stiles watches Derek remove his shirt as he disappears down the stairs.
Stiles reads Toni Morrison’s *Beloved*. There’s a pair of fashionable *eyeglasses* on his face.

Derek, freshly showered and dressed after his run, enters the kitchen barefoot. "I see we broke out the glasses." He opens the fridge and pours himself a glass of orange juice.

"Had to. Forgot my contacts." Stiles, head still in his book, gets up and takes a plate out of the oven. He sits it before the chair beside him at the *table*. All the while, his eyes never leave the pages of his book. The plate next to him contains a hefty mound of scrambled eggs and four pieces of buttered toast.

"Good. I love the glasses." Derek smiles as he sits before the plate. "Knew you could talk my mom into it."

"I didn’t. I told her I was specifically making you a ‘special’ breakfast. She called bullshit and said I spoil you too much."

Derek pecks Stiles’ cheek. He digs into his food. "Thought you read everything."

"Eh. Found something I never got around to."

"I love that book."

"It’s a great book so far."

"Have you put it down since picking it up?"

"Nope."

"Good. Don’t. You eat?"

"Your mother made chocolate chip pancakes; of course I ate."

They sit in comfortable silence for a few minutes before Allison comes into the kitchen. Her eyes are bloodshot and swollen from crying for hours on end, her hair a mess, and skin pale, and grey. It’s only been a day since Scott’s been gone, but his absence has clearly taken a strong hold on her. Not to mention, the impending fight between the Hales and the Argents, with her in the middle, is waiting in the shadows.

"Ally? Princess Jasmine? You okay?"

She nods slowly, as though she can’t remember where exactly she is and who’s speaking to her.

"Do you want something to eat?"

"...Thank you. For staying with me."

"It’s okay, Allison," Derek tells her. "I was worried about you."

Stiles’ concern grows when she doesn’t respond and wobbles on her feet a bit, as though she were about to faint. "You should really eat something, Allison. Sit. I’ll make you some eggs." Stiles stands and Allison jumps back, terrified. "Derek..." Stiles says, unsettled by Allison's reaction.

"Allison, it’s alright," Derek carefully tells his beta.
"I’m sorry. I don’t... I don’t know why I jumped like that."

"No one’s going to hurt you."

"I know. It’s just..." She looks confused. She forgot what she was talking about, her mind such a fog at the moment.

"Why don’t you call Scott," Stiles offers. "He’s probably going crazy wanting to talk to you."

She nods. "Okay." She shuffles out of the kitchen.

Derek and Stiles sit in uncomfortable silence now; the elephant in the room trampling loudly between them.

Stiles finally breaks the pulsing worry between them. "We can’t kill her father."

"...I know," Derek replies.

Chapter End Notes

TRIVIA QUESTION: Valerie's daughters are named after two female characters in Jason's favorite play. Can you name the play...?
Cabin Fever

Chapter Summary

Derek, with Boyd's help, formulates a plan B against the Argents that might not send Allison into a downward spiral.

Chapter Notes

THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR WONDERFUL COMMENTS! I AM SO APPRECIATIVE OF EACH AND EVERY ONE! More to come... :)

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Derek wanders in the pool/guest house and flops down on the couch. He closes his eyes, enjoying the silence for a few minutes...

He feels a presence enter the room and take a seat across the him in the armchair. He opens his eyes. Boyd. Eating a bowl of cornflakes.

Though he’d never tell Stiles, sometimes he liked talking things out with Boyd more than him. Boyd never bombarded him with questions, or interrupted, or forced him to talk. He just sat patiently, continuing to do the thing he was preoccupied with before, and waited for Derek to speak. And Derek did the same for him. He liked that. He liked the comfortable silence they easily shared sometimes.

When Derek chose Boyd to be his number two over Scott, he didn’t think it would be that much of a big deal. Boyd is strong, fast, steady, thoughtful, bright, and a million other things that would make him such a great pick as his number two beta. But Scott had pitched a fit like a whiny baby, further proving why Derek didn’t pick him. Scott made it worst by dragging Stiles into the whole ordeal, causing a fight between the Alpha and his mate.

Stiles completely understood why Derek chose Boyd, and agreed with his pick, but Scott’s piss, bitching, and moaning about it, gave Stiles such a headache that he asked Derek privately to rethink his decision for the sake of peace within the house.

Derek was furious with Stiles asking him to take away Boyd’s rank and give it to Scott. Scott was immature, not as strong as Boyd, too hyper in a fight, lazy, and he hated to admit it, but a bit dim-witted at times. Derek knew that Scott had automatically assumed he’d be made number two because he was the Alpha-mate’s best friend. What Derek didn’t anticipate was that he’d go running to Stiles when he didn’t get what he wanted, only infuriating Derek even more.

What surprised Derek though, was Stiles asking him to 'rethink his decision'. He accused Stiles of favoritism and placating to Scott and his childish ways instead of what was best for the pack. And Derek knew that one thing Stiles could not stand, was being accused of selfishness. Derek knows Stiles is the most selfless human he’s ever met, that he puts their pack first, and stating otherwise
would do nothing short of upset his mate. But Derek was on a roll and added that he would no longer make decisions regarding his pack with Stiles, and that Boyd stays as beta number two. He knew he crushed Stiles with his last remark as the boy packed a bag and stayed the night at Cora’s place.

A week later, Stiles showed up and apologized to Derek without warning.

Boyd had picked Stiles up from his class earlier that day, wanting to talk. He didn’t think it was right he be made number two if it was going to cause so much division in the group, especially between Stiles and Derek. Add intuitive to that list of fantastic Boyd qualities.

Stiles felt horrible and immediately apologized to Boyd. Boyd, being the gentleman he is, regarded Stiles’ apology with a simple ‘thank you’, and dropped Stiles off at Derek’s, insisting that he make up with the Alpha, and that he’d stop by later to tell Derek that he can’t be his number two anymore. Stiles found Boyd’s decision unacceptable, but told Boyd to stop by later anyway.

Derek also apologized to Stiles, with a bruising, hard kiss. He’d always include Stiles in any decision regarding their pack. They were a team. Stronger than a team— a family. And the next order of family business, was straightening out Scott McCall.

They told Scott to come over, about an hour before Boyd arrived. Derek was meaning to have a good, long talk with his beta about his pettiness and the trouble it caused, but Stiles beat him to it, laying into Scott like the ferocious “den mother” he was. The entire time Derek kept quiet and watched as Scott bowed his head in shame, cowed by his best friend and his disappointment in him.

Boyd showed up afterward, and Scott immediately apologized, asking sincerely for Boyd’s forgiveness. Boyd accepted his apology then accepted his new role in the pack when Derek and Stiles officially regarded him as their “No. 2.”

"You miss Erica?"

He puts down his bowl of cereal. "Yes. But not like Scott misses Allison, and vice versa."

"Why?"

"Erica and I aren’t mates."

"You don’t think so? You’ve been together on-and-off since high school."

"We both know longevity doesn’t equal mates."

"A lot of things don’t equal mates."

"And a lot of things do."

"And you and Erica don’t have those things?"

"Not really. I’m assuming you would never give Stiles permission to sleep with anyone else,” Boyd says, referring to he and Erica’s open relationship. Derek’s eyes flash Alpha red at the thought of Stiles in bed with another person. "See? Erica and I came to an understanding. We’ll always be there for each other, but it doesn’t mean we’re bound to one another."
"Why'd you decide that?"

"Because you and Stiles were mates, and we knew that’s not what we had." Mates weren’t a rare thing with wolves. Just a matter of timing. One could meet their mate when they were 8 years old, or 80 years old. It was all about when the 'supernatural universe' decided you were ready. "This what you wanted to talk about?"

"No." Derek thought quietly to himself, then sat up, turning to Boyd. "We can’t kill Chris Argent. It’ll break Allison, and take Scott a lot of years to put her back together."

"So what do we do with him?"

"I don’t know. Take him hostage when we attack? Contact him, tell him to leave town before we do?"

"That runs the risk of him telling the rest of the Argents."

"Should I let him talk to Allison first?"

"I don’t know about that either. It’s not Allison I don’t trust--"

"It’s him. He might have the rest of the hunters in the lurch, waiting for us, and snatch Allison."

"This isn’t an easy one."

Derek nods in agreement. "Remember when they were?" He groans, frustrated. Stiles might have teased that being Alpha is hard, but it's true. He needs to take out the Argents, once and for all, but killing Chris will kill Allison. She might even turn on him. His sister already killed her mother when she was a child, she can't lose another parent to the very pack she's apart of. And if Allison falls apart, so will Scott. They're mates. They're connected, bonded. "...We take him hostage when we ambush them. Deaton knows some people that’ll take him somewhere he can’t be found for a while. At least he’d be alive, and Allison would know he’s safe."

It’s Boyd’s turn to nod. "Sounds like the better plan."

"I hope so. There any aconite beer in here?"

"Yup." Boyd breaks from his seat and crosses the room into the kitchen.

Stiles sits in bed, finishing the last chapter of Beloved.

Derek stumbles in. "Hey, baby," Derek smiles, slurring his words.

"Oh, fuck, you’re drunk."

"I’m not drunk. Swear." He's drunk. Very drunk. Derek clumsily takes off his shoes before bouncing on the bed with Stiles. He grabs the book from Stiles’ hands and nuzzles his neck.

"Derek, come on. You’re drunk, sourwolf." But Stiles can't help but let out a moan when Derek clamps down on his neck and sucks a bruise onto his skin.
Derek sits up and takes his shirt off. Stiles kisses his chest all the way down to his navel. He doesn’t care that Derek’s drunk. They haven’t had sex in days, and for them it feels achingly longer.

Derek grabs a fist full of Stiles’ hair and rams his tongue down his throat. Stiles braces his hands at Derek’s sides and takes control over the sloppy, wet kiss.

He pushes Stiles down on the bed and opens his jeans. Stiles does the same for Derek. They slide their hands in each other’s pants, jerking one another off.

Derek pulls himself down for a kiss. His mouth moves to Stiles’ ear, making breath-y hot noises.

"Shit. Derek..." Stiles keeps jerking Derek off...

...then stops gradually, noticing Derek’s stiff body slumped on top his own. The hand inside Stiles’ pants no longer moving. "Derek? Derek...?"

Derek lets out a loud snore.

"You’re joking..." Stiles lets out an exasperated sigh and tries to push Derek off of him, but he’s too heavy. "Oh, my God, you’re like a piano." Stiles tries with all his might, and shoves Derek to his side of the bed. Derek continues snoring. "You are very lucky I’m madly in love with you."

Stiles climbs out of bed. He takes off Derek’s socks and pants, then tucks him into the covers.

He grabs his book and turns out the light as he exits, closing the door.

Valerie and Jason flirt with each other like high schoolers over their breakfast.

Derek drags himself into the kitchen, looking like death as he shuffles into the room in his bathrobe, hungover.

"You look terrible," Valerie says honestly.

"Thank you. And thank you for fucking each other’s brains out very loudly this morning. Better than an alarm clock, really." Derek flops down at the table with them. "Jesus." He squints at the bright, morning sun radiating through the kitchen windows directly in his face. He reaches into the pocket of his bathrobe and pulls out a pair of dark aviators and puts them on. He grabs Valerie’s coffee and takes a big sip before putting his head down on the table, clutching the mug.

"Any particular reason you decided to get drunk last night," his sister asks.

"Senior pack meeting later," the Alpha replies.

"When?"

"When my hair doesn’t hurt."

Boyd staggers in through the patio doors, looking just as wrecked as Derek, already wearing a pair of shades on his face. He takes a seat beside Derek, grabs the mug of coffee from an unflinching Derek’s hand, chugs it, and puts his head down on the table as well, pulling the hood to his blue-striped hoodie over his head.
"We’re assuming Boyd was your drinking partner...?" Derek responds with a weak grunt.

Stiles enters. "Morning. Oh, there’s my Alpha, and his equally hungover beta."

Derek musters enough strength to lift his head a bit.

"Where’d you sleep last night?"

"In Chris Hemsworth’s bed." Derek emits a low growl at Stiles’ joking. "With Lydia, sourwolf. You want food?" Derek groans and puts his head back down. "Boyd? Boyd...?"

"Maybe a little later. He seems to be a little under the weather at the moment," Jason says over his cup of tea.

"Derek called a senior pack meeting later," Valerie informs Stiles.

"When?"

"He has yet to grumble a time."

"Ah. I see. Let’s say in 2 hours?" Derek manages a disapproving groan. "Three hours then." Valerie nods. "I’m going to go and check on Allison then help your mother in her garden."

"You like to garden, Stiles," Jason asks.

"I’m warming to it. Talia’s teaching me a few things. I can see why she likes it. It’s very therapeutic. And I like to cook with only fresh, organic food, so, there’s that. Do me a solid? Make sure these two get showered and dressed before the meeting, please?" Valerie and Jason nod. "Highly doubt anyone could take their Alpha seriously in a bathrobe."

Boyd lets out a loud snore.

Stiles shakes his head as he leaves the kitchen for Allison's room.

Boyd, looking a little better than earlier, opens the door, escorting Allison into the study. She’s still a bit torn apart: eyes swollen and red from endless crying, skin pale and grey, like she’s a ghost, hair in a simple, limp ponytail. It’s mid-afternoon and she’s still in her pajamas. They same ones she was wearing when Derek stayed the night with her. And there’s a timid, lost look about her face.

Boyd steps out of the room, closing the door.

She’s scared. 18 pairs of eyes are on her: Derek, Stiles, Theo, Talia, Thomas, Valerie, Peter, John, and Deaton.

Derek approaches her. He’s also recovered a little bit better from his hangover. He extends his hand. "It’s okay." He gives her a small, soft smile. She takes his hand. He leads her to an armchair. "Allison, there’s been a change in regards to our plan of action against the Argents. What I’m going to tell you, does not leave this room, understand?" She nods. "I need you to answer me vocally." A vocal answer doubles as a promise, or understanding in packs.
"Yes, Alpha Hale. I understand."

"When we attack the Argents, we are going to spare your father."

Allison gasps, covering her mouth immediately at the broken, relived sound threatening to escape her body. "We’re going to take him captive, then allow you to see him, briefly. Afterward, Deaton is going to take him somewhere. He’ll be safe, I promise you, but he’s to never return to Beacon Hills. Understand?"

Allison bolts from her seat to wrap her arms around Derek. She sobs openly into his neck, clutching onto him with all her might. His hold is keeping her up. The guttural noise that surfaces from her is evidence of her crumbling self squeezing gratitude into Derek, barely keeping her standing if not for her Alpha’s grasp. "Thank you."

Her eyes finally open, no longer terrified she’s dreaming, and land on Stiles. His eyes gloss over, a bit watery. He’s happy she’s happy. Happy her despair is slipping away before him. Happy her light hasn’t completely dwindled and he and Derek aren’t the cause. Her arms slip away from Derek and she steps back, smiling weakly at Stiles. He surges forward and puts a long, affectionate kiss on her forehead. She closes her eyes, feeling his tenderness. "Thank you."

"This one’s all Derek. But we both love you, Princess Jasmine. Okay?"

"I know."

"Good. Now go call Scott. And do not mention--"

"I know. I won’t. I made a promise to my Alpha." Allison leaves the study after kissing Derek's cheek and whispering another 'thank you' to him.

"Is this a good idea, Derek," Thomas asks, stepping in for an absent Laura.

"My beta was withering away. It would have taken years to bring her back to where she is now. She’s my responsibility, and so her happiness is my responsibility."

"What of jeopardizing the plan," John asks.

"I don’t think it will. Allison is trusted."

"And Chris Argent? What if he won’t go with Deaton," John asks.

"I’ll go with Deaton, to make sure he does," Peter offers. "Sometimes you need a little brawn with your magic." Peter winks at Stiles.

"Ugh! Stop hitting on me in front of your nephew! It’s disgusting and disrespectful!"

"Peter," Talia scolds her brother.

"What?! I’m teasing!"

"No, you’re just gross," Stiles snaps at him.

Theo snorts a laugh. All eyes fall on him. "The kid’s funny. And I agree; it's disrespectful, Peter."
"The bottomline," Derek says, wanting to ignore the topic of Peter's continued flirting with his husband, "is this is what we’re doing. It comforts my beta and still lets us take out our enemy."

Every head nods, understanding and complying with their Alpha’s new plan of action.

It’s dark. Quiet. The open curtains allows the moonlight in and a soft midnight breeze lets them bellow playfully against the window sill.

Derek and Stiles lie in bed. Their usual position with Stiles as the ‘little spoon’.

Stiles is awake, thinking... He turns over on his other side, facing Derek. He gently runs his hand up and down Derek’s chest... "You were thinking about your dad. And my dad."

Derek, eyes still shut, "I could never just let someone kill my father, even if they thought he deserved to die. I could never let anyone hurt John either." Derek opens his eyes, looking into Stiles’ amber-colored ones. Stiles stops stroking Derek’s chest. "What would you do, if you were Allison?"

"...I’d warn my dad."

"I’d do the same."

"That’s why you asked if I trusted her. But now she has hope; good news. He won’t die. And she won’t feel tempted to warn him."

"If she’d keep a letter he wrote her secret, even from Scott..."

"You are...a slick one, Derek Hale."

"I try." Derek kisses him. "I’m sorry about last night."

"Make it up to me then," Stiles says with a flirtatious coating in his voice.

Derek grins. His hand slides inside Stiles boxers. Stiles presses their lips together.

A muffled moan vibrates through the wall behind them. Derek breaks their kiss. "That... That was not you, was it?"

Stiles shakes his head.

The muffled moan comes again, louder and longer, with the name ‘Jason’ on its peak.

"Oh, for fuck’s sake, Val!"

"I'm suddenly not in the mood for you to play with my dick."

"Me, neither." Derek removes his hand from Stiles’ boxers. "This house is way too crowded. Everyone’s underfoot and we haven’t had sex in months," Derek exaggerates.

"Try 6 days. But yes, it feels like months."
"We've only been here for 6 days! I’m getting cabin fever."

"Come on. It’s not that bad," Stiles chuckles.

"Twenty-four people cooped up in one house together for an indeterminate about of time? This is my hell."

"I thought your hell was meager small talk about the weather and traffic." Derek glares at him. "What? Your dad thinks I’m funny."

"This is going to get bad. For everyone."

"Derek, I love you, but you’re exaggerating. We’re a pack. We love being close. Our betas lived with us for a year. This is a chance for the rest of the pack to become an even tighter, stronger unit. Closeness works for us. You’ll see."

---

Stiles and Derek play ‘Marco Polo’ in the pool with Laura and Valerie’s girls at the shallow end. Boyd, Danny, Malia, and Kira horse around at the deep end.

Lydia, Allison, and Cora tan in the sun. Peter is beside them on a lounge chair with a scotch in one hand and his cellphone in the other.

CRASH! The patio doors burst with wood and glass, spraying outward as Jackson comes flying through them, landing on the ground just a foot shy of the edge of the pool!

Before anyone can comprehend what’s happened, Isaac, wolfed-out, jumps atop Jackson and swipes his claws across Jackson’s face! Jackson growls at Isaac! He wraps his hand around Isaac’s throat, choking him as they rumble around the veranda!

Stiles jumps out of the pool toward the fighting betas!

"Stiles," Derek shouts, not wanting him to attempt at breaking up a vicious werewolf fight. He hurries after him! Boyd, Ethan, and Danny bolt from the pool toward the fight with Derek! Malia and Kira grab Laura and Valerie’s girls out of the pool and away from the commotion!

Isaac and Jackson continue snarling and wrestling around, breaking everything in their path!

Jackson grabs Isaac by his shirt and slams him into the ground!

Danny and Ethan make it to them first and snatch Jackson off of Isaac! Boyd holds a snarling Isaac in his arms!

Derek roars at both betas! Their tempers simmer in submission to their Alpha. Just glowing eyes and fangs now as Isaac and Jackson shoot death-glares at one another.

Theo, Talia, Valerie, Thomas, and Jason step out of the house, stunned at the mess created.

"ARE YOU FUCKING KIDDING ME," Stiles screams at his betas.

"Where are the girls," Valerie asks.
"Kira and Malia took them to the pool house," Danny answers. Valerie and Jason rush over to the pool house.

"I, do not give two fucks as to why, but what I do care about is the fact that you two decided to treat your Alpha’s childhood home like a goddamn fighting ring," Stiles yells at Isaac and Jackson. "You are guests in this house!" Isaac and Jackson retract their fangs, eyes returning to their normal color, as they bow their heads in shame at Stiles’ lecture. "There are children, actual children, in this house that are more well-behaved than the two of you!"

Isaac and Jackson talk over each other attempting to explain--

"BE QUIET!"

They shut up.

"You are going to spend the rest of the day cleaning this mess up and fixing every single thing you destroyed! Then you will go to your rooms with your dinner! You are not allowed to eat with the rest of the pack tonight!" Isaac and Jackson look crushed at being effectively shunned for the night. "But first, you will apologize to your Alpha, for embarrassing him, then to Theo and Talia for creating havoc in their home, then to Valerie and Jason for causing a scene in front of their scared children."

"I'm so sorry, Derek," Isaac apologizes.

"I'm sorry," Jackson tells Derek with all honesty.

Derek shakes his head at them, unable to comprehend their ridiculousness at the moment.

Stiles nods to Theo and Talia. The shamed betas sincerely apologize to them both. "We just ask that you boys fix this mess. Please. There’s tools in the shed," Talia tells them.

"I'll help," Ethan offers.

"No, you won’t," Stiles tells him. "This is Isaac and Jackson’s mess to clean up!" His attention falls back on the two betas. "Pool house! Go!"

Isaac and Jackson head toward the pool house to apologize to Valerie and Jason.

"Unbelievable. Jesus Christ," Stiles whispers to himself.

"What was that all about," Thomas asks.

"The same thing it’s always about," Stiles says evasively. He steps over shards of glass into the house with a frustrated groan.

A tiny smirk lands on Theo’s face. Derek takes notice. "What?"

"He’s a great mate, Derek. Good 'den mother', good Emissary... He’ll make an excellent father, too. When the time comes." The corner of Theo’s mouth turns up again at Derek. Theo slides into the house.

"I think the prospect of more grandchildren was just hinted at you, Derek," Thomas teases. He gives Derek an amused slap on the back as he, too, falls back inside the house.
Derek eyes the mess around him. "If I didn’t already have my hands full..." He disappears into the house.

Chapter End Notes

Headcanon/story note: Boyd will always be No.2 and Derek’s best friend in the pack.
Derek and Stiles are going to explode...!

STEREK SEX!!! And lots of it ;)

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Derek lifts Stiles atop the sink as they make-out feverishly.

The shower is running and the hot water makes the room waft with steam.

Stiles takes off Derek’s shirt, then his own. Stiles grabs Derek’s hair forcefully and kisses Derek’s jawline. Derek unbuttons his jeans and Stiles’ hand slips inside. Derek lets out a sexy groan as Stiles spindly fingers grip his cock and his thumb sweeps along the head, already leaking with precum. He slides Stiles off the sink, his legs wrapped around Derek’s waist and they bump into the glass, shower wall. "I want you so bad, Derek." They’re both still half-dressed trying to make their way into the running water, but Derek doesn’t care. He misses his boy and they haven’t had the chance to--

KNOCK, KNOCK, KNOCK!

"No," Derek growls to the pounding on the locked door.

"Derek," Danny calls on the other side of the door, "I know this is probably a bad time--"

"It’s a really bad fucking time, Danny!"

"--but the girls are being vicious!"

"Well, then, get Thomas and Val!"

"Not their girls. Your girls."

"What the hell is wrong with our betas lately," Stiles complains.

Peter watches with wicked amusement as Derek pinches the bridge of his nose while Lydia, Allison, Cora, Kira, and Malia all squawk at him in high-pitched, frantic voices.

Derek-- not being able to take it any longer-- holds up his hand, begging them to be quiet. They
"Lydia has been hogging the bathroom all night."

Lydia scoffs.

"I want to take a shower, Cora needs to take her make-up off, Malia’s had to pee for the last 20 minutes, and Allison was going to shower after me, 45 minutes ago. When we asked her, nicely, to open the door and let Malia go to the bathroom, and Cora get her make-up remover--"

"Wait. Why do you need make-up remover," Derek asks his sister. "We’ve only been on the property for the last 10 days."

"Doesn’t mean I have to look like Malia," Cora answers.

"I don’t understand," Malia says, confused by Cora's dig at her.

"Moving on," Derek insists.

"Lydia refused," Kira continues. "I asked her again. She told me to go away. I banged on the door--"

"Nearly, breaking it down," Lydia chimes in.

"--and she wouldn’t answer. So, I told her if she didn’t unlock the door and let Malia pee and let me shower, I was going to throw her vibrator out the window."

Peter...is...dying...of...hysterics. Derek, on the other hand, is at a loss for words. He finally takes notice of the pink sex toy in Kira’s hand.

"The Lelo Gigi 2 is a very expensive sex toy! It’s waterproof, easy to clean, and hits my G-spot better than any werewolf could!"

"This is the greatest day of my life," Peter gloats at Derek.

"Really," Malia asks, curious about Lydia's vibrator.

"And now it’s not," Peter says with a frown.

"Plus, it was a gift. Stiles got it for me for my birthday!"

"I can’t do this. Peter, you want to help me out here a little? Two of these ladies are under your charge."

"Nope. You’re fine. I think I’ll go check on Stiles, see how he’s doing."

"Move from that spot and I’ll rip your arms off."

Peter scoffs at Derek and his red eyes...but doesn’t move.

"So I told Kira that if she threw my vibrator out the window, I was going to tell everyone about a certain werewolf I caught her making out with last pack Christmas."

"And I’ll take Jackson’s blood/venom and squirt that poison all over your face!"

"Please. I’m not the one that likes Jackson squirting all over my face!"

"Oh, shit. Nice burn, Kira." Kira and Peter hi-five.

Lydia lets out a ‘war cry’ and lunges for Kira!

**CHAOS!** Screaming! Scratching! Slapping! Hair pulling! And the overuse of the word 'bitch'!

Derek easily pulls both girls apart. "ENOUGH!"

They stop at Derek’s roar. Allison holds Lydia; Cora keeps Kira at bay. Peter...smiles brightly, enjoying the childish antics of his own personal viewing of 'Were-Girls Gone Wild'.

"Kira give Lydia back her vibrator then go take a shower in my room. You have 10 minutes. Cora get your make-up stuff out of the bathroom and use the half-bath downstairs. Malia use the bathroom. You have 2 minutes, afterward, it’s Allison’s turn to take a shower. Allison--"

"10 minutes. Got it."

"And when they’re done, Lydia, you can go back and use the bathroom. Understand?"

"Derek, you know I have a morning and nightly beauty regiment!"

"Yes, I do. And I also recall the same fights occurring between you and Erica when the whole pack lived together. You can't always get things your way; I'm not Jackson, and I'm not Stiles. You know better, Lydia, and I expect you to act as such. More than anyone else here."

Lydia stands before Derek, slack-jawed at his discipline. She’s Lydia Martin. No one yells at Lydia Martin, let alone snaps at her, and expresses disappointment. She snatches her vibrator from Kira’s hand and storms into her room, slamming the door behind her!

Stiles sits on the bed in his pj bottoms and a T-shirt with Stanford University’s logo and seal. "Could have warned me that Kira was going to be using our bathroom."

"Why," Derek asks, coming in the room closing the door behind him.

"She got a bit of an eye-full when she walked in. Was kind of hoping it was you and we can pick up where we left off."

"Oh..."

"Yeah. We might not be able to look each other in the eye for about a week." Derek collapses on the bed. He rolls his head into Stiles’ lap. "That bad, papa-wolf?"

"I hate them. All of them." Stiles chuckles. "Lydia was being Lydia and Kira had enough of it."

"You snapped at Lydia Martin? Oh, the wrath coming your way..."
"I’m not afraid of Lydia."

"The last man to have spoken those words is probably dead… In fact, I think he is."

"I got you to protect me though, don’t I?"

"Always." Stiles pecks him.

"Hey," Derek whispers, sitting up, "Who did Lydia catch Kira making out with last pack Christmas? I know she told you."

"I love when you get all gossipy." Stiles mouths Peter's name.

"I could have gone my whole life without ever knowing that. I would've thought it'd be Isaac."

"No! Could you imagine Kira kissing Isaac?! He and Scott only broke up 3 months before she was with him. Jesus, it’s so gross how Scott kind of got around when he and Allison broke up. I think he slept with Erica, too."

"He did. I heard them. It…was really weird. He’s terrible at dirty talk by the way."

"How could you not tell me Scott slept with Erica?!"

"Thought you knew."

"Liar."

"Erica swore me to secrecy. She didn’t want Boyd to find out," Derek concedes.

"Ugh, God! Our betas used to be so incestuous!"

"Says the man who was dating my cousin when I met him."

"That was way before I knew you."

"Still weirds me out."

"At least she’s not trying to kill you anymore."

Derek shrugs. Yeah. There’s that, I guess… He takes notice of Stiles, lost in thought. "I’ll give you a penny for them."

"You know what’s in my head is at least worth a dollar… It still bothers me the way Scott treated Isaac and Kira. Especially Isaac. He’s my best friend, my brother, but the way he broke Isaac’s heart just made me want to throw him off a building. He’s such a bleeding heart, such a good guy. It was weird seeing him act like a douche. Especially with his pack-brother. Isaac was so gone on him."

"I remember. So was Kira."

"Thank God they’re not mates."
"Boyd and Erica aren’t mates."

"Neither are Lydia and Jackson."

"Guess it’s just Scott and Allison."

"And you and me."

"No one comes close to you and me." They kiss. An affectionate, loving kiss that speaks volumes about how much they live for one another.

They break apart at the gruff noise of someone clearing their throat. Kira. "Thanks. For letting me use your shower. And I’m sorry about the catfight you had to break up, Derek."

"Let’s just try to not kill each other while we’re all here. That’s all I want."

"Okay." Kira approaches the door, her hand on the knob, she stops. She turns back to her Alpha and his mate sitting on the bed. "And thanks for being concerned. About how Scott treated me. Took awhile to get over him actually. But I get it: I’m not Allison. And no one else could be." Kira leaves, closing the door behind her.

"Let’s take her from Peter and bring her back to San Francisco with us."

"I think she’s happy with Peter actually."

"In Fresno? On a goat farm?"

"Peter and Malia live on the farm. Kira and Ethan stay downtown."

"And where does Braeden stay?"

"Don’t remind me of that. It’s not a conversation I look forward to having with my antagonistic uncle." Derek whips off his shirt. He lies down on the bed and pulls Stiles toward him to cuddle. "Those fucking girls exhausted me."

Stiles laughs lightly, "Sorry." Stiles tucks in under Derek’s arm; head on his chest.

Derek breathes in Stiles’ scent, nose buried in his hair. And then Derek remembers... "Did you buy Lydia a vibrator?"

Stiles eyes go wide. "Goodnight." He quickly turns out the light, trying to avoid the question.

"This is a discussion in the morning," Derek says in the darkness.

---

The pack tries to keep busy while locked down on Hale property:

The wolves go running in full-beta form as the sun rises.
Isaac and Jackson repair the patio doors.
The entire pack, including John, Melissa, and Deaton, sit down to a hearty breakfast.
Theo trains all the wolves in fighting techniques.
Allison and Scott talk on the phone.
Lydia and Jackson make out on her guest bed. His hand creeps up her skirt.
Derek watches fondly as Stiles plays Hide-and-Go-Seek with his nieces.
Peter and Talia have a heart-to-heart in the **LIBRARY**.
All the females dance around to records in the **FAMILY ROOM**.
Derek spots Boyd as they lift weights in the **GYM**.
Stiles and Jackson spend some quality time together watching **Sportscenter**.
Laura and Thomas have phone sex.
Isaac and Jackson repair the tables they broke on the veranda.
Valerie, Derek, and Cora watch affectionately as their parents coo over each other while Talia cooks dinner.
Peter shows Malia a cool fighting move. She nails it.
Allison practices shooting with her bow and arrow.
Deaton and Stiles try out spells in the pool house.
Boyd and Erica talk on the phone.
Danny shows Stiles and Derek something on his laptop. They nod in understanding.
Stiles lies in Derek’s lap as Derek reads a book and Stiles dozes off.
Valerie and Jason make love.
Derek talks on the phone on a 3-way call with Scott and Erica.
Stiles and Luna teach a culinary-impaired Lydia and Jackson how to make basic spaghetti.
Allison impresses Boyd, Isaac, and Jackson with her knife-throwing skills.
Cora and Malia get into a vicious fight, slamming each other into walls and throwing things! Peter and Ethan break it up.
John and Stiles talk with one another on the veranda.
Derek, Jackson, and Danny play a 3-on-3 basketball game against Boyd, Jason, and Thomas on the **COURT** outside.
Stiles helps Talia in her garden.
Scott calls Melissa while she’s on break at work.

Lydia and Valerie give cucumber-avocado facials to all the other females in the house.

Stiles stands in the doorway of the kitchen, watching fondly as Derek cooks dinner for the pack.

Derek pulls Stiles into a secluded corner of the veranda to make-out. Not before long, they’re being pulled in opposite directions by Soleil and Cee.

Scott and Allison have phone sex.

John, Melissa, and Deaton arrive at Hale House with three cars full of groceries and other supplies.

Stiles plays guitar for his nieces.

All the adults play Pictionary in the family room.

Peter and Theo play chess.

Isaac, Cora, Ethan, and Allison ‘chicken fight’ in the pool.

Stiles and Isaac play ‘Red Rover’ with Laura and Valerie’s girls.

Derek, Thomas, and Jason talk as Thomas grills steaks on the barbecue.

Thomas and Jason roast marshmallows with their daughters over the fire pit.

Stiles, Kira, and Lydia sing a cover song for everyone as Stiles plays guitar, Kira plays her violin, and Lydia plays the piano in the Living Room.

Talia busts Danny and Ethan making out, and half-dressed, in the Laundry Room.

Theo and Jason have a heart-to-heart in Theo’s study.

Stiles and Isaac watch a scary movie with Laura and Valerie’s girls. The girls cringe and jump, tucking themselves into an equally scared Stiles and Isaac.

Theo reads an old, well-worn copy of To Kill A Mockingbird to his granddaughters in their Attic Room.

Talia watches Steel Magnolias with her daughters.

Derek and Thomas take Thomas’ daughters out for their first morning run with the rest of the wolves.

Boyd and Valerie spar with one another during training. They’re both fierce, skilled fighters. Probably the toughest fighters in the pack.

Allison, Lydia, and Cora sift through wedding magazines with enthusiasm.

Lydia watches Stiles practice magic with Deaton.

The pack helps celebrate Cora’s 29th birthday with a beautiful cake and a feast. She’s all smiles and happy tears.

Derek and Stiles are in the midst of a romantic (and naked), midnight swim in the pool...that is quickly interrupted by a pompous Peter who turns on the back light and sits in a lounge chair with
a book. He knows full well what he just disturbed and grins like the Cheshire Cat at doing it.

Valerie dithers between a Pinot Grigio and a chardonnay for lunch as she stands in the wine cellar. Derek trots down the staircase into the cellar.

"Help me out. I can’t choose."

He disaffectedly picks the chardonnay. She puts both wines back and grabs a Sauvignon blanc instead. "Why did you even ask me?"

She shrugs. She grabs two more bottles. "Can you get the other two?"

"Do we need that much wine for lunch?"

"Well, Lydia and Cora have been guzzling it like fish for the last 3 days, and Jason only drinks white wine. Red gives him a headache."

Derek grabs the wine. Suddenly, the whole top shelf collapses, resulting in the loss of 10 bottles of really expensive white wine!

"What the fuck, Derek?!"

"I didn’t do that! I just grabbed the wine!"

Valerie puts down the bottles in her hand and grabs the broken shelf. "Well, at least it was just the top shelf, and the rest of the bottles didn’t break. What the hell is going with you?"

"What do mean?"

"You put a mug down on the counter the other day and it broke in half. And yesterday you took a door off it’s hinges just by opening it."

"Nothing’s wrong. I’m fine." He grabs one of the bottles of wine Valerie was holding. It shatters in his hand!

"Derek!"

Lydia comes downstairs. "What’s going on in here? Everything okay?"

"Derek is suddenly The Hulk."

"Don’t tell your comic book-loving husband that. He might cream himself over the thought."

Derek’s eyes turn scarlet red, and a low growl erupts from Derek’s throat at the thought of Stiles coming all over himself.

"Oh, my God, D! Did you and Stiles not have sex before the full moon?"

"'Before the full moon?' We haven’t had sex since we got here! Because every time we turn around, one of you needs something!"
"You must seriously be backed up."

Derek snarls at Lydia. Her eyes widen, a tad scared.

"D, you can’t be serious. That’s what all this He-Man strength is about? Jason and I have had sex nearly every day since he got here."

"Yes, Val. I know. Your room is right next to mine. Not to mention, I can smell it on all of you. I can even smell Allison and Thomas’ phone sex. And every masturbatory thought Peter has had-- probably about my husband-- over the last 8 weeks! 8 weeks! Two months, of splitting up fights and talks with dad, and strategy plans with senior pack, and holding Allison until she falls asleep, and bedtime stories to my nieces, and training, and checking in with Laura, Scott, and Erica, and two full moons of me sleeping outside so I don’t rape my husband because for 8 fucking weeks everyone in this damn house has cockblocked me!"

Derek drops the wine bottles he was holding and pushes past Lydia to rush upstairs!

Stiles helps Luna and Cee put on their floaties at the pool.

Derek storms out of the house and makes a b-line for Stiles! He grabs Stiles by his arm and drags him toward the pool house!

Isaac and Jackson watch TV while Boyd reads My Antonia.

Derek drags Stiles inside the pool house. "Out," Derek snarls at their betas. They don’t hesitate and scramble out of the pool/guest house.

"Derek, what’s--"

"We have not made love in 8 weeks, Stiles. That’s two full moons."

"You think I don’t know that?! That I’m not completely wrecked over it, too?! Just because I don’t have fangs and blood red eyes-- which is really turning me on right now-- that I’m not unfathomably pissed about it?! Every time I turn around there’s someone here who needs something from one of us, or the both of us, and it’s fucking maddening! It’s maddening listening to Val and Jason damn-near every night, Allison and her phone sex with Scott, and Thomas and his phone sex with Laura, or Lydia with Jackson, or Lydia with Lydia, using her damn vibrator! And the most annoying one is Peter, jerking off every morning in the bathroom, then winking at me during breakfast!"

"I’m going to kill him."

"Not before I do."

"Stiles, I can not do this. I can’t breathe! All these fucking people together like this, all the time... It’s sensory overload. And I’m so backed up I’m shaking."

"Rose and Cee asked me to read Little Red Riding Hood to them the other night and I had to stop a
quarter of the way through because I was getting hard! I ran out of the goddamn room, Derek!

"We’ve got to get away from these people."

"How?! Where?!"

"I don’t know!"

"Derek." Stiles takes a step toward Derek. Derek takes two back. "Oh, my God. You weren’t kidding."

"I’m serious. I need you so bad it aches. And I don’t think I can control myself."

Stiles lets out a ragged breath at Derek’s confession and shaken state. He crosses the room past Derek and slides the pool/guest house doors closed. He locks them and closes the curtains. Stiles pulls his shirt over his head. "You going to just stand there or are you going to fuck me within an inch of my life? At this moment, no one’s here but us and God help the man, woman, or child that gets the bright idea to come and disturb us because I no longer have any self control left either." Stiles approaches Derek and puts a hard kiss on his lips...but Derek just stands there like a statue, not knowing how to react to Stiles practically climbing all over him. "Derek, this whole sex thing needs two people to perform, otherwise it doesn’t work."

Derek pushes Stiles off of him.

Stiles suddenly feels weary, hesitant, not knowing what's going on his his husband who's just staring at him... "Derek...?"

Derek grabs the back of Stiles' neck! His eyes haven’t faded from their Alpha red since the wine cellar. "On your knees."

Stiles obeys, slowly sinking to the carpeted floor.

Derek moves his hold on Stiles’ neck to his hair, in a tight, domineering grip. Derek unties his swim trunks. "Beg for it."

Stiles is so turned on he’s nearing a panic attack. He's never been ashamed to admit to himself (and Lydia) that what turns him on the most about Derek is how scary, and domineering he can be. He knows Derek would never hurt him, but the possibility of him doing so, or when he acts as though he would, gets Stiles so hot he can't breathe. It always takes him a moment to collect himself and focus because he's brain turns to mush and all thinking ceases in favor of being used like a rag doll by his husband. "Derek--"

"That’s not what you call me."

Stiles wants to come right now. "Big Bad, Little Red needs you. He needs your big, fat cock in his mouth. That’s all I thought about all day. I love how thick, and heavy it is in my mouth. And I love that it’s so big I can’t take all of it, no matter how much I try and how bad I want to. I love choking on it. And I love when you come down my throat. I love when I suck you so good you just keep spilling and spilling and spilling your hot cum in my mouth and it runs down my chin. Please give me your dick. Please fuck my mouth."

Derek lets his shorts drop to the floor and guides Stiles’ open, waiting mouth toward his throbbing dick. Stiles takes Derek into his mouth as far back as he can, his hands on Derek’s hips.
Derek temporarily lets go of Stiles to remove his T-shirt then returns his hold on his boy’s hair. Derek’s hold keeps Stiles in place as he moves his hips, fucking in and out of Stiles’ mouth. Stiles moans around Derek’s cock while Derek continues fucking his mouth in a steady rhythm.

Stiles gags and Derek fists the base of his dick so he doesn’t have to take so much, but Stiles bats Derek’s hand away. He wants all of him. As much as he can take.

Saying that he missed Stiles like this, on his knees, mouth red and swollen around his hard cock, with his eyes bleary at Derek shoving in and out of his mouth, would be an understatement. He hasn’t had him like this in 8 weeks, two moon cycles, and hearing him beg earlier for his dick, seeing him take as much as he can into his pretty, debauched mouth, and feeling him moan enthusiastically around him, making obscene wet noises, is making him practically vibrate off the floor.

Stiles knows Derek’s close. So, so close. He takes Derek’s hand and puts it on his throat. He knows when he does that it sends Derek spiraling out of control. He knows Derek loves the feel of Stiles throat bobbing up and down, swallowing his cum and the simple move always makes his Alpha--"OH, FUCK, STILES!"

Stiles digs his fingertips into Derek’s hips, holding him there, while keeping Derek upright as Derek’s orgasm nearly knocks him over atop Stiles. Derek shudders as streams of cum paint the inside of Stiles’ throat, coating every inch. He doesn’t move, keeping right there for every drop of Derek he can get. Derek starts to see stars as Stiles lazily continues to suck him off, trying to milk as much cum from him as he can. Derek lets out a breath, wrecked from head to toe. Stiles finally lets Derek’s dick slip from his mouth, a bit dizzy himself. Derek looks down at his Little Red, almost as nearly out of breath as he is.

"That better not be it."

There’s a line of Derek’s cum running down Stiles’ chin. Derek tilts Stiles’ head up and licks it off. "Not by a long shot." Derek picks Stiles up and throws him on the couch!

Couch. Derek and Stiles are completely naked. Stiles lies face down, Derek on top of him, fingering his tight hole with a rapid pace. Derek holds Stiles in place as Stiles squirms and wiggles with pleasure beneath his Big Bad Wolf.

Derek lies on the coffee table on his back. Stiles sits between his legs jerking him off while Derek sucks on the fingers of Stiles other hand.

Derek lies face down on the cushioned bench adjacent to the couch. Stiles’ face is buried in Derek’s ass, rimming him, fucking him open. Out of everything he and Stiles do to drive each other crazy, this is Derek’s favorite. He loves being fucked by Stiles’ tongue, giving complete control over to his Little Red, and being torn apart from the inside out by Stiles’ exhibitionism. Derek grips the legs of the bench as he reaches his orgasm, spilling his seed all over the cushion. Stiles keeps it up, overstimulating him, and Derek comes again with Stiles’ name on his rasping lips.

Kitchen. Stiles grips Derek’s hair as Derek goes down on him while Stiles is perched atop the kitchen counter.

Stiles fucks Derek on the kitchen floor, pushing into him in a healthy rhythm. Derek wraps a hand around his dick, but Stiles bats his hand away, wanting to be the only thing that makes his man
come undone. Stiles picks up the pace, fucking into Derek with everything he’s got. Derek has to grip the counter, bracing himself, nearing his orgasm. Stiles pinches Derek’s nipple and Derek shoots cum all over Stiles’ chest and stomach.

**Shower.** Stiles is bent over, clutching at the tile wall as Derek pounds into him forcefully. The shower curtain and rod come tumbling down when Stiles tugs on it as his orgasm rocks through him violently. Derek gives no purchase and continues pounding into him.

**Bedroom.** Derek has Stiles wrapped around him, pushed up against the wall, as he rocks into him with a slow, deliberate pace. It’s intimate, tender. Tears run down Stiles’ face at their closeness. He loves Derek. He loves Derek more than he’s ever loved anyone. More than he thinks he could love anyone. Derek belongs to him. And he belongs to Derek. Stiles bares his neck, and Derek takes the invitation to mark him.

There’s two full-size beds in the room. Derek and Stiles are on the bed furthest from the door. Stiles bounces atop Derek’s lap. Derek’s hands are tied to the headboard with one of Jackson’s ties. Derek can’t take his eyes off his boy. His Little Red. He loves watching him like this; completely gone and in the moment. Stiles hands dig into Derek’s pecs as he rolls his hips, chasing his orgasm. Derek wants to touch so bad, but he loves this more. He loves watching Stiles get himself off on his cock, fucking himself wildly on Derek’s hard-as-steel erection.

They’re on the other bed now. Derek holds Stiles hips as he fucks into him like a madman, pushing Stiles halfway off the bed. Red eyes. Fangs. Claws. Derek’s a growling, snarling mess. Stiles tries to hold onto Derek’s forearms, but he can’t. His whole body feels like Jell-O. He’s coming undone as Derek keeps hitting his prostate, over and over and over again, with a force so savage it only leaves Stiles to scream and cry. Derek’s a wild beast and Stiles loves-- *loves*-- when he’s like this. Loves that he can turn Derek into a ferocious animal, spitting and drooling filthy, broken words out of his mouth. Derek may not say much outside the bedroom, but when he and Stiles are alone, like this, he has the dirtiest mouth. Just the things Derek says alone have made Stiles come. But Derek’s fragmented syllables are barely coherent now. Stiles is just a toy. Just a slick, wet hole Derek’s fucking into, blind with lust. Stiles is completely falling apart beneath him. There’s no sound and his vision is turning white. His whole body shakes into a spasm and then it all goes black...

Derek runs his hand gently through Stiles’ sweat-soaked hair.

Stiles’ eyes flutter open.

"There’s my boy."

"What happened?"

"You passed out."

"Happens when you wolf-out on me."

"You provoked me."

"I don’t even remember what I said."

"You said, 'Give the wolf what he wants. I can handle it.' It’s the exact same thing you said the last time I fucked you so hard you blacked out. And the time before that, and the time before that..."
"Wow. I’m a little shit, huh?"

"Yes. But you’re mine."

"I am yours." They kiss. A slow, sweet kiss that doubles as a vow, to only belong to each other. "My whole body aches. And I’m sticky. And wet."

"Are you provoking me again?"

"No. Just stating facts. This whole room smells like us."

"I know. The whole pool house smells like us. I like it."

"Why didn’t we just take the pool house and give Boyd and Jackson your old room?"

"Because I wanted to make love to you in my old bed. But seeing as how that never happened, sleeping arrangements will change in the morning."

"In the morning...?" Stiles looks out the window. It’s nightfall. "We’ve been at it since three o’clock!"

"I know. I was there."

"We full-on marathoned it! We haven’t done that in a while."

Derek kisses Stiles neck. "Yes, we have. We did when we went to Havana." Derek continues kissing Stiles’ neck.

"Oh, yeah. God, that place was beautiful. But what a welcome home present though, getting arrested by the FBI."

"I don’t want to talk about any of that. If it’s not about you and me, in this moment, I don’t care."

"What if it’s about how hungry I am?"

"That we can talk about. Stay." Derek hops out of bed and walks out of the bedroom, completely naked. Stiles sighs, utterly content. He sits up, leaning against the headboard. His neck and chest are covered in hickeys. He looks down and sees bruises on his hips and inner thighs. He smiles. He loves it when Derek is possessive in bed and marks him.

Derek returns balancing two plates of food and one bottle of water and one bottle of beer in his hands. He hands a plate to Stiles, then the water. "Why do I get the water?"

"The beer has aconite in it."

"I can handle it."

"Like last time when we had to call the fire department to get you out of a tree because you thought you were a cat that could fly?"

"You’re a horrible husband for remembering such an embarrassing moment." Derek chuckles. He
climbs back into bed beside Stiles. "You marked me up good."

"Did I," Derek says with a coy smile on his lips.

"You did, sir."

"Good." They kiss. "I love you, Stiles."

"I love you, too." They kiss again.

"We’re in Jackson’s bed, by the way."

"You can smell him?"

"And Lydia."

"Ugh!"

Derek laughs.

Derek patiently fucks into Stiles as he sleeps. They’re both on their sides, facing away from the door. Derek has one hand wrapped under Stiles with his palm on his chest. His other hand holds him at his hip. Derek moans softly. "Oh, my God... Baby..."

Stiles gradually begins to flutter awake at the slow, rhythmic stretching at a very sensitive spot. And the hot, breathy moans in his ear. "Derek..."

"Morning." Derek moves his hand from Stiles’ hip and hooks Stiles’ leg over his thigh for a more accessible angle. He hits Stiles’ prostate, causing Stiles to let out a sharp gasp. "You like that?"

Stiles nods. It’s too early for him to find the words to say so, and it feels too good for him to bother trying to find them.

"You were so fucking loose and wet this morning. I had to." There’s nothing sexier than a foul-mouthed Derek Hale whispering in your ear first thing in the morning. "I couldn’t sleep. I kept thinking about you rimming me last night. I love when you do that. I love when you put that mouth to work, fucking me with your tongue. You like the way I taste?"

"Y-Yes."

"How do I taste? How does the Big Bad Wolf taste?"

"Like mine." Derek’s grip tightens around Stiles and his pace picks up. "Like you’re mine. Only mine. Like I’m the only one that can get you off that way. Like I’m the only one that can make you wet, and eat you open like that."

"You are. You’re the only one, Stiles." Derek hits Stiles’ prostate again. And again. "What do you want?"

"F-F-For... my Big Bad Wolf to-- oh, fuck!-- s-scent mark me. Little Red wants his cum."

Derek’s pace turns quick; deep, hard thrust moving at eager speed. "You want my cum? You want
me to let everyone know who you belong to?"

"Y-Y-Yes. Please, Derek."

"I love when you smell like me. You have no idea how hard I get when I can smell myself on you."

Stiles hands finds Derek’s hair and tugs. Derek pinches Stiles pert nipple. "I want it! I want it so bad, Derek!"

"Oh, shit, Stiles!"

Derek’s pace is now frantic. He bites down on Stiles’ already sore, purple-bruised neck. Stiles gasps at Derek’s bite as he repeatedly slams into his prostate. "Fuck! Derek! I’m going to come!"

Stiles grabs his cock and squeezes himself hard, expelling cum all over his hand and the bed. Derek lets out a growl and pulls out of Stiles. Stiles whimpers in response before Derek pushes him onto his back and hovers above him. Derek grabs the headboard with one hand and his dick with the other. He takes off the condom and throws it to the side somewhere.

"Where?"

"On my stomach."

Derek’s hand moves frantically up and down his rock hard dick. Stiles licks his lips, desperately wanting Derek to come all over him. "You’re such a fucking cumslut. It turns me on so fucking much." Derek takes Stiles’ hand and replaces his hand with Stiles’ on his cock. Derek grips the headboard for dear-life while Stiles jerks him off feverishly.

Derek’s close. His eyes shut tight, grip on bed furniture tightening...


"Oh, shit." Derek let’s out a surrendering whimper, giving himself over to his pleasure. He growls through gritted teeth, and the headboard cracks under his hands! Ribbons upon ribbons of hot cum shoot out of him and onto Stiles’ stomach.

Stiles continues jerking Derek off with a light and easy pace, letting Derek catch his breath.

Derek slides to his side of the bed, drenched in sweat, trying to recover his breath.

Stiles swipes two fingers into Derek’s cum and licks it from his fingers. Keeping the thick, white pearl on his tongue, he turns to Derek and kisses him. Derek’s mouth wraps around Stiles’, accepting Stiles’ ‘gift’.

Stiles breaks their kiss and straddles him, his hands on Derek’s muscular chest. "You fucked me in my sleep."

"You didn’t seem to mind."

"I’m still hard."

Derek sits up and licks into Stiles’ mouth. "What do you want me to do about that?" His lips trail down Stiles’ neck.
Stiles moans at Derek sucking on his already bruised skin. He’s such a wanton for his husband.
"Take a shower with me."

Without hesitation, Derek climbs out of bed with Stiles wrapped around him and heads into the adjoining bathroom.

Derek and Stiles enter the kitchen from the patio doors. Lydia and Valerie sit at the breakfast nook having coffee together. Derek and Stiles join them.

"Wow! You two are potent! I can smell the pool house from here, too," Valerie exclaims.

"Please, God, tell me you two showered," Lydia says.

"Of course we did," Stiles says.

"For the sake of showering, or was it just another place for you to give each other mutual handjobs," She asks with a raised eyebrow.

"Both," Stiles answers.

"Sometimes you two are a little too close for my liking," Derek says.

"Where is everyone," Stiles asks.

"Hiding in their rooms. Avoiding you two," Valerie answers.

"Why?"

"I think we were a little loud yesterday, Stiles...and this morning," Derek reminds him.

"In addition to being only a 100ft away from the main house which was inhabited by 14 werewolves that could also smell what you were up to," Valerie adds.

"Well, serves you all right for your inconsiderate encroaching. And I hope Peter choked on the smell," Stiles gloats.

"Please tell me he was pissed," Derek says with a gleam in his eyes.

"He pouted for a bit. Until he decided Lydia was more interesting," Valerie tells them. Lydia rolls her eyes.

"What is his deal with the two of us," Stiles asks. Lydia shrugs. Not wanting to discuss anymore of Peter’s pervy infatuations with her and Stiles.

"I think it has something to do with when he offered you two the bite. He feels like you two should be his betas...or mates," Derek says.

"Mates? Plural," Lydia asks, all wide-eyed and open-mouthed.

"Maybe," Derek shrugs.
"When was Peter an Alpha," Valerie asks, feeling out of the loop.

"When he killed that Alpha from Salt Lake City. Deucalion asked him to. Some old debt he needed settled and called on Peter to take care of it. But he fucked up and killed a bus driver a few weeks later, losing his Alpha powers."

"And you two turned down the bite?"

"I did. It didn’t take with Lydia; she’s immune. Whole, banshee-thing."

"Can we get back to the whole mates-plural thing," Lydia insists.

"I’d rather not," Stiles says.

"I don’t know if a wolf can have more than one mate. I highly doubt it, but Peter’s always seen turning a human into a wolf somewhat sexual in nature. So it’s not surprising when given the chance to offer the bite to someone, he picks two people he finds attractive," Derek tries to explain.

"That may explain him pedo-wolffing on me and Lyds, but I still don’t like it."

"I bet I could get you to like it, Stiles." They turn to Peter leaning against the kitchen doorway. "You, too, Lyds."

"Doubt it. First, Lydia wouldn’t touch you with a 10ft pole. Second, I consistently reek of your Alpha, and third, I used to have sex with your daughter."

Both Derek and Peter ask Stiles to never bring up the fact that he used to have sex with Malia. Stiles shrugs. It's a fact. What do you want me to do?

"Something you need, Peter," Derek asks.

"Just wanted to see what Stiles looked like after being fucked out of his mind." Derek flashes his red, Alpha eyes at Peter. "He looks good, nephew. Real good." Peter leaves with an evil grin on his face.

"Is there no one else in this house he could sexually harass," Stiles snaps.

"Doesn’t seem like it. Looks like it’s just you two kids that get to bear the brunt of Uncle Peter’s bad sexual innuendo."

"Innuendo implies subtlety. Peter Hale is as subtle as a car crash."

Chapter End Notes

I loved writing this sexy chapter ;)
Derek has to decide the fate of his pack when an unexpected offer is given to him by a hunter.

I honestly loved writing this chapter, and I hope you guys like it, too :)

Stiles’ head is in Derek’s lap as he watches TV and Derek reads Tzu’s *The Art of War*. Derek’s favorite moments are the ones when it’s just the two of them, either intellectually sparring, or just sitting in comfortable, familiar silence. When Stiles is close, and content, Derek’s wolf is at ease and happy. He can feel it inside him and it radiates a warmth through his whole body that he knows Stiles can feel in his fingertips when he lazily grazes through Stiles’ hair or touches his skin, like scorched earth, because Stiles used to tell him all the time how hot Derek’s touch felt during those moments. During the quiet moments of just them when Derek would trace Stiles’ lips with the pad of his finger, or when they’d talk about literature or history and Stiles would get so riled up and flail about that Derek would have to calm him with a hand on his shoulder, or a kiss.

Yet, their moment is interrupted when Stiles feels Derek tense; his whole body going rigid. **Wolf-y senses tingling**...

"What is it?"

Before Derek can answer, Boyd, Isaac, Jackson, and Cora are stalking into the pool house. Isaac tosses Stiles his baseball bat.

"How many," Boyd asks, all business.

"One," Derek answers.

"Omega," Cora asks.


"Derek--"

"Not a discussion, nor an argument. Cora stay with Stiles. Boyd, Isaac, and Jackson come with me." Boyd, Isaac, and Jackson follow Derek out the pool house.

Stiles attempts to follow, but Cora blocks his path. Her eyes flash their beta golden-yellow at him. "Derek said stay."
"Cora, come on--"

"Derek. Said. Stay." She flashes her fangs at him.

"You wouldn’t hurt your brother-in-law."

"If he disobeyed my Alpha I might. Stay." She’s just as frightening as Lydia. Probably even more so given she can literally rip him into pieces, whereas Lydia can just threaten to.

He reluctantly takes a seat on the sofa. Cora takes a seat beside him. She grabs the TV remote and changes the channel to *Downton Abbey*.

"...You're lucky I like this show," Stiles says bitterly.

The woods are scary, dark, and deep... A light fog hovers just a few inches above the ground, and the moonlight is scarce.

Derek, Boyd, Isaac, and Jackson walk through the darkness. Wolf-eyes turned their appropriate colors as they scan through the trees, looking for the hunter.

A twig snaps...

They freeze, standing at four points: north (Derek), south (Boyd), east (Isaac), and west (Jackson).

Hesitant, approaching footsteps crunch on dead leaves and twigs toward Jackson...

The wolves stay at their four points, seeing every angle and having each other’s backs, while keeping a close ear in Jackson’s direction.

A figure within the shadows gradually makes their way toward them, slow, and cautious. Jackson snarls.

The figure stops.

A beat of tense silence wafts through the dark area. They’ve taken down intruders before. Omegas and rouge hunters looking for a fight. But for some reason this feels new, unfamiliar. Like their brand new cubs in their first fight, on edge and eager. It’s the lockdown. Nine weeks of training and no action has left them overeager and clawing for a fight. Cooped up in the house and only permitted along the borders of the preserve has stifled their wolves and now all they want is to pounce and tear and rip and taste blood in their mouths.

"Come out here," Derek demands.

The figure takes a few tentative steps toward them. It stops when a low growl rumbles through the betas. Derek steps in front of them, at the silhouetted shadow, halted by the agitation of three wolves. Derek repeats his earlier demand. His tone more relaxed, but just as commanding; the figure clearly hesitant about coming forward with hungry werewolves ready to attack.

The moon gives just enough light to reveal Chris Argent stepping toward them reluctantly. Chris holds up his hands, showing their empty of a weapon. It doesn’t stop the snarls and growls directed at him.

"What are you doing here," Derek asks.
"I’m not here for a fight. I wanted to talk."

"You alone?"

"You smell anyone with me," Chris snarks. "Yes, I’m alone."

Derek listens to Chris’ heartbeat. He’s telling the truth. "Boyd. Isaac."

Boyd and Isaac approach Chris. They search him. Isaac pulls a dagger out of the back of Chris’ jeans. He immediately drops it, the handle scorching his hand!

"It’s dusted with wolfsbane. I needed something coming out here to talk to you."

"There isn’t anything to discuss, Argent," Derek says.

"Yes, there is."

"Get off my property."

"I can’t. Not until we talk about Allison."

Derek shrugs. "She’s not of your concern. She’s my beta."

"And my daughter," Christ snaps angrily.

Jackson growls at Chris’ hostile tone toward his Alpha.

"She’s my daughter," he quickly repeats, adopting a more even tone. "I don’t want her hurt. I don’t want to lose my child like I did my wife: in some centuries-old feud that’s not worth anyone’s life."

"Gerard thinks it’s worth lives. Werewolf lives. As does your sister."

"I’m sorry I didn’t believe Talia about what she did to Laura back then."

"But you suddenly believe it now?"

"...I overheard my father and Kate talking. They brought up Laura. And your father... And you. All I ever wanted to do was to honor the code. I never wanted to be apart of this. I never wanted Victoria to die. I never wanted to lose Allison--"

"To criminals?"

"To bloodshed! I never wanted my own sister to become something I don’t recognize!"

"What are you saying, Chris?"

"I’m saying... I’m saying things need to change between our families."

"My family’s fine," Derek shrugs again. "We’re okay until we’re fucked with. And that’s all your family’s been doing...for the last 400 years."

"And I want it to end."
Derek takes a intimidating step towards Chris. "And how does it end?"

"With my daughter letting me walk her down the aisle."

Derek’s eyebrows knit together curiously at Chris. How does he--? Derek smells the air. A familiar scent. A few familiar scents... The wolves tuns their heads-- Peter. With Kira, Malia, and Ethan at his sides. They calmly approach from the direction of Hale House.

"I told him about Allison and Scott getting married," Peter says, noting the look on Derek's face.

"You two been keeping in contact?" Derek’s eyes glow crimson. Fangs protrude and claws out. His betas follow suit.

"Just about how dear Allison is doing as of late. Chris was concerned."

Derek approaches Peter. "You care to enlighten me about all this, Peter."

"Certainly. Chris, here, would like his life to end when he’s 90 years old and surrounded by generations of Argent/McCall half-breeds. Dying impaled on Boyd’s claws as he chokes on his own blood while shitting himself is not how he envisions his own death. He’d like to live a long and happy life. And he’d like to start doing that by reconnecting with his werewolf-loving daughter."

"That’s Allison’s decision," Derek tells Chris. "And I doubt you’d like the conclusion she’d come to."

"Ah, but she’d be more susceptible if she felt her father’s attempts were genuine, and without malice toward her precious Scottie and their pack." Derek's eyes narrow, trying to puzzle it together... "Come on, Derek. I know Stiles isn’t here, but you can do it. Put it all together," Peter teases in his usual snark.

"...You’re backstabbing your family," Derek poses as a question to Chris.

"If I have to choose between Allison and my father and sister, then I choose Allison."

"And your own skin," Jackson digs at Chris.

"Allison means more to me than my own life. But I won’t have much of one if she’s not in it."

"So touching I could vomit," Peter says with a wicked smile.

"Fuck you, Peter," Chris snaps.

"You’re here because Peter told you we were going to let you live. That we were going to send you away after we attacked."

"Stiles is rubbing off on you, nephew. You’re picking up on this quick--"

Derek’s hands wrap around Peter’s neck! "You’ve been going behind my back, giving away pack secrets. You’ve been disobeying me. Your Alpha. That is betrayal, Peter."

"He contacted me first," manages through a strained breath. Derek’s hand wrapped around his neck
seemingly making it hard to formulate words.

"And you replied. With details." Derek’s claws dig into Peter’s neck as his grasp on his uncle tightens, bringing Peter’s knees to the cold, damp ground, and blood on the tips of Derek's claws.

"This needs to end, Derek... Too many people hurt... I don’t-I don’t want any of us to die... To get hurt... Laura and Theo were enough... Victoria was enough... Allison is enough..."

Derek snarls at his uncle held tightly in his hand, gasping and sputtering for air as Derek cuts off his oxygen. He hates it. Absolutely hates it. It doesn’t happen very often, if hardly ever, but he still hates it, with every fiber of his being. He hates it when Peter’s right.

Reluctantly, he lets go of Peter with a shove. Peter fights for air. The clawed holes in his neck begin to knit back together. Malia helps him to his feet.

"I appreciate you wanting to spare my life for Allison’s sake, but I don’t know if I can just disappear with a promise to never see her again. I want to be a fixture in her life."

"She’s pack. You in her life means you in ours. I don’t want that. I don’t trust you," Derek says.

"Well, how about this: Beacon Hills needs hunters. It can’t be the only district in California without them. You can’t kill every hunter and banish me and not expect other hunters to notice. To be curious. To ask question. To start a war in search of answers. Nor can you expect the damn government to not notice either. You need hunters you can work with, cooperate with."

"My father offered Gerard that years ago. He refused."

"I’m not mt father."

"What do we get in return? If Derek lets you live and stay in Beacon Hills, what do we get," Boyd asks.

"Information. Starting now and whenever you need it. In addition to help when needed. But I don’t kill innocents. Or humans."

"Neither do we," Isaac tells him.

"If we don’t have to," Jackson adds with a not-so-subtle threat on his tongue.

"Why should I take your offer? Why should I think to trust you," Derek asks.

Chris approaches Derek. "What wouldn’t you do for Stiles?"

"Don’t attempt to use my mate against me."

"I’m asking you, sincerely. Would you be okay with knowing Stiles was out there somewhere in the world, but you couldn’t be with him? You didn’t know if he was safe--"

"Allison is safe with us! Trust me!"

"But you can’t trust me...?"
"I have reason not to."

"So do I. First example-- my wife."

"Only example. And a horribly unfortunate result of Kate’s psychotic manipulation." Chris’ jaw sets. He and Derek exchange unblinking, icy glares at one another.

"He’s right, Chris," Peter says. "You know he is. You want Allison’s forgiveness? You want to be apart of her life? You want to stop Kate and Gerard dragging your family into this bullshit that caused your wife’s death, then you quit acting like you’re doing us favors and stop blaming us for all the shit that’s been piling up in your life over the last 25 years."

Chris’ eyes move around the woods at the wolves staring back at him, waiting... He takes two steps back away from Derek. Their pissing contest ended. "You can trust me. The only loyalty I have is to myself, my daughter, the hunter’s code, and this town."

"Trusting your family has never been a good decision on my part. Forgive me if I can’t give you a decision right away," Derek replies with a tint of snark.

But Chris nods. It's true. He gets it.

"But no more talking through Peter," Derek finishes.

Derek and his betas walk back toward the house.

"How do I contact you then?"

"You don’t. We contact you." Derek and his betas continue toward Hale House.

Chris picks up his knife, then stalks off into the woods, back the way he came.

Peter watches him fade into the darkness. He looks crestfallen. A memory of something creeping into his brain, remembering something gained, and then lost. Gone. And never coming back.

"Peter."

Peter turns to Kira. Derek and the rest are already nearing the edge of the woods toward the clearing on which Hale House sits. She nods toward them.

"Right. Time to face the wrath of Talia Hale," Peter sighs.

Peter walks back toward the house. Kira, Malia, and Ethan follow. Never a dull moment with Peter Hale as your leader.

Derek returns to the pool house. Stiles rushes to him. They embrace. After all they’ve been through over the years, a relived hug and reassuring kiss is always needed when whatever lurks around the corner is gone.

"Everything okay," Cora asks.

"Yes...and no," Derek says, Stiles still wrapped in his arms.
"I can hear mom... yelling at Uncle Peter."

"It’s well-deserved."

"I’m sure it is," Stiles remarks.

"Did this one behave," Derek teases, nodding to Stiles.

"Hey," Stiles exclaims.

"After a few leveled glares," Cora tells her brother.

"Yeah. That usually works."

"Says you," Stiles says, rolling his eyes.

"Fill me in later. If mom’s yelling doesn’t clue me into it beforehand."

"Boyd can tell you," Derek tells her.

"Okay." She pecks his cheek. "’Night."

"Thanks. Goodnight."

Cora walks back to the main house.

"First, don’t you ever leave me behind like I’m Princess Peach again," Stiles scolds, breaking from Derek’s hold.

"I can’t make that promise."

"Try. Second, what the hell happened? Why is your mother verbally beating the shit out of pedo-wolf?" Derek takes Stiles’ hand and leads him to the sofa. "Oh, shit. This is heavy, isn't it?"

"Chris Argent was the one in the woods."

"Derek--"

"He was alone. He’s betraying Gerard and Kate."

"He wants something then... Access to Allison?"

"He wants to stay in Beacon Hills. He wants to build a relationship with her."

"It’s a trick. This is their attempt to kidnap her. Divide and conquer. He gets to see her, steals her away, and the hunters attack."

"I don’t know... I listened to his heart, and..."

"And what?"

"He seems... genuine. Like it's killing him not being apart of his daughter’s life."
"That’s their making. Not ours. They sent her to spy on us. Not our fault she fell for Scott and decided to stay."

"That’s pretty much what Peter said, in a nutshell. That none of this over the years is our fault, but theirs. I think Chris got that. Understood it finally."

"We still need a backup plan in case it’s bullshit."

"I know."

"Wait. What was Peter doing there? I thought it was just you and the betas."

"Apparently, Peter and Chris have been communicating with each other. He told Chris we were going to keep him alive when we attack the Argents and send him away. He wanted to broker a deal that would keep him in Beacon Hills and near Allison."

"Peter is such slime sometimes!"

"I nearly snapped his neck."

"I’m almost tempted to ask you why you didn’t finish what you started."

"If you want, you can go and help my mom with the Peter-bashing."

"Talia Hale is the only person who seems capable of cowing Peter. I’m sure she’s okay."

"I don’t know. He seems to listen to you...and Lydia."

"I hate you for bringing that up."

Derek pulls Stiles into his lap. "He tried to use you against me."

"How?"

"He tried to compare being without you, to not being in Allison’s life."

"I don’t know what it’s like being a dad, but I do know how I’d feel without mine. He was pretty peeved when he interrogated me and I egged him on about being out of her life. He does miss her. She’s pretty much all he has left. She’s half him and his dead wife. I can understanding him needing her."

"I don’t doubt that, but it’s not the same as you and me."

"Of course not. You’re a werewolf. Your emotions are twice as strong as any human’s."

"It’s not just that, Stiles. You felt it. When we were apart last year. When you went to jail. That’s how it’s not the same."

Stiles climbs out of Derek’s lap, uncomfortable. He doesn’t like reminding himself of how lost and torn apart he was without Derek. Especially with Derek.
"What?"

"Nothing." It’s clearly something. But Stiles remains silent, picking at an invisible seam on the sofa.

Derek’s hand comes up to cup Stiles’ cheek. He runs his thumb across Stiles’ lips. "I love you."

Stiles smiles warmly at him. "I love you, too."

"I need to tell you something. About something I’ve decided."

"What?"

"I physically can not live without you, Stiles. I’m not equipped for it. Werewolves can’t survive long after their mate dies, and being apart, for long periods of time, after you’re mated, is just as bad. Some can go on living. Some do in fact, but they’re different. Lost. They become depressed, shut-away from the rest of the world. There’s nothing worse for a wolf than being alone. That’s why Omegas get the way they do, having been without love and family and pack for so long. Their humanity dissolves, slowly, like a drip from a leaky faucet. And it’s painful when it happens. I can’t ever get like that."

"If you ever lost me-- which will never happen, by the way-- your mother and your father would bring you back to the land of the living. They wouldn’t let you fall away like that."

"But I did."

"When--?" Stiles catches it the moment the question leaves his mouth. He knows when Derek was lost, angry, and depressed. He knows when Derek felt like an Omega. Talia told him Derek wanted to die. He wanted to die when he didn’t have Stiles. When he couldn’t have Stiles. When they refused to let him see him. When they took Stiles to a white room and strapped him to a bed and injected him with drugs to stop his screaming. To stop his panic attacks. To stop him from remembering where he was and the wolf he needed like he needed his lungs to breathe. "I can’t hear this."

Stiles bolts from the sofa toward the bedroom, but Derek is up in a flash and on him, grabbing his arm and swinging him around to look at him. "But you need to, Stiles! You need to know that without you I couldn’t function! 26 days, 10 hours, and 31 minutes. That’s how long I was without you. That’s how long a grey building of concrete and barbwire came between me and you and I couldn’t do anything about it aside from getting my own self killed trying to."

"Derek--"

"I was feral, Stiles!"

The wind is knocked out of Stiles. Wide eyes and lost words is all he’s got at Derek’s confession.

"Four days. For 4 days I was feral, in wolf form. It took 3 days for my mom and Laura to find me. When they did, do you know where I was? Alaska. I ran all the way to Alaska as my wolf with every intention of staying there and like that until they came for me. They had to trap me, Stiles, and bring me back in a cage, like an animal. I am never going through that again with you, Stiles. Ever." Derek lets go of Stiles’ arm.

He's ashamed. He's ashamed this whole time he's been avoiding this conversation he didn't know
Derek was so lost. So desperate. And all because he didn't have him. He didn't have his mate. He
didn't have Stiles to hold at night. To laugh with, and sometimes laugh at. He didn't have Stiles to
make dinner with and snide comments when they watched bad TV. He didn't have his Emissary to
advise him, to tell him when a plan, or 'business deal' was bad, or the best decision for them to
make. Stiles was gone. And Derek wanted to be gone right along with him. "I... I didn't know..."

"I’m turning you."

"W-W-What?"

"If it ever comes to the point where I can save you, where I don’t have to live without you, by
turning you, I’m going to."

"Derek, I told you. I don’t want 'the bite'."

"If it would save your life and keep us together, I will turn you. That’s my decision. If three and
half weeks apart from you is enough to make me feral, I can't imagine what’ll happen if I ever let
you die."

"Derek, it’s my decision."

"And I just told you it isn’t anymore."

Stiles nearly chokes on Derek’s audacity. "Excuse me?"

"Being turned is no longer your decision. It’s mine."

"I don’t want to be a wolf, Derek! Now, or if ever half my head is blown off by rogue hunters!
We’ve discussed this--"

"Yes, we did. Years ago, but I’ve changed my mind and revoked your decision. Why am I
repeating myself?"

Stiles could easily be knocked over with a feather at Derek’s gall at the moment.

Stiles steps closer, looking him dead in the eye. "Alright, Derek Hale, listen to me closely, because
I’m not repeating myself."

Derek folds his arms across his chest.

"If I should ever decide to accept 'the bite', from you or any other Alpha, it will be my decision
solely. As it stands now, I am not interested in becoming a werewolf. Nor do I believe I’d want to
be if I were dying. Leaving you, in any capacity, is the most terrifying thing I can think of, but
regardless of such, I am human and enjoy being so. And although I act like it at times, I am not
invincible. I am very well-aware that I could die at any moment. Especially given the sometimes
daily supernatural things that occur in our lives, and the fact that my mother’s illness is hereditary.
Yet, despite all that, I take comfort in still being human, and as such, I will die a human death if
need be. Is that clear?"

They meet each other’s glares with unflinching nerve.

Derek’s eyes fade into their bright, fire engine red. Derek leans in close to Stiles. "I will fucking
turn you, if I need to, Stiles."
"GODDAMNIT, DEREK!"

"What part did you miss when I told you that I can not, and will not, live without you?! If you wanted to keep this decision as yours than you should have never gone to jail in the first damn place!"

"You make it sound like I took a fucking vacation! Like I just up and decided to go to prison one day!"

"YOU DID!"

"WHAT?!

"You did, Stiles! I told you to leave it alone and you couldn’t! You just had to go after him and it landed you in a courtroom facing 5 fucking years of jail time!"

"I had to! I was protecting us!"

"You didn’t have to! You were showing off!"

"Like you don’t?! I’m pretty fucking sure there’s a royal faerie family out there that’s still a little pissed about you nearly killing their last heir!"

"That was different and you know it! And I didn’t have to go to jail for that!"

"Oh, good for fucking you, Derek," Stiles yells, clapping his hands ironically at Derek.

"You are such a shit sometimes!"

"Well, you’re the one that wants me to be immortal and stick around with you forever, so..."

"Is that it? You don’t think you can deal with me past a normal lifespan?"

"Oh, don’t do that, Derek! You know damn-well being with you, actually being with you, has no bearing on my decision to remain human."

"Then what does? Because if being without me isn’t enough to persuade you, if rotting from the inside out isn’t enough, then what is, Stiles?!"

"...Are you serious?" Stiles searches his husband’s face. He is. Derek is serious. He truly believes Stiles doesn’t love him like he loves Stiles. He’s hurt at the thought of Stiles being able to go on, to live his life fully and happily, if Derek weren’t there. If they weren’t together.

And then Stiles realizes why his husband feels this way. Why he’s scared of the idea of losing Stiles, and has this desperate need to keep him for as long as he can. It’s not just him going feral. It’s why he went feral. He doesn’t know if Stiles had longed for him the way he longed for Stiles. He doesn’t know that Stiles was in just as much agony. And it’s because Stiles never told him. He never told him what it was like being separated from Derek by force. He never wants to talk about it, and it’s left Derek to do nothing but assume. And with Derek, it’s always the worst assumption that’s adopted.
Tears fill Stiles’ eyes. He steps closer to his mate. "I heard you. Every night. Every night I was away from you I could hear you howl. It was like Lydia’s banshee cries pulsing in my head, as loud as possible. After 3 days I couldn’t take it, and started screaming. Screaming for you, yelling your name at the top of my lungs until guards would come and sedate me. I’d wake up the next morning and vomit all over the floor. Sick to death with worry from nightmares about something happening to you. To thoughts of you dying, and me not there to tell you I love you. I refused to sleep because I didn’t want any more dreams about you being gone. I stopped eating. I coughed up blood one night and had a panic attack that was so bad I hit my head and blacked out. When I woke up I was strapped to a bed in the psych ward. When I started screaming for you they stuck a bunch of needles in my arms to knock me out. And the fucking nightmares would start all over. I thought I was dying. I thought that this is what hell must be like, and so I thought I was dying. You, as your full wolf, and running to Anchorage, is misery, but it was not what I was going through."

Derek’s stunned. He doesn’t know what to say. What to do. He now knows why Stiles never wants to talk about it. It was bad. Beyond bad. It was like Stiles said. Hell.

"Just because I didn’t want to talk about it with you, doesn’t mean nothing happened. Or that it was somehow easy for me." Tears run down Stiles’ face. "I owe you an apology. I’m sorry. You’re right. There was no reason for me to be there except pride and revenge. That’s what took me from you, and it didn’t need to be. It was my fault that I was in jail and I separated us. No one’s but mine. I’m sorry, Derek. You should have gotten that apology a long time ago. Along with knowing what happened while I was there."

Derek’s hand comes up and gently wipes away Stiles’ tears. "Then can’t you see why if I was losing you, I’d do the only thing I could think of to save you?"

Stiles thought about how he had fallen apart in jail. How just being away from Derek for only a few weeks had driven him into madness. "...Yes."

"Then let me keep you." Derek’s hands cups Stiles’ face. Stiles closes his eyes, feeling the warm, tender touch of his mate’s hands on his cold, wet cheeks.

He finally opens his eyes, staring into Derek’s jade-colored ones. "You have my permission to turn me. If you need to, as a last option."

Derek kisses him. A desperate kiss of gratitude. Of relief that if he were losing his boy, he’d have a Hail Mary pass in saving him. "Thank you."

"What do I do?"

"What do you mean?"

"What do I do if I lose you? I don’t have any power. I don’t have anything I could do to save you. To bring you back. To keep you."

Derek simply stares at Stiles.

"What," Stiles asks, confused and curious by Derek’s staring.

Stiles does have something powerful. He does have something that will always keep Derek with him. He’s had it the moment Derek met the younger man and knew instantly that they were mates. He has something that could save them both from falling into pits of despair. Derek just needs to help him with it.
Derek lifts Stiles up; his feet coming off the floor with his legs wrapped around Derek’s waist. Derek walks them toward the bedroom...
"It's a Complusion Spell..."

Chapter Summary

The Hales talk 'deal' with Chris Argent.

Peter looks annoyed as Derek crushes his cellphone in front of him with his bare hand!

"You may leave now, Peter," Theo tells his brother-in-law. Peter rolls his eyes and walks out of the study.

"No offense, Talia, but how are you related to him," Stiles asks incredulously.

"Peter is like an onion--"

"He reeks with a smell that lingers for hours?"

"--he has many layers."

Theo groans. He doubts his wife’s assessment of Peter is accurate.

"Peter did what he did and we have yet to discover if the end result is fortunate or unfortunate. I want to move on," Derek states plainly.

"Agreed," his father remarks.

"Do we trust Chris Argent," Derek asks the room.

"Peter trusted him enough to communicate with him about the deal being offered," Valerie replies.

"I’m not talking about Peter’s trust. I’m talking about the trust and loyalty of the people in this room. Should we trust Chris and take the deal?"

"What exactly is the deal again," Thomas asks.

"He tells us everything psycho-Kate and their equally psycho father are planning and we beat them to the punch," Stiles answers.

"In exchange for what," Thomas asks.

"He wants to stay in Beacon Hills. He wants to be able to see Allison. To be in her life," Stiles says.

"Isn’t that her decision," Thomas asks.

"He doesn’t want to be banished. He thinks proximity affords him the chance to build a relationship with her," Stiles replies.
"And why do we give a fuck about that? She’s in our pack. She’s marrying Scott," Thomas says.

"We don’t have to give two shits about it. If that’s all he wants for intel on the Argents..." Valerie shrugs. "It’s Allison’s choice if she wants to mend their broken fences. We still get to know what they’re up to."

"And if it’s a setup," Derek asks.

"Then we need a plan B," his sister says.

"Which would be," Thomas asks.

"That’s Stiles’ department. I’m a fighter, not a strategist," Valerie states.

"Chris is right though. We kill every hunter and put him on a boat far off somewhere, other hunters are going to notice. They’re going to start asking questions about the mysterious deaths of the Argent Clan. Every district in this country has a hunter family. Beacon Hills can’t be the only one that doesn’t," Talia informs them.

"And if it doesn’t, who’s to say that the hunter family that replaces them will be any better. What if they’re worse," John asks.

"Can you get worse than the Argents," Stiles asks snidely.

"Yes." Theo’s direct tone suggests a past tangled with hunters far more murderous and deranged than the Argents.

"You said he’d be willing to talk peace if we allowed him to stay in Beacon Hills," Talia asks.

"That’s what he offered," Derek replies to his mother.

"How can we guarantee he won’t renege on the peace treaty," Thomas asks.

"He’s alone. He’d be the only hunter here. He’d be outnumbered. We have you guys--" Stiles points to Theo and Talia, "--you and Laura live here, Tom. My dad, Deaton, and Melissa. We can either have his back when he needs it, or he can create an even bigger problem for himself. And Scott--"

"Scott would be his son-in-law and he’d run to protect him. With Allison. They’d help," Derek interrupts.

"Or not. If he were to turn his back on the peace we brokered," Talia says.

"Has anyone asked themselves why he’s offered this deal," John throws out.

"Allison," Stiles states obviously.

"No. Why he came to us. Or Peter rather. Why is he coming to us with this now?"

Stiles thinks... His rapid mind sifting through theories and going into overdrive, until he's wearing his 'lightbulb face'. "They’d lose."
"What," Theo asks.

"They’d lose. They’re either outnumbered or don’t have enough weapons or both, but they’re at a disadvantage. Chris knows they can’t win."

"It kills me you’re not a detective," John teases his son.

"They don’t have something..."

"Or we have something they don’t," Deaton responds.

"Uh, yeah, werewolves." Thomas says with a bit of ‘duh’ in his tone.

"That, and a very powerful banshee and two Emissaries that know a little magic."

"Werewolves they can fight--" Stiles starts.

"Magic they can’t," Deaton finishes.

"If they were confident in their force then they would have already attempted to take Allison. They could have easily taken dad, Melissa, and Deaton. They didn’t. Nine weeks and not a peep from them."

"I was going to be kidnapped," John asks worried.

"It was part of a plan I was working out. Forgot to tell you. The point is they’re at a loss. They can’t use magic because they don’t have the capacity."

"Not to mention they’ve spent their lives hunting supernatural beings. They aren’t going to find one willing to help them against us. They could capture a witch or fae and force them to use their magic on us--" Deaton starts.

"But magic under pressure like that is false. It won’t work properly because the being using the magic isn’t fully committed to the action. They got nothing," Stiles says, a wicked smile threatening to crawl along his lips.

The tension in the room shifts from weary to confident. They air is settled and a lot less risen with worry. The center of it’s relief is Derek. He stares at his boy. How did he get so lucky? His father is right. Stiles is a great mate. A good Emissary. He’s managed to put all Derek’s worries at ease in the matter of one afternoon. He squeezes Stiles’ shoulder. The desire to touch him at the moment is overwhelming.

"So do we not need a plan B," Valerie asks innocently.

"You always need a plan B," Stiles and his father state simultaneously. "It just doesn’t have to be as complex as I thought it needed to be," Stiles adds.

"So do you have one?"

"Of course I do," Stiles says with a smirk.
Chris walks down the cereal aisle of the supermarket with a basket in his hand.

He takes notice of Melissa further down the aisle on the opposite side of the aisle.

Melissa notices him.

She makes her way down the aisle slowly, pretending to look at the stock on the shelves, as though she were trying to decide between Cheerios, CoCo Puffs, or Kix.

She shifts to the same side of the aisle as Chris, a couple feet away as she grabs a box of granola bars and drops them into her basket.

She passes by Chris, casually dropping a note in his basket and continues down the aisle.

By the time Chris turns around, she’s gone.

Chris treks through the dark woods with a flashlight.

"That’s good."

Chris stops in his tracks. He looks around. He heard Stiles, but doesn’t see him...

Stiles appears from behind a tree just a few feet away. He’s wearing his red hoodie. The hood up, obscuring his face. He approaches Chris, head down, hands in his pockets.

"Where’s Derek?"

Stiles says nothing and continues to approach a now nervous Chris.

"Where’s Derek, Stilinski?"

Stiles stops in front of Chris.

"I told you..." Stiles pulls down his hood and lifts his head, revealing his eyes glossed over entirely in a milky, white opaque color! "...it’s Stilinski-Hale." Before Chris can back away, Stiles blows a sparkley blue dust into Chris’ eyes from the palm of his hand!

Stiles eyes return to their normal, honey-brown color. "Follow me."

"What the hell did you do to me, Stilinski?"

"Stilinski-Hale. Last time I’m going to say it. Follow me, Argent." Stiles stalks off toward Hale House.

Chris, confused, and strangely curious as to what is actually going on, hesitantly follows Stiles out of the woods.

Stiles enters Theo’s study. Chris cautiously follows him inside.

"No one here is going to hurt you... If you don’t provoke them."
"I wouldn’t."

"Good to know. Wait here." Stiles closes the door behind Chris and locks it. He then crosses the room to a side door with a triskelion carved into it and exits through it.

Chris looks around nervously. He’s never been in the Hale House. It’s rich in more ways than one: wealth, color, size, history, and essence. Admittedly, he can feel them all at once here. He can see why it’s the ‘safe house’ of the Hale Pack. It’s full of life. Various lives that have traveled in and out, but always come back. Always come back here. To this place. To this house. To this home.

The side door opens and in walks Stiles, with Derek, Theo, Talia, and Deaton. Theo sits on the sofa across from him. Talia joins him. Deaton takes a seat in the armchair adjacent to Chris, while Derek and Stiles have taken to standing behind the sofa Theo and Talia occupy.

"You may sit," Theo says.

Chris takes a seat on the sofa across the coffee table from Theo and Talia. Chris has only ever seen Theo Hale enough times he can count on one hand. Yet, each time he feels a strong, raw power in his presence. As though he were face-to-face, or in the same room, with royalty. There's just something about him that's ancient and special... If as a human he can feel it, he can't imagine how supes regard him. "Is Allison here?"

"Yes," Stiles answers.

"Does she know I’m here?"

"No. Why is that your first question," Stiles asks.

"I’m concerned for her. I miss her and I want to see her. We haven't had a proper conversation in years. Last I saw her, my agents were putting handcuffs on her. Can I see her?"

"No," Derek answers gruffly.

"That upsets me. And angers me that you have authority over my daughter’s contact with me." Chris blinks rapidly, confused. Why did I say that? Why did I confess that? He looks up to see Stiles give him a sly grin. Chris bolts up from the sofa! "What did you do to me?!"

"It’s a compulsion spell. It compels you to tell the truth to any question posed to you and confess any strong emotion or thought you have," Stiles tells him.

"You could have easily just listened to my heartbeat!"

"Yeah, but we had to be sure. And not to get into semantics, but you told Derek that you’d give us information, not unbridled honesty."

"We like unbridled honesty better than information. Don’t you," Derek asks sarcastically.

"No. I’d rather have the upper hand." Chris bites his tongue, hoping it’ll allow him to hold back his need to tell them unflinchingly, truthful details.

Stiles turns to Deaton. "How deep is the spell, Deaton?"
"Let’s find out. Chris. Can you tell us what other werewolf packs are being investigated by the FBI?"

"I’d rather not."

"It would allow us to trust you more."

"It would also allow a government secret to be revealed to unclassified persons."

"He can resist answering directly, but answer truthfully indirectly."

"Or maybe the question needs to be more specific," Stiles suggests. "Is the FBI investigating the Donaldson, Loftwood, Koppley, and Nickels packs in Washington?"

Chris tries with all his might to not answer, nearly breaking a sweat, but ultimately-- "Y-Yes."

"Are they investigating the Farrow and Bixby packs in Oregon?"

"Yes."

"The six packs in Alaska?"

"Yes."

"And the three in Hawaii and the five in Southern California?"

"Yes, dammit!"

"All of Deucalion’s territories,” Derek points out.

Chris hates himself a little for not being able to resist the spell Stiles put on him. But he hates Stiles a little more for putting him under said spell.

Derek can sense Chris’ hostility toward his husband. "You got a problem, Argent?"

"I’d like to strangle your mate."

"I’d like to see you try."

"I’d enjoy making you watch."

Derek growls.

"Derek," Theo says with no real heat, but a warning underneath. Derek fights with every fiber of his being to not jump across the couch and rip Chris in two.

"Look, Chris, I get it. You’re pissed, but we need to look after ourselves. No one else is going to do it. And I’m sorry we did it this way, but try and remember that your daughter is in this pack, and the more secure we are, the better protected she is," Stiles tells him.

"I’m her father! I should be the one protecting her!"
"Yes. You should. But you gave that up when you sent her to spy on us and she threw a wrench in your plans by making a home with us instead," Stiles throws in his face.

"That was never my idea. It was Kate’s, and Gerard agreed. I had no say."

"Regardless," Theo begins, "she’s here now. She has a place here and she’s safe and happy. If you’d like to be apart of her life as you so claim, then you should answer whatever questions are posed to you and refrain from making threats to my son-in-law before I allow my son to rip your throat out with his teeth." Theo’s voice never wavers. Never trembles. He speaks in matter-of-fact tones of confidence and regalia. And there’s nothing more terrifying than him doing so with a threat on his sober tongue.

"I’ll agree to be civil for the sake of our deal, but at the present moment my conceding is due to my fear of being trapped in a room full of werewolves and spell-wielding emissaries." He slumps down onto the couch. "Ask away."

"Why did you contact Peter," Deaton asks.

"He’s the only member of your pack I felt I could make civil contact with. We...have a history."

Derek grumbles something that sounds like disgust under his breath.

"What specifically did you contact Peter for?"

"I wanted to weasel information out of him about the pack, but he was too slick and called me out on my failed sleuthing. He wouldn’t tell me anything, but he did tell me Allison and Scott were engaged. I started to cry, realizing I’d never see my little girl get married and start a family. Especially if we lose whatever bullshit was going to go down between my clan and his pack. So Peter told me about your plan to keep me alive, but send me away. For Allison’s peace of mind."

"Is that all Peter told you, Chris?"

"Yes."

"You and the rest of your 'hunting party' are at a disadvantage. What is it," Stiles interrupting, wanting to get to the point.

"We’re at several disadvantages: you have a banshee that basically serves as a ‘alarm call’ of death, two emissaries with magical powers, a former hunter, the town’s sheriff-- and from what Peter claims-- two Alphas, a True Alpha, 13 betas, and something referred to as a 'werelizard'. It’s me, Kate, my father-- who is going through Stage Two prostate cancer by the way-- and two dozen inexperienced hunters from Riverside who act more like a biker gang than a true hunting clan. You also have Danny; a more than adequate computer hacker. If you didn’t have all the rest, Danny would be enough on his own. We’ve been trying to stay off the grid since we got back to Beacon Hills. We’ve got more bodies, but not enough skill. Especially to take down a large werewolf pack and kidnap one of its members."

"Back up. Gerard has Stage Two cancer," Stiles asks.

"Yes. It graduated from Stage One just 4 months ago."

"When you contacted Allison," Stiles pieces together.
"Yes."

"You tell her that her grandfather is dying," Stiles questions.

"No."

"Your father’s illness changes nothing," Derek spits out vehemently. It's cruel, but true.

"That was callous...but I would have said the same thing."

"What’s the plan? How were you guys planning on attacking us," Stiles wants to know.

"We were going to first kidnap Allison, but she hadn’t left the property in weeks. None of you had. So the Riverside hunters wanted a full blitz on Hale House with guns blazing. My father eventually talked them out of it, convincing them it was too risky, and that Allison could be hurt in the process. So we went to plan B-- kidnap Melissa and hold her hostage in exchange for Allison. We were intent on taking her, but she was always around the sheriff. Or rather he was always around her. Killing, or injuring the town’s sheriff would have been too high-profile, too much attention and questions, so we backed off for the moment."

"Good for you. Had you not, and hurt my father, you would have incurred a wrath so vengeful it would make God jealous," Stiles says, boring an intense glare into Chris.

Derek smirks. He loves when Stiles is a badass motherfucker.

"When we couldn’t get Melissa I knew we were fucked. Peter solidified that after our talk. So I told him I wanted to offer Derek a deal."

Derek nods. They have confirmation. Chris is telling the truth. He wants to help them. "Before I agree to anything, I want you to know that whatever Allison decides about the future of your relationship is completely her own decision. Regardless of how things turn out in the end. We are not offering you Allison for your 'help'. We’re allowing you to live. We’re allowing you to stay. Anything after that between you and your daughter is Allison's decision. She's her own woman," Derek tells him.

"But we will protect her fiercely if you hurt her," Stiles threatens.

"I would never hurt my child."

"Maybe not physically, but the last few years say differently on an emotional manipulation level," Stiles says.

"I’m ashamed I don’t have a retort for that. Because it’s true. I haven’t been a good father to her. Not since she was a little girl."

"We all make mistakes. Some more than others. Life is about the attempts we make at learning from them, and correcting them. This is your opportunity to do that, Chris," Talia offers profoundly.

He nods solemnly. She’s right. He can try to learn and fix the things he was apart of breaking. "And you can start by agreeing to a peace treaty between our families. Seeing as how you’ll be the only living Argent left." Talia's last words hit Chris like a hammer, finally getting into him what
exactly it is he's doing. "Chris?"

"This isn’t easy. I’m betraying my family. My clan. My calling."

"Your calling isn’t to hunt down and kill any and everything that isn’t human. You’re calling is to protect those that are human, from those that intend on doing them harm. Hatred is not apart of that. Preservation and safekeeping are," Stiles tells him.

"I don’t hate werewolves." The room freezes at the statement. They had always assumed he had. That all the Argents had. "Or any other supe. I’ve just been too cowardly to rise against the gross environment I was raised into. If I hated werewolves, Peter and I wouldn’ve... I don’t hate wolves. I can’t hate something my future grandchild will be."

"Good. Peace Treaty," Derek says, short and direct.

"Yes."

"We can discuss terms after we attack."

"Your indifferent tone about killing my family makes me angry. And scared for them."

"I’m only indifferent because of the hell your sister put me through."

"I’m not asking for you to have compassion. Especially for Kate. What I am asking is that you try not to sound so eager about murdering my baby sister and father. They’re still my family. They’re still Allison’s family. And I’m sentencing them to death by helping you. I’m turning my backs on them. It hurts."

"Fine. Discuss anything you need to with Stiles." Derek really can’t do it. He can’t find it in him to take it into consideration the magnitude of what Chris is doing. He has too much vitriol hatred for the Argents. For Kate. For allowing her in and letting his guard down. For being vulnerable to her lies and fake charm. Her manipulation was more than disgusting; it was abusive. She abused him mentally, emotionally, and sexually.

Derek had never thought of himself as an abuse survivor. Stiles had referred to him as such once, after he told him about Kate being his ex a couple weeks ago, and Derek felt awkward and slimy all over at the label. Stiles sensed it, and held him close, rubbing soothing circles on Derek’s back until he fell asleep.

Stiles woke up the next morning and Derek was gone. For hours. Having run himself ragged through the woods. He didn’t tell Stiles how he stumbled to the pond on his parents’ property and sat at the edge of the water and cried uncontrollably for an hour, practically howling.

When he got back, Stiles said nothing. He saw the weary, puffy eyes of his husband whose feet were caked in dried mud. Stiles took his hand, leading him upstairs. He put Derek in a warm bath and joined him. They sat in the comforting water, saying nothing, until it turned cold, and Derek stopped crying.

Stiles can feel the tension radiating off his husband and Chris. He needs to shift gears. "Where are you guys staying?"

"A cabin, safe house, on the outskirts of the county. By the cliffs. When are you attacking?"
"I’m not telling you that. Just know that when we do, you’ll be extracted."

"Fine." Chris stands. "We done here?"


The three betas enter the study.

"Please escort Chris back through the woods."

They nod. Just as they turn to walk out, Stiles remembers. "Our property is enchanted with charms and protection spells. How’d you get through?"

"Don’t those things keep out evil, or someone who means you harm?"

"Yeah."

"I told you. I didn’t come looking for a fight. And despite what you might think, I’m not a bad guy."

*Maybe not*, Stiles thinks. After all, he’s doing all this for Allison. He’s risking everything he knows for the daughter that he no longer knows. "The spell should wear off by the time you reach the edge of the woods."

Chris rolls his eyes. "Thanks."

Valerie, Boyd, and Jackson escort him out.
The whole pack is gathered in the living room, including John, Melissa, and Deaton. Everyone except Laura and Valerie’s girls who are off playing downstairs in the rec room.

"We’re calling off the lockdown," Derek announces.

"What happened? Are the Argents gone or something," Cora asks nervously.

"No. We just have proof that they’re not as viable a threat as we initially thought."

"So everyone can go back home," Jason asks. Though he’s spent a good amount of time there, bonding and getting to know everyone, and repairing his broken relationship with his in-laws, he’s still eager to get back to his own home and the job he’s taken an extensive leave-of-absense from. No one can blame him for that. They're all a little antsy to be free of the lockdown and return to their normal lives.

"No. Everybody stays. You just don’t need to hideout in the house anymore," Stiles tells him.

"Can we go into town," Kira asks.

"Yes. But we’re implementing a buddy-system. No one-- no one-- is to be alone," Stiles tells the kitsune.

"Especially those of you that aren’t werewolves," Derek adds.

"Thank God! I couldn’t listen to you all fuck each other’s brains out anymore," Malia complains.

Talia can’t help but snicker.

"Maybe if all of you had something to do aside from take each other’s clothes off, you’d might be a little more considerate of those of us that haven’t been afforded the opportunity to have sex every hour-- Ow!" Peter pinches his daughter to be quiet.

"We’ve also got something important to tell you all: we’ll be attacking the Argents at the end of the week. They’re staying at a safe house on the edge of the county, near the cliffs," Derek says.

"My grandfather’s hunting cabin," Allison says in a whisper, but surely heard by all the wolves no doubt.

"Doubt he was hunting deer up there," Valerie mumbles under her breath.

"Some important things I need to stress about the attack: First, Chris Argent is not to be killed. In
fact, we’re extracting him. Everyone else gets gutted," Derek informs them.

"Why," Isaac asks.

"At the moment, because I said so. A better explanation will follow after the attack. Second, I’m bringing Scott, Erica, and Laura back home. Scott and Erica’s 90-day probation is over in two days and I want every werewolf in this fight. All hands on deck."

"Which means training is non-stop until then," Stiles adds.

"That includes Stiles and Lydia working with Deaton. Lastly, the girls stay here with Melissa, Danny, and Jason. Questions?"

"We have an attack strategy," Boyd asks.

"Stiles has something, but we’re going to hold off on telling everyone until Scott, Erica, and Laura are back. Any other questions?"

Nope. None. They heard their Alpha and trust his plans.

"Okay. Everyone change for training."

Stiles sighs. "Derek..."

"What? We have to be prepared--"

Stiles rolls his eyes. They need a break, from the house and each other. *Was Derek not the one complaining about everyone being underfoot?*

"Fine," Derek concedes. "No training today."

"We know everyone is tired of being cooped up in the house over the last--"

"10 weeks."

"--10 weeks. Thank you, Malia," Stiles says. "So, before things start to get serious and shit gets real, maybe you should all go into town and--" They don’t even let him finish! Everyone scrambles out of the living room in a hurry to break free of the confines of the Hale House. Even Talia and Theo are gone. "--and enjoy themselves for the day." Only Allison and Peter are still there.

"Guess everyone got tired of hearing me have phone sex with Scott," Allison says.

Stiles chuckles. He bends at the knee to meet her eye level; she sits on the tufted daybed. "You okay, Princess Jasmine?"

She nods, but there’s the glossy, wet film of tears forming in her big, brown eyes. "Yeah. I’m okay."

"You sure? You can talk to me."

"I know that, Stiles. I know I can talk to you. You’re a great listener. A good mom." Stiles blushes. "I’m just... My grandfather taught me how to ride a bike with no training wheels. Aunt Kate taught me how to use my bow and arrow and put on make-up. How to fight with daggers and hunting
knives. She taught me how to be a warrior. I remember things like that sometimes. Then I remember things like her having me infiltrate the pack and manipulate Scott, and seeing Theo walk around with his cane...and my mom... Sometimes things don’t seem to fit together. Like I’ve got two pieces of a puzzle that are supposed to connect, but sometimes I can’t figure out how.

"It’s your heart and you head; they’re fighting. You’ve got gooey memories bumping up against a violent truth. Ally... You don’t have to--"

"No. I will. For you and Derek. And Scott. And my dad. I was taught to be a warrior. That’s what I am. Gooey memories and all." She stands. As does Stiles. "Scott’s coming back."

"Yeah. He is. I actually miss that puppy-faced, Mexican boy."

"Me, too. I should call him." She pecks Stiles’ cheek. "Thanks." She walks out.

"She’s stronger than she looks," Peter says with a hint of admiration in his voice. "Than she gives herself credit for. She’s Chris through and through."

"She is," Stiles agrees.

"Peter." Derek grabs a box off the fireplace mantle and hands it to his uncle.

"Latest iPhone. Nice."

"Betray my trust again and I won’t hesitate to throw you out of this pack and turn you into an Omega."

Peter listens to Derek’s heartbeat. Derek’s not kidding. No matter how much Talia Hale may love her brother, she will never allow someone to betray her son and his pack. Blood be damned; there’d be no saving him from that particular fate. Peter nods, fully comprehending the gravity of Derek’s promise.

Stiles makes himself a peanut butter and Nutella sandwich on white bread. Derek enters the kitchen just as Stiles licks Nutella off his fingers.

"Hey."

"Hey."

Derek’s just staring, with a mischievous grin on his face.

"What?"

"Isaac, Danny, Jackson, and Ethan went to the movies. Lydia and Cora are at the bridal shop with Allison."

"Already? Shouldn’t she do that with Scott? Scott is romantic enough to appreciate that shit."

Derek shrugs, not really caring enough to vocally respond. "Val and Jason took the girls out for pizza. Boyd went to visit his grandparents and his sister. My dad took my mom out to dinner and a movie. Kira and Malia went to the mall, your dad and Melissa went to work, and Peter and Thomas..."
“went to a bar, with Deaton, surprisingly.”

“So everyone’s gone?”

Derek nods.

“So...we’re alone,” Stiles asks, finally getting the mischievous grin Derek has on his face.

Derek nods.

“Completely?”

“Completely.”

Stiles raises a naughty eyebrow at his husband.

Stiles grips the hand rail as Derek fucks him openly on the steps at the shallow end of the pool. With no one around, Stiles seizes the opportunity to be as loud as he wants, creating a slick grin on Derek’s face.

Derek and the rest of the wolves-- minus Talia and Theo-- run through the woods at daybreak.

Valerie and Boyd spar with one another. As do Isaac and Cora.

Jackson and Malia attempt a scent tracking exercise with Derek as the bait.

Stiles practices a spell with Deaton. Just by snapping his fingers, Stiles makes a fireball appear.

Thomas and Peter do sit-ups side-by-side.

Allison practices, with poignant accuracy, with her bow and arrow.

Stiles and John teach Lydia how to fire a gun at the shooting range.

Talia uses the triskelion medallion to train Ethan, Malia, and Kira in controlling their inner wolf, coyote, and fox.

Danny shows Lydia how to use both the cellphone jammer and radio jammer.

Another scent marking exercise. This time at night, with Isaac and Ethan who find Derek right away.

Cora and Peter spar with one another. She gets the drop on him, flipping him onto his back with her claws at his throat.

Stiles and Derek get into an argument over attack strategies until Theo and Lydia break it up.

Derek and Thomas compete with one another playfully as the both do pull-ups.

The wolves run at night through the woods.
Derek’s rental car pulls up toward the house from the iron gate.

Scott scrambles to get out the car. Just as he does, Allison comes flying out of the house and into his arms. They kiss madly.

Scott finally breaks their kiss. He moves Allison’s hair from her face, looking at her longingly. "10 weeks."

"I know."

"That was torture."

"I know." They kiss again...interrupted by a disgusted groan from Erica at the pair.

"Leave them alone. They’re mates. Just be glad they aren’t fucking," Laura chides Erica.

Thomas and Laura’s daughters come barreling out of the house. The girls rush to their mother in a cacophony of joyful squeals! She hugs them, scent marking them, and they her. Thomas grabs Laura’s bags from the car. Laura snatches him by his shirt and rams her tongue down his throat. He returns her kiss just as fervently.

"Ugh! All the couple-ness is so gross."

"Like you didn’t miss Boyd," Allison teases.

Erica merely shrugs and walks into the house.

"She didn’t," Scott tells his fiancée.

"Really?"

"Erica’s got a few chew toys in the Bay Area she calls when she wants to play," Scott says.

"Disappointing. Always hoped she and Boyd would work things out."

"They're not mates. They don't feel compelled to. Everyone's not us."

She smiles. "No, they're not." She kisses him again. Slow, and caring. Taking her time to explore his mouth. Tasting him. Feeling his soft, wet lips and carding her fingers through his thick hair. She's missed him. More than missed him, yearned for him. And he can feel it as she pushes everything she wants to say, and can't say, into his mouth. He meets her gesture with equal commitment. This isn't a kiss. It's a promise. One of the many they've given to each other over the years and it'll be stored away in a sacred place, for safe-keeping with all the other promises they've made and kept to each other, but this particular one is to never be apart again.

Laura claps her hands. "Well, that was a lot to take in in only 20 minutes."

"Seriously," Scott adds.
"I know. I didn’t want to tell you guys much while you were in San Francisco. We didn’t want to worry you," Derek says.

"Or have Scott run from home all the way back to Beacon Hills like he was The Flash," Stiles interrupts.

"And like there wouldn’t be a sonic boom heard across California when Derek broke the sound barrier trying to get to you if he found out about all the dangerous pack drama surrounding his mate."

A small smile sneaks across Derek’s face. Scott’s right. He’d move mountains and cross oceans if Stiles needed him. He catches Stiles’ eye. Stiles smiles bashfully at him. He knows Derek would. And he’d do the same.

"Ugh, God! I’ve only been in this house for 2 hours and already I’m nauseated with all of you," Erica snaps at them.

"Sorry, Catwoman. We’re focused now," Stiles assures her.

"Good, because I’d like to be clued in to our plan of attack and on what exact day said attack will take place."

"Tomorrow night," Stiles says.

Scott, Erica, and Laura each look wide-eyed at Derek and Stiles.

"Tomorrow?! We haven’t trained," Scott whines, as if he were back in school and just informed of an Econ pop quiz.

"You mean to tell me three of the baddest wolves I know aren’t ready for a fight," Stiles goads, knowing it’ll egg them on.

"Hell no!" Erica snaps, pounding her well-manicured fist onto the table.

Scott’s eyes flash gold, and Laura cracks her neck like a thug looking for some action.

"No. We’re ready," Scott says.
Moonlight Massacre

Chapter Summary

Hales vs. Argents

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

A rustic, cabin with the typical decor of Native American patterns weaved into throw pillows and carpet. Exposed, timber wood used as frame for everything, leather armchairs masculine colored couches of evergreen and deep red, and a deer antler chandelier.

Gerard sits before the roaring fireplace, staring unblinkingly at the flames. He clutches his medication in his hand tightly, eyes fixed on the flames. Mouth tight in a thin line, eyes vacant and elsewhere.

His children, Chris and Kate, sit behind him on the couch. Kate sharpens a large hunting knife in her hand on a whetstone. Chris waxes the string on his bow.

A handful of hunters meander around the cabin, eating, talking, cleaning their weapons, or playing card games. Seems they’ve been on lockdown as well.

Gerard's lips purse at a hostile wave of thoughts clouding his head. He angrily throws his medication, bottle and all, into the fireplace!

"...Daddy," Kate says, concern weaved into her voice.

"Goddamn wolves get to live forever. No illness. No disease. Free to live their animal lives without a care in the world while they saturate everything with their menace and debauchery. Now I know how the angels felt when God created humans."

Worry washes over Kate, while Chris tries to hide the look of anxiety on his face; Gerard is really starting to lose it. "Dad. The angel that questioned God’s creation of humans was Lucifer," Chris reminds him.

"...I know that. 'The Fallen Angel'. He was once God’s favorite, and then he was cast out of heaven. For wanting God to explain himself." He turns to his son. "And what is so wrong with wanting answers?" He turns back to the flickering fire. "They’re given this incredible gift, and all they do is squander it by acting like the uncivilized animals they are. And my granddaughter, my beautiful granddaughter, has been brainwashed by them and their savage ways; fooled into believing she loves one of them. Allison, besotted by a wild dog..." He bangs his hand against the armrest of his chair! "Not my granddaughter!"

Without pretense, a mountain of dirt comes flying down the chimney, expelling the fire and casting a smoky cloud of dust into the living room! They all jump back from the fireplace, coughing, as soot and ash dust up into the great room.

Just as the black cloud begins to waft into thin air, the electricity goes out!

"I’ll go check the generator," a random hunter offers.

An overweight hunter in camouflage rounds the side of the house. It’s dark out. Pitch black almost. He grabs the flashlight off his hip. The battery is dying, causing the flashlight to flicker on and off. "Oh, come on, dammit." The hunter beats the flashlight against his palm. The light manages to stay on.

He makes his way toward the generator at the side of the house. His footsteps falter when as he gets closer to it. The thing looks beat to hell. Like someone took a baseball bat to it...

He steps a little closer... Long, claw marks are etched along the side of it. Wolves. Werewolves!

Before he can spit out a sound, Derek appears behind him and snaps his neck! The hunter crumbles to the ground.

"What in the hell is taking him so--" Gerard's words are interrupted by the sound of two wolves howling...

"Weres," a hunter asks.

"What other wolves live in California," he snaps at the ridiculous question.

"That sounded close. Really close," Kate warns.

Gerard fumbles around in the dark.

"Dad. Daddy! Where are you going," Kate asks.

Gerard fumbles around. The sound of a door opening... Rummaging... "Shit!" More rummaging... And then a light. Gerard holds up a battery powered camping lantern. He approaches the front door and unlocks it.

"Gerard. Gerard, what the hell are you doing," a hunter asks nervously.

Gerard ignores him and opens the door.

Gerard exits from the house onto the porch. Standing a good 25 feet away is Derek and Boyd. Beside them, is Talia in wolf form. Her wolf form is scary, intimidating. She’s just as big as her son when he’s in his wolf form, which is about the size of a Shetland pony.

"Well, Mr. Hale," Gerard greets him with a devious smile.

"Alpha Hale."

"Not in my book. There's motion sensors all around this cabin."

"Yeah. They were a bitch to tear down." Derek throws a sensor on the ground, right at the last
Gerard snickers. *Clever wolves*... His attention moves to Boyd. "Who’s this?"

"Boyd. My number two."

"Wish I could say it’s a pleasure," Boyd says.

"Oh, I’m finding this little exchange to be very pleasurable. Shame you’re not. Where’s your mate, Hale? Where’s Scott McCall?"

"I’m tired, Gerard. Fucking exhausted. With all of this. Aren’t you?"

"Never."

"I’m giving you an out."

"And who the hell are you to do that," Kate says. coming onto the porch with a pump-action shotgun in her hands. Derek’s eyes turn blood red at the sight of her, causing Boyd and Talia’s eyes to change color as well. "Glad to see I can still get you rowed up, sweetheart."

"That bitch keeps talking to me and I’m going to lose it," Derek says.

"I thought you knew hunters were matriarchal. Kate’s actually the one you should be talking to,” Gerard smirks.

Gerard steps back. Kate steps forward. She eyes Derek up and down with a kittenish grin on her evil face. "God, Derek, if you weren’t a wolf... And gay now--"

"You’d what? Try to kill my other two sisters this time?"

"How is Laura by the way? Haven’t seen her in a while. Her or that beefy husband of hers. Thomas, right? I know all about your family, Derek. From you, and those very detailed FBI files I was allowed to sift through. I even saw a copy of your marriage license. And let me tell you, that husband of yours’ name is just simply unfortunate. No wonder he goes by ‘Stiles’."

Kate steps down from the porch, kicking away the broken sensor Derek threw there. "Where is he? Why didn’t you bring him with?"

She steps closer. "Is he at home? Is he at home waiting for you?"

She comes closer..."In the kitchen, with an apron on, making you your dinner? Waiting for you to come back and tell him all about your day, like a good little housewife?"

Closer. "That’s what you wanted. When we were together that’s what you said. What you dreamed of. A nice, little wife to come home to. And make love to. And have children with. Is that what Stiles is? Have I been replaced, sweetheart?"

"You have to have mattered to have been replaced," Derek says coldly.

Kate scowls at that.

The corner of Boyd’s mouth turns up in a smirk at her upset.

"Then I should get me a new werewolf." She turns toward Boyd. "He looks adorable."

"No, thank you. I hear you're a pretty disappointing girlfriend," Boyd says.

Second time she’s been verbally burned. She’s pissed. She raises her shotgun at Derek. "Where’s my niece?!"

Talia snarls at her!

"Wolfsbane bullets, assholes. Answer me. Where's--"

Suddenly, a ring of fire surrounds the cabin, blocking Kate from Derek, Boyd, and Talia! She falls back from the flames and lands on the ground! The fire’s high, nearing 10 feet!

"Kate," Gerard screams.

She looks up. No Derek, or Boyd, or Talia. She turns toward the house. "FIND THEM!" Just as Kate starts running toward the cabin, the ring of fire dissipates and they’re left in total darkness again. "Well, well, well. The housewife is here." Kate continues making her way toward the house.

Kate and Gerard burst inside and lock the door! The battery in Gerard’s lantern goes out.

"Great! How the fuck are we supposed to fight if we can’t see shit," one of the hunters complains.

"Like the trained killer you are," Gerard tells him.

"Everybody shut up," Kate yells.

They quiet, not moving a muscle.

Kate listens... They all listen...

Then Kate sees them. Three sets of eyes in the dark. One red, and two yellow.

"Wolves!" Kate shoots first in the direction of the yellow eyes! The others in the room with a firearm follow suit!

A hunter screams, followed by a wet, gurgling noise!

Kate is knocked to the floor by a heavy load atop her! It’s the body of the hunter that screamed. His bloody throat bleeds all over her face.

The patio doors shatter as Derek, Boyd, and Valerie crash through them in a blur, disappearing outside! Two hunters make an attempt to follow after them, but only get as far as the door frame before they collapse to the floor in a heap!

Kate manages to roll the dead hunter off of her. "HOW DID YOU F***S LET THEM INSIDE?!"

She stands, fumbling around for her gun. She pulls the trigger, aimed at the busted patio doors. Empty. No bullets.

"Fuck!" Kate ducks down and army crawls toward the kitchen. She opens a bottom cabinet and takes something out. Paper ripping and then a hissing sound. A flare. The dark house lights up in a bright, red tint. She grabs the whole kit and tosses it to her father. He grabs one and tears the end off, lighting it, before tossing it to another hunter. "Where’s Chris?"
Gerard looks around. "Chris?! Chris!" Gerard takes the walkie off his hip and tries calling Chris. White noise. "The signal's jammed."

"They took him... Those fucking beasts took him!" Kate grabs her gun and bounds for the patio doors. She yells into the darkness-- "CHRIS!"

Nothing. Nothing but the cold, mountain night air.

She turns back into the house and stumbles over something on the floor: two dead hunters. Arrows lodged into their hearts.

Kate grabs hold of one of the arrows and yanks it out of the hunter’s chest. She eyes it, curiously. Silver arrowheads... "Allison... Oh, baby girl, no."

Her sorrow soon turns to into a scowl that burns into her face. Hatred is boiling over inside her and she needs to unleash it. She needs to go over the edge. She needs to kill. "Grab every weapon you can carry!"

Kate moves through the trees like an agile cat, holding her shotgun, with a bandolier sling of bullets around her chest. She tucks behind a tree for cover. Her father and the other hunters behind her do the same, hiding behind trees.

Kate looks down at her feet. A massive paw print. A wolf’s print.

SCREAMING!!

Kate and the rest raise their weapons! But they don’t know where to point. It sounded as though it was everywhere...

Another BLOODCURDLING SCREAM in the dark distance! The hunters keep their weapons raised.

"Allison..." Kate fears.

With the stealthiest skill, Isaac and Cora drop down quietly from the trees behind the two furthest hunters. Cora drags her claws across her hunter’s throat, then covers his mouth to stifle his agony. Isaac swiftly snaps the neck of the hunter in front of him, and eases his body quietly to the ground.

"Was that, Ally? Kate. Was that, Allison?"

Isaac and Cora grab the hunters’ weapons and hurry back up their respective trees, undetected.

"I don’t know. I think so."

Gerard is rage personified. "COME ON OUT HERE, YOU ANIMALS!" Gerard fires off two shots from his handgun into the darkness in front of him!

"Dad, get back!"

"YOU WANT TO TAKE MY SON?! YOU WANT TO TORTURE MY GRANDDAUGHTER?!"

"Dad! I said get back!"
"I got something for these, dogs." Gerard twisted the bag on his back off of him and opened it.

Behind them, Erica and Peter, stealth as possible, each grab a hunter, yanking them off the ground and up into the trees with them, unbeknownst to the rest.

"What are you doing?"

"I’m taking care of these creatures right now." Gerard pulls a silver ball, about the size of an apple, from his bag. He twists it’s top and bottom halves in the opposite direction. The silver globe lets out an high-pitched, sonic noise! Isaac, Cora, Peter, Erica, and the two hunters fall from the trees to the ground! The wolves shift and hold their bleeding ears at the sound, as they wither and SCREAM in pain!

"Where’d they come from?!

"Who cares?" Gerard raises his pistol, ready to shoot Isaac-- But the sonic ‘dog whistle’ in his other hand suddenly burns bright, and heats like an incinerator, scorching his hand! Gerard drops it, causing him to accidentally fire off his shot, missing Isaac completely.

Isaac lets out a HOWL!

Peter turns to Gerard, "You are so fucked."

Everyone freezes, distracted by the sound of hellish growling ahead of them. But it’s dark. Too dark to see in front of them. And the night fog adds to their visual impairment. Those with flashlights and flares raise them in the direction of the bestial noise.

There’s nothing. They can’t see anything.

Kate turns her attention back to the four wolves immobilized on the ground-- They’re gone! She draws her head up to the trees, but it’s just as black and dark as the distance in front of her.

Gerard unload his clip into the shadows! "Fuck you, Hale!"

A 10 foot ring of fire appears, circling them all, trapping them there! Twelves werewolves rain down on the hunters like God's revenge!

All out brawl! A battle! Fight to the death!:

Boyd and Valerie fight like the skilled killers they are, easily taking down their opponents, while watching each other’s backs.

Malia is all bloodlust and gore! Slashing throats and ripping out beating hearts!

Kira cuts heads off in a clean sweep with her katana!

Scott is slashing throats and body-checking like nobody’s business!

Two black figures soar through the air with each landing on a hunter! It’s Derek and Talia as their wolves! They nearly rip the hunters’ heads off clean with their teeth!

An electric green ball, about the size of a bowling ball, sizzles through the air before crashing into the ground! It melts rapidly at the feet of three hunters! A wave of energy shoots through them like
a gust of wind! They collapse to the cold dirt shaking and vomiting violently!

Jackson digs his fangs into a hunter’s neck, ripping, and spitting out the fleshy meat out of his mouth!

Talia grabs a hunter by his neck and flings him into a tree, snapping his spine!

Kate and Laura settle for some good ol’ fashion hand-to-hand combat with Kate having lost her gun when the wolves attacked!

She pulls a dagger from her back and makes eager attempts at slicing Laura open, but Laura is just as quick and nimble as Kate!

Kate gives Laura a swift kick, sending her falling into a tree! Kate’s right there, jamming the dagger into Laura’s shoulder blade! Laura screams!

Derek hears his sister’s pain. He drags his claws across the face of the hunter beneath him, tearing it half off, then barrels toward Laura! But Kate steps in his way, shotgun regained and in her hand. "Hello, sweetheart." She pumps the fore-end and-- Peter body checks her into the ground! He grips her neck and slams her into a tree, repeatedly! She falls unconscious into the dirt.

Derek shifts back into human form. "Get Laura and bring her to Lydia!"

Peter nods. He picks Laura up in his arms and runs like hell into the shadows!

Derek grabs Kate and hoists her over his shoulder. He takes off toward the cliffs, naked, with Kate slung across him!

Gerard gets the better of Ethan when he stuns him with an electrified baton! He then beats him over the head with it, rendering Ethan unconscious.

Gerard reaches into his bag and takes out three flash bombs. He sets them all off, causing the wolves to become disoriented, dazed, and blind!

This time it’s Scott that HOWLS! It’s not a cry, but a call. A distress call.

"That’s Scott!"

Allison jumps down from her perch in the tree behind Stiles. "That was Scott."

"I know. Give me Jackson’s blood," Stiles tells the redhead. Lydia hands over a travel-size, squeeze bottle of Jackson’s blood/venom to Stiles. He grabs Allison’s arrows and pours the blood/venom over the heads. "Don’t miss."

"Never," Allison says. One after another, with an uncanny speed, she sends arrow after arrow toward the sounds of wolf howls and firearms!

Stiles eyes gloss over, opaque and white as he sends another green orb of electricity in the same direction Allison sends her poisonous arrows!

Peter runs up with Laura clutched in his arms! "That cunt, Kate, stabbed her." Peter sits Laura on the ground.

"I’m fine. Take me back," Laura protests. She’s sweaty profusely, and dizzy.
Lydia turns Laura over on her stomach and rips open her shirt, exposing the wound. Black veins. Yellow pus. Greenish bruising. It’s spreading. "It’s ‘Dark of Moon’ wolfsbane. You’re not alright."

"Then fix it," Peter snaps, nervous about his niece.

"I will." Lydia rummages through a designer bag.

"Did you bring a purse to a battle?"

"What else was I going to carry all this stuff in?!" She pulls out a potion bottle of yellow liquid.

"I hope that’s not piss."

"Your commentary, Peter, is extraneous and irritating. As always." Lydia lets a few drops land inside Laura’s gash. Then takes out an item that looks like an EpiPen. She twists the head and a blue flame expels from the top.

"You have a travel-size blow torch in your purse? ...Marry me."

"What did I say about the commentary?" She bends closer to Laura's face, "I’m sorry, but this is going to suck."

Laura screams in pain as Lydia cauterizes her wound! Peter holds her hand.

Cora jams her claws into the spine of a hunter while slashing his chest open with the other hand! She shoves his dying body off her nails.

She pauses, standing still. There’s no noise. No sounds of snarling, growling, howls, arrows whizzing through the air, gunfire...

Nothing.

She looks around. It's just her, and her pack. Surrounded by the dead and dying bodies of almost two dozen hunters.

Except one...

Gerard lies slumped against a tree. Four claw marks create a bleeding, open gash on the side of his stomach. He holds a revolver in his hand.

Scott approaches. Gerard raises his weapon.

"I got one left and it’s for you."

Scott continues approaching him coolly. He bends at the knee to meet Gerard eye-to-eye. Like the rest of the pack, Scott is covered in blood. His clothes torn and caked in dirt, and mud, and plant life, with wounds and bruises that start to knit themselves back together on his skin. "Ten years ago, you sent your granddaughter into 'the lion’s den', hoping to bag you a prize. To mount a head on your mantle. To have a story to tell all the other psychotic hunters like you on one of your sad, little retreats over a campfire. Your granddaughter was to be the second-coming of your wife--"
name."

"It really sets your teeth on edge that she confessed. That she broke down in tears, sobbing, and begging me to forgive her for betraying my trust. For making me look a fool in front of my Alpha and to the rest of my pack. She knelled to me, Gerard. She got down on her knees and pleaded. Then she bared her neck, and submitted to me."

Gerard presses the barrel of his gun under Scott’s chin.

"She loves me. She would die for me. And I would die for her. Take comfort in that at least before I kill you."

"And why would that give me comfort, wolf?"

"Because you’d know she’d always be safe with me."

Gerard chuckles wryly. "There is nothing but danger lurking around you."

"Happens when hunters lose their shit and forget their code."

"You’ve been hanging around the Stilinski kid too long. His smart mouth is rubbing off on you."

"Thanks."

The corner of Gerard’s mouth turns upward in a smirk.

"I don’t want to kill you, Gerard. But I have to."

"She’d never forgive you."

"It’s a shame how you don’t know her like I do. You have nothing left. Stop fighting."

"I’m not a coward."

"But you are oblivious. It’s over. It’s over, Gerard."

Gerard looks around. No Kate. No Chris. All the hunters are dead, and he’s slumped against a tree, bleeding profusely from his wounds as werewolves look on in disgusted pity. "You’re right. I have nothing left. But it doesn’t mean I can’t take you to hell with me."

Scott can feel the anxiousness roll off of Gerard in waves. It’s what allows him to grab Gerard’s hand and twists the gun from under his chin seconds before it goes off by his ear! Scott grabs Gerard's head, and twist, snapping his neck!

Gerard's body falls off the tree, slumping to the ground.

Scott stands, staring at the lifeless body of Gerard Argent, dead, but still warm. Scott can see the light in his eyes dwindle, fading away into nothingness. Vacant. A sign of respect would be to close them, to allow the last bit of life he had not look on in death at his killer. But Scott has no respect. At least not for the man that used his granddaughter to seduce him. Not for the man that taught his kids to hate and fear what they chose not to understand. Not for the man that maimed his Alpha's father. Not for the man that held a gun under his chin during his last moments alive. That man gets no respect. He gets nothing.
Scott HOWLS!

The other weres join him, HOWLING at the bright, waning gibbous moon!

Kate rolls out of her unconsciousness with a groan, holding her head. She pulls her hand away from her head. Blood. She tries to stand, but she slips; dizzy.

A dark shadow cast over her...

She looks up. Derek. Naked and looming at her. Beside him is Theo in human form as well, but clothed and holding his cane.

Kate scrambles away from them, scared. Even more so by the distant sounds of the pack HOWLING victoriously. But she stops, noticing how close to the edge of the cliff she’s inching toward.

"Hello, Miss Argent. Those howls you hear are my son’s pack telling him that they’ve killed every hunter," Theo says.

"More are coming."

"We both know that isn’t true." Kate swallows hard. Theo’s casual ease makes him even more terrifying. He’s so calm and even in his tone of voice. Wondering what he sounds like truly angry and fierce is enough of a trembling thought. "You are all that is left. You, the woman that abused my child."

"A-Abused?"

"What would you call luring a young boy into sex for your own personal gain, to hurt him and his family? You took advantage of my boy, in the worst possible way, and yet you think we’re monsters. I’d laugh, if I weren’t so viciously angry." Theo’s eyes change colors. But they aren’t Alpha red. They’re a different color. They’re a **bright purple color**.

"Oh, my God... It’s true..."

"Very true."

Kate’s petrified even more now.

"I have never really gotten a chance to look at you. I’ve only seen you once, in the forest, the day your father dragged his blade down my leg coated in ‘Pluto oil’." Theo looks at her. A deep, studying look. As though he were looking for so secret hidden within her face. "I see why Derek was so susceptible to your charms. I’d imagine to a teenage boy who just experienced the tragic loss of his first love, an attractive, older woman such as yourself would be hard to resist. But you knew that, didn’t you? You knew the right things to say to him to get him to trust you. You knew how to make him feel. How to make him vulnerable. How to use him."

"She did," Derek scowls.

"I have no doubt. Which is why I’m going to let my son kill you. But first, he’s going to tell you
"Chris isn’t dead. He’s alive. With us. He’s going to stay here in Beacon Hills and run this district. We’ve allowed him to live because he helped us. He came to us and told us your pathetic plans and how to defeat you. That’s why Gerard is dead, and why you’re going to die," Derek tells her.

"That’s not true. You’re liars," Kate says, trying to convince herself.

"It’s very true, Miss Argent," Theo informs her. "Chris would like to build a normal relationship with his daughter. By proving so, he betrayed you and your father. Your erratic, sociopathic behavior has pushed him so far to the edge that he’s come to the enemy for help. And you will die knowing your own blood turned his back on you. In a pack, that would never happen."

Kate clenches her hands into fists. Her rage bubbles like boiling water. It’s festering and vile. She could vomit. All that would erupt from her thoughts would be plots of furious hatred in thick, green bile.

Her anger is potent enough to be visible. Derek can almost taste it. So he has to needle it. He has to smirk. He has to gloat a bit in the upturned corner of his mouth.

Kate takes notice. "Abuse you? How could I abuse such a disgusting animal? Having you touch me, kiss me, sleep with me, was the most vile thing I’d ever done. I would go home afterward and scrub myself until my skin turned red and would bleed. Your gross stench would follow me everywhere. It would get into my hair, my clothes, my things. Every time you would touch something of mine I would throw it out afterward, not wanting your smell anywhere. I was ashamed of what I had to do to get to **him**." She nods at Theo. "Why do you think I took you to cheap, dirty motels outside of town? I didn’t want to be seen with you. You were so naive, thinking I was just ‘being careful’, because you were a minor. I could fill the Grand Canyon with all the stupid things you assumed. **Mates.**" She laughs dryly. "You really wanted to be mates with me. You thought I was your fucking mate!" She laughs boisterously.

Derek cuts off her evil amusement with a strong hand wrapped around her throat! He lifts her slowly off the ground, eyes blood red and never leaving her wide, frightened ones.

"I’m not afraid of you anymore. I know who you are, and what you are. You’re a predator, and you’re a mistake. A very bad mistake. I thought Paige was love, and she was. A first love. I thought Jennifer was love, but she wasn’t real. I would have thought Braeden was love, but she didn’t have my heart. But you? You’re the only one I’d call a mistake. Misguided judgement. The wrong action taken. You’re an error I’m going to correct." He steps closer to the edge of the cliff. She’s still held tight in his grip by her neck as he dangles her over the edge.

She’s desperate now. Trying to claw and wiggle her way out of his chokehold. "What are you doing, Kate? Where are you going to go?"

"Derek... Please..." It’s a soft, pleading whisper. Barely audible.

"I’ve pictured this. You begging with tears filling your eyes. Eyes I once thought were the answer to everything, and sometimes, just sometimes, I would give in, and let you live. Because all I ever wanted to hear from you was ‘I’m sorry’."

"Derek... I’m sorry... Please... Please..."

"Ask me why I’m not afraid you anymore."
"Please..."

"Ask me."

Tears run down her face. She doesn’t want to die. The bile that filled her minutes ago is now gone. Gone at the reality of what’s happening, and where she’s at now; dangling in open air over jagged rocks. Her whole body hovers mid-air, only held up by the hand of the man she used. The one she said disgusted her. The one she violated and corrupted. He literally has her life in his hand. The weight of her desperation causes tears to run down her cheek. For her lips to tremble. For her legs to feel numb. "Why? Why aren’t you afraid of me anymore?"

"Because I have love. Real love. Every day I’m with him makes you a liar. Every time we kiss and he tells me he loves me, you matter less and less. The gaping whole in me when he’s not near, or hurt, or sad, and the desperate desire I have to fix it, lets me know what I had with you was comical and embarrassing. I should be the one that’s disgusted... And I am."

And with that, Derek opens his hand, and the feel of Kate’s hot, burning skin against his warm, calloused palm and rough fingertips disappears, and there’s nothing left there but cold, night air pushing down from the mountains.

He bothers not to look at her as her once present figure drifts into an abyss of darkness and fog, growing smaller and smaller the further she falls. But her SCREAMS... He listens for those. He won’t hear them in his sleep because there’s no guilt in what he did. He no longer has any regret when it comes to Kate. There’s just facts: he knew her, he loved her, she used him, tried to hurt him and his family, so he killed her. He rid himself of a problem, like he does any other time in his 'business'. Like a fly in the ointment, she was an issue, now resolved.

He turns to his father. Theo nods at him.

Derek ROARS, calling to his pack!

Chris, John, Deaton, and Thomas wait by the sheriff’s civilian car at the edge of the woods. They can hear Derek roaring in the distance.

"I have to go," Thomas says.

"Something wrong," John asks.

"No. Just Derek calling for everyone. You good with him," Thomas asks, pointing to Chris.

"I’m not a child. I don’t need to be baby-sat," Chris spits out. "Haven’t I proved myself enough by now?" He looks worse-for-wear. Derek’s roar like a church bell announcing the death of his family is not helping. And neither are the pack members keeping a watchful eye on him.

"Not really," Deaton says.

John snickers at the easy, honest way Deaton responds to Chris’s question.

"He’s got no weapon and I practically have a cache of firepower in my trunk that’ll make a drug cartel blush. And I’m an ex-marine. I think I can handle one hunter," John says.
Chris rolls his eyes, despite knowing the sheriff could probably give him a good fight if he pushed it.

"Plus, Deaton’s here. He can turn him into a toad or something if he gets too lippy," John smirks.

"Or something," Deaton says, eyes narrowed at Chris.

Chris’ jaw tightens at being talked about like he's not even there, or a small child that's got a reputation for being difficult to baby-sit for. The last two members of his family, his father and sister are dead, because of him. Because he betrayed them. Because he had to. For Allison. For himself. The only thing keeping him from a breakdown is that they didn't know. They think he's dead, too.

"Okay. I’ll be back." Thomas shifts into his beta form and takes off like a flash of lightening into the woods.

"Scott!" Scott turns to Allison running toward him. Lydia and Stiles are not far behind. Stiles and Lydia carry battery powered lanterns. Stiles has three shovels rucked under an arm, while Lydia brings along a red can of kerosene. With a wave of his hand, Stiles makes the ring of fire disappear.

Scott sweeps Allison into his arms in a tight embrace.

She draws her head up. Tears in her eyes. It burns at the back of her throat, but she has to. She has to ask. "Everyone's dead?"

Scott nods, looking into her sweet, sad eyes.

"Aunt Kate...?"

"Derek," Scott answers simply.

"Where is Derek," Stiles cuts in.

"I think he’s near the cliffs."

"You guys did good. Thank you. Your Alphas are proud," Stiles says.

"You did good, too," Scott replies.

Stiles nods a 'Thank You' to him. "Is everyone alright?" Stiles notices Ethan being held up by Malia, holding the back of his head. "Ethan?"

"I’m good. Was just caught off guard and he got the drop on me, but I’m fine," Ethan says.

"Lydia check them all for serious injuries. I have to find Derek," Stiles tells her.

"Okay," Lydia answers.

Stiles puts down the shovels and heads toward the cliffs.

Scott opens his mouth to speak. To tell her the truth, but-- "Me. Before Kate stabbed Laura," Peter answers, having snuck up on them, with Laura cradled in his arms.

Allison can’t help the tears that run down her cheek, but she nods. A simple, understanding nod at Peter of the inevitable. She knew this was coming. Just the reality of it is like a jolt; sudden and felt through her whole body.


Allison turns to Scott, "Take me somewhere." Scott grabs Allison’s hand and takes off with her into the distance.

They pass Thomas as he takes notice of Laura in Peter’s arms. "Laurie-love." Peter gently sets Laura down on her feet. She and Thomas embrace. "You alright?"

"Me? I’m steel. You know that," Laura says.

He smiles, relieved and amused at his at playful wife. "I do. I heard Derek."

"Kate’s dead. Finally."

"She the one that hurt you?" Laura nods. "I hope her death wasn’t a peaceful one," Thomas says.

"I’m sure Derek didn’t make it one," Peter tells him.

"Where’s Stiles," Laura asks.

"He went to find Derek," Lydia answers.

"I almost forgot how 'intense' it gets after a fight," Laura says with a grin.

"Yes." Peter and Kira’s eyes meet. A primal smirk grows on his face. She meets his carnal smile with one of her own. "It does." Peter leaves them, walking over to Kira.

Stiles, alone, walks through the deep woods. Lost. He can’t find the cliffs. "Derek?! Derek!"

Derek appears, still naked, behind Stiles. Fangs. Eyes. Claws. There’s a heated, primal look on his face. He’s gone. He’s wild, and filled with lust. And there’s a tasty-looking boy in a red hoodie in front of him, calling out his name.

"Derek, where the hell are you?!" Stiles stops, running his hand through his hair. He takes his cellphone from his back pocket before putting it away. Why would Derek have his phone, idiot?

A snarl behind him... His pack are the only wolves in the woods. And no one in his pack would dare snarl at him... Stiles turns around coolly. Derek. "There you are. You need something, Big Bad Wolf," he says, raising a cocky eyebrow at his mate.

Derek snarls at Stiles again.

"I know you do. I know what you need." Stiles takes off his hoodie. "I need it, too."
Malia, Isaac, and Cora dig graves for the pile of dead hunters behind them. A large hole a few feet away burns brightly with a contained fire.

"Why do we have to dig the graves," Malia complains.

"Because we don’t have anyone to fuck," Cora answers honestly.

"What?"

"After a fight. All that adrenaline needs to go somewhere," Isaac tells the coyote.

"Is that what everyone’s doing now?!" Isaac and Cora nod. "My dad left with Kira..."

Isaac and Cora exchange looks. "We were hoping you could tell us about that."

"They’re not together. Seriously anyway."

"Must be a wolf thing then; using each other for tension release," Cora says with a shrug.

"I don’t like that." Isaac digs harder into the earth. Cora puts a gentle hand on his shoulder, hearing the biting anger beneath his voice.

"Someone use you like that," Malia asks.

"Unfortunately."

"Who?"

"Scott," Cora answers for Isaac.

"No. Not Scott. Scott and I actually had something...good. It clearly wasn’t Allison-good, but it was good. While it lasted."

"Who used you for sexual tension then," Cora asks.

"Are you serious? You’ve never smelt him on me? Or seen the way we act with each other?"

Cora shrugs and shakes her head. No. She’s never really noticed anything going on with Isaac and whoever he’s referring to. She’s a bit embarrassed by it actually. She should know her pack-brother better than that.

"Jackson," Isaac answers.

"I knew it," Malia exclaims, victorious in her assumption.

"Wow. Just... Wow. When did that start," Cora asks.

"Three years ago. During a full moon. He grabbed me and... It just became this thing during the full moon and after he had to 'handle' someone, or something, for Stiles and Derek. But I ended it a year later."
"Is that what all the fights are about? He’s pissed you ended his full moon booty calls," Cora asks him.

"Pretty much."

"You miss it? Especially when we’re here digging graves and burning evidence," Malia asks.

"Sex with Jackson was amazing. Almost as good as it was with Scott. But I don’t miss it. I don’t miss being used. And I don’t miss using someone."

"What did you use him for," Malia asks, incredibly interested in their conversation.

"Loneliness," Cora answers for him again. That she does know. And is familiar with.

Isaac nods, affirming Cora’s answer. "I was kind of shattered after Scott, and seeing him all the time, and at pack meetings... Then he and Allison got back together... It was too much for me. Stiles and Derek helped me through it though. I was so wrecked. I just wanted someone to look at me. To hold me. To kiss me. I didn’t want to be alone. Then, one night, the whole pack went running during the full moon after Erica’s birthday party, and Jackson pounced on me out of nowhere. But it wasn’t real. What we were doing, it wasn’t real. I was trying to fill a Scott-shaped void and he wanted to just get his rocks off. I want someone that craves me because they love me. They can’t live without me. The idea of not having me wounds them. That’s what I want. I want--"

"What Derek and Stiles have. What my parents have. What Laura and Tom, and Val and Jason have. You want a mate," Cora interrupts.

"Yeah. I want a mate."

"Join the club," Cora says with an eye roll.

"Really? You always seemed like you’d be opposed to the idea."

"Opposed? Opposed to someone understanding you and knowing you down to the bone? Someone willing to die and kill in order to protect you? Someone who loves you just as ferociously as you love them? Someone to grow old with? No. I’d never be opposed to that."

"Me, neither," Malia adds.

"Good," Isaac stops shoveling. "Then we’re all in agreement: mates from now on. No bullshit relationships. No friends-with-benefits. No drunken hookups. No temporary cures for boredom and loneliness. Only serious candidates need apply, until we find the one. Our mates."

"I thought Stiles was my mate," Malia says ruefully.

"And I wanted Scott to be mine. We can be wrong. And then we can start over." He takes her hand and smiles at her.

A warm, assured smile grows on Malia's lips.

Cora takes Isaac’s other hand. "Agreed. Only serious candidates need apply."

Both girls peck Isaac’s cheek affectionately.
They return to their grave digging. A new promise made, and eager to be kept.

Scott has Allison pinned against a tree, her legs wrapped around his waist as he fucks her greedily.

Allison’s eyes are closed, letting the feel of Scott rid her of all her hurt emotions about Kate and her grandfather. She focuses on her fiancé driving into her wildly; his wolf taken over and in charge.

She loves when Scott is slow, and romantic, taking his time to worship her body, but every now and again she needs this. She needs Scott to be dominant and commanding. She needs him to push away all the things she doesn’t want to think about and force her to focus on him. On them, and the crazy lust that fills them sometimes.

Her hand moves to his bare ass, squeezing his cheek, encouraging him to dig deeper, give her more. He doesn’t miss her cue and rucks into her forcefully, eliciting a scream of pleasure from her that rattles a shower of leaves from the tree she’s pushed against.

Erica rides Boyd reverse cowgirl. He holds on to her hips as she moves them in a swivel.

Boyd is just as quiet during sex as he is when not having it. But Erica knows him. She knows when he’s pleased. When he loves everything she’s doing. He tells her in short, bated breaths. He tells her in hard grips to her moving hips. He tells her in the tough hold on her long, blonde locks. He tells her in the kneading grope to her breast, and the finger rubbing her clit.

And he tells her in the sharp surge of his hips that lets her know everything she was doing is driving him crazy when he comes inside her with a low growl and her name whispered into the darkness for only her to hear.

The back of Jackson’s head digs into the dirt as Lydia’s mouth wraps around his dick. She’s good at giving head. Great even. He loves it when she does. But sometimes she’s all technical and detached, and not enough...something.

There’s always something missing when he and Lydia are having sex. That’s how he knows they’re not mates. He’s never felt whole with her. He’s never felt complete. He’s never felt broken either. He’s never felt wrecked by her. Cut open and exposed. He’s never felt raw and worn. He’s never felt sick to death with not having her near. He believes he loved her, at some point. But it was when they were young and didn’t know other people and what lies ahead for them and the dangers they would face.

They were young, and every week there was some new thing out to kill them, or possess them, or kidnap them. So they leaned on one another, and called their fear ‘love’. And then they were apart for a while. They traveled and got to know other people and felt other things aside from panic and exhaustion from being chased, or doing the chasing.

They were different, but the same. Things were different, but the same. She was still Lydia, and he was still Jackson. They just weren’t Lydia and Jackson anymore. And he was fine with that. So was Lydia. They were fine.

Fine enough for Lydia to drop to her knees and give him the thing he so badly wants. The thing he
needs.

She hollows out her cheeks and sucks, taking him to the back of her throat, turning Jackson into a withering, mumbling mess.

Lydia is good at giving head. Great even.

Danny is face down on his guest bed, fisting the sheets on the bed as Ethan grabs the headboard with both hands and snaps his hips manically into him.

He loved Ethan once. When they were young and stupid and awkward. Could he love Ethan again? No. Love required trust. And Danny didn’t trust Ethan. He gave him his heart back then, and Ethan broke it when he up and left Beacon Hills without a word. No phone call. No email. No letter. Nothing. Danny spent days in a fog, going over everything he could have possibly done to drive Ethan away, until finally, he went to Stiles and broke down in tears. Stiles had held him, and comforted him and assured him that Ethan was what was wrong. Ethan was what was wrong if he couldn’t see how amazing Danny was, because Danny was quite frankly just that-- amazing. Anyone who knew him thought so. And it had torn him apart inside that the one person he wanted to know that more than anyone, apparently didn’t think so.

Then Ethan appeared one day. He and Aiden. At the pack house four Christmases ago. Stiles insisted on throwing a huge, Hale Pack Christmas party, and invited everyone. Talia and Theo couldn’t make it. They were spending the holidays in the Caribbean that year. But there he was, in a dark suit, sipping egg nog in Stiles and Derek’s living room while Lydia collected donations for Alzheimer’s and FTD research.

He was somehow now a beta in Peter’s territory in Fresno that Derek had given him. Neither Stiles nor Derek knew anything about Ethan joining Peter’s house and were just as floored as Danny and everyone else were about both he and Aiden being there.

Danny was not violent by any means. He didn’t have a hostile bone in his body, but seeing Ethan there, across the room, laughing at something funny Scott had said, pushed something to the surface. Something hard, and angry. Something that felt like fire in his chest, smelled like smoke, and tasted like ash in his mouth.

He was halfway across the room, approaching Ethan, when Derek intercepted and grabbed him by the arm and hurried him outside. Derek could feel the shaking anger coming off Danny and knew he was well on his way to making a scene in front of everyone he had made his way to Ethan. Ethan was a werewolf, and Danny was human. No matter how much control Ethan had gained over his wolf, if attacked, he may fight back. And if Peter was his mentor, then there’s no doubt he’s taught him to do so.

Stiles came outside a minute later, and listened as Danny paced back in forth in the snow, yelling in tangents about gay, werewolf boyfriends and their “bullshit dramatics.” Stiles and Derek just stood there and watched him rant and rave until he was out of breath and freezing.

When he had calmed down, Stiles simply walked over and hugged him, and let Danny shed tears on his shoulder. Derek took off his jacket and draped it over Danny’s shoulders.

After he was all cried out, they went back inside. Ethan and Aiden were gone. Derek had Danny’s old room made up for him, and Stiles helped him to bed.
When Danny woke up the next morning, rubbing his puffy, red eyes, he went to his computer and typed out a long email, detailing his feelings and all the questions he wanted to ask Ethan. He had gotten Ethan’s email address from Stiles who flirted with Peter to get it, meaning he owed Stiles an infinite amount of favors for having to smile and make eyes with Derek’s creepy uncle.

Three days later, Ethan sent him an email back, explaining himself. He had given Danny what he felt were some weak excuse about commitment and marriage and “finding himself” and being their own people. Danny called ‘bullshit’, but he wasn’t going to press it. Ethan’s email wasn’t the closure he was expecting. It was how he felt about Ethan’s email that was. He realized he didn’t need to keep buried feelings for a man that didn’t care about him, didn’t love him enough, to be honest. A man that thought the best course of action he should take for his scared, commitment-phobic feelings would be to skip town for four years without a word, then reappear like nothing happened. Danny was amazing. He didn’t need that.

So he sent back a short paragraph saying he wanted to be friends. They were both apart of the Hale Pack and needed to be civil. And Danny was never above civility. Ethan replied that he would like them to be friends again and once again apologized to Danny. Danny didn’t need the extra apology, just the awareness that they were working toward something polite, cordial. Derek was their Alpha. They respected him, and didn’t want their pettiness to create havoc.

But now, in this moment, and a few other moments, during their stay at Hale House, they needed something. They needed release. Especially Ethan. He was a ball of pent up adrenaline and lust after their battle with the hunters, and Danny-- not so even himself-- gave him his body to abuse with pleasure, taking them both over the edge and crashing on the waves of their mutual climaxes.

And tomorrow they’ll eat blueberry pancakes (Stiles’ victory meal) and bacon and sip coffee, and it won’t be awkward because they both know what it was last night, and what it’s been every night since coming back to Beacon Hills.

Laura’s pink, lace panties dangle from her ankle. Other than the soft material just above her foot, she’s completely naked, lying atop Thomas, who is also nude, and beneath a bed of sweet-smelling, purple flowers.

Laura moans loudly as she tries to focus and bring her excitement down a bit. But she can’t. And if she’s honest, refuses. She always loses it with Thomas. He knows just what to do to make her howl and whimper and wail his name then shudder like it’s her first time.

He works her over heatedly. Her back against his broad, muscular chest. She finds his head and she grips his hair while his right hand teases her between her legs and the left massages her breast.

Derek and Val can believe all they like that being mated to a human conjures up better, more intense sex, but Laura’ll take Thomas as a wolf any day. Their heightened senses allows them to root around each other’s personal auras and tunnel deep within to pull out the thing they need to bring them to ecstasy.

Thomas rolls them over without breaking stride, and pumping feverishly into his explicit wife. His hand stays between her legs, tickling her clit. The other hand holds her by her wrists, over her head.

He looks at the slowly healing scar in her shoulder. Kate. He growls. His pace picks up, slamming into Laura’s wetness.

His tongue darts out and licks the weak scar. He licks it again. And again. And again. Trying to
will it away with his tenderness and need to aid.

He licks it again...

Kira’s not the female beta he wishes he was fucking beneath a giant oak tree. But he does. He fucks her raw and real. There’s no sweet kisses and cooing and soft breaths and ‘I love yous’ whispered in ears.

It’s him and Kira, half-dressed and drenched in sweat, burning up with need and overdrive. She knows what this is. They always do this. It’s primal. Instinct. They need to rid themselves of the tornado of energy rising in them. At having slashed throats and cut off heads and dug their nails into flesh and torn out bloody organs.

So Peter keeps a death grip on Kira’s hips and jackhammers into her. She pulses around his swollen cock. Peter’s eyes are gold and far away, thinking about the strawberry blonde he’d rather be deep inside of, and the smart-mouthed Alpha-mate he wishes was watching them while stroking himself and kissing his lips.

Kira pushes back against him, matching his frantic rhythm with her own, and Peter’s brought back to the present, because the sudden move reminds him of a certain someone. The someone he shared his deepest secrets with. His first kiss with. His first time. His first ‘I love you’. And although his love never said it back, Peter knew. Peter knew the boy loved him, just as much, if not more. He felt it in secret kisses under the moon, late at night. He felt it in trembling hands on his skin in parked cars in empty lots. And he read it in love notes left in his locker. They weren’t mates, but they were something close to it, and it felt like a rain storm on a hot, summer day. Electric. Peter knows he’ll never have something like that ever again. Not unless a certain strawberry blonde and smart-mouthed Alpha-mate ever decide to offer themselves to him.

But Peter knows better.

So for now, after epic fights and during full moons, he and Kira can do their thing where he thinks fondly on the only four people he’s ever had any sort of affection for, wishing they were the ones with him as heat boils inside his body.

And Kira can forget about every guy she’s ever loved loving someone else more than her. Scott McCall is just the first in a long list of men who were nice enough, but kidding themselves into thinking they were over whoever they were with before her. And here, like this, Peter’s honest. This means nothing. Just release. We’re not going to make it a thing because it never will be.

She appreciates his honesty. It means the world to her, seeing as how she feels she’s always lied to. And maybe, for a while, something that means nothing might be good for her.

Forty-one years of marriage and Theo Hale can still drive Talia wild, like she was fifteen all over again. She can still lose control, shifting into her beta form, with claws tearing into the sheets, fangs drawing blood as she bites her lip, trying to hold in her screams in a house full of werewolves. Four of which are her own children and five her grandchildren.

But Theo is insatiable as he feast between her open legs and uses a hand to massage her bare breasts.

He moves from her wetness to place a kiss on her inner thigh.
They lock eyes. Theo’s eyes the perfect shade of Amethyst. "Come for me, my love."

And he disappears between her legs again, making her back bow off their bed and her eyes turn rose red with pleasure.

Valerie **bounces atop Jason wildly.** Under the influence of a brutal fight with hunters, or not, she’s always like this. Uninhibited. Exhibitionist. Hedonistic. And a complete wanton for the man beneath her.

Sometimes all Jason can do is watch. Staring at her as she looses control. As she lets her wolf take over and go crazy for him.

Other times, most of the time, he meets her reckless abandon for reckless abandon. He gives as good as he gets and it puts her wolf on edge. Her wolf keens when he rises to the challenge.

He has to.

He has to meet her in the middle. He has to push, pull, bite, scratch, and scream just as much, if not more than her. He’s not a wolf. He doesn’t have an animal inside him that gives him super strength, super hearing, sight, taste, and smell. So he has to put every bit of himself into taking her apart like this. To make her wolf howl and whimper when it’s pleased and overstimulated. Because here he’s not weak. He’s not less than her. He’s more. He’s the man-- the human-- that makes his werewolf wife tighten around his hard cock, shudder and shake atop him like a leaf in the Autumn wind, dragging her claws down his abdomen, throwing her head back with unruly strands slicked to her forehead with sweat and heat, and making her shout his name at the top of her lungs, soaking his lap with her sweet sap.

And it’s then that Jason can let go. He can relish in the fact that he brought his wife’s wolf to heel. He’s the one the wolf needs and obeys. He comes, coating inside her, hands gripping her waist and with a swear on his tongue.

Stiles’ clothes are thrown all around he and Derek. They’re both naked as Derek **pistons into Stiles like a beast.** He’s not feral but he might as well be. He’s all red eyes, claws, and fangs as he stares down at Stiles beneath him. Words are trying to form out his mouth, but all that comes out are drooling, snarling growls.

Stiles is nothing but screams and cries.

Derek’s pace changes to sharp, hard thrusts and Stiles manages to open his tear-filled eyes. He knows Derek’s gone. In some untamed place brought on by the bloodthirsty violence that preceded it. It always takes him a while to come back to reality after turning full-wolf. So Derek, forgone as he is at the moment, was nothing new to him.

Yet, Derek’s lost control on Stiles once, after a full moon. Derek stopped coming home after running with the pack, spending the night in the woods. Stiles tried to reassure him repeatedly that he was fine and he knew Derek wasn’t in his right state-of-mind, but Derek refused, ashamed and scared that he lost control and hurt his mate. So Stiles took to keeping the back door unlocked for Derek when he returned at sunrise.

But now, with Derek all red eyes and pointy teeth, he’s not scared. He’s more turned on than he’s been since their sex marathon in the pool house.
Stiles lifts his hand from Derek’s shoulder, attempting to bring his long, thin fingers to Derek’s mouth, wanting to touch his canines-- Derek’s hand snaps up and grabs Stiles’ and pins it over his head.

Something in Stiles snaps at Derek’s dominance over him. It bubbles like lava, nearing eruption. His breathing labors. His skin flushes pink and turns hot.

Derek growls. Whatever is boiling inside Stiles, he can feel.

Stiles uses his free hand to drag his nails down Derek’s arm! Long, jagged scratches like wolf claws instead of thin, neat lines from the fingertips of a human! Derek’s bleeding all down his bicep and forearm!

He glares at his mate. Stiles eyes flash a **bright orange color**!

He breaks his hand free of Derek’s vice grip, pulls Derek’s hair, yanking his head to the side, forcing Derek to bare his neck! Stiles leans up and bites the space meeting Derek's neck and shoulder!

Derek ROARS!

Stiles pulls off Derek. His mouth drips with Derek’s blood like honey. His new pumpkin-colored eyes brighten with lust at the wolf. Derek crashes their mouths together, hard and abusive.

Stiles cries out as Derek fucks him savagely! Pistoning his hips into the boy with a brutal passion that leaves Stiles no choice but to fall apart. He drags his hands down Derek’s back as his whole body tenses, tears fall from the corners of his eyes, and Derek’s name flies from his mouth and echoes in the darkness, bouncing off the rocky forms of the cliffs and being swallowed by the canyon below, as Stiles comes with a force so strong white pearls of his cum land on his own lips.

A blackness crowds Stiles’ eyes as Derek hungrily licks at the cum of Stiles' mouth, and the last thought he has is: *How did we end up at the cliffs...?*

**Chapter End Notes**

For the sake of this story, Talia is only 57 years old, and Theo looks 60*. The reason I wrote they've been married for 41 years is because they have in my headcanon for this series. They met when Talia was 15 years old, and Theo was older. A year later, her parents gave her permission to legally marry Theo, after discovering they were mates. Under law, Theo marrying Talia while underage, also made him her legal guardian. This also points to the reason Laura is only 17 years older than her mother.

Second, the links to sexinfo101.com are merely because I always think I don't describe sexual positions accurately and they end up reading like instructions on how to make soft-baked pretzels or something. It's just a visual for the reader.

Thirdly, Stiles' eyes changing color and Theo's eyes having a different Alpha color will be explained within the next few chapters...

And lastly, **MPREG COMING VERY VERY SOON!** And for savvy readers out there, you might have picked up on it at the end of chapter 8... ;)}
The Right Boy

Chapter Summary

At Theo and Talia's request, the pack decides to stay at Hale House in Beacon Hills until the 4th of July weekend is over. Stiles turns curious at his in-laws odd behavior...

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

It's dawn. Barely a streak of light breaks through the horizon as Stiles and Derek scramble into the pool house as quickly and as quietly as they can. They're both completely naked.

Stiles is shivering. "I'm going to kill you. You tore my clothes into confetti," he snaps at Derek as best he can while his teeth chatter.

"I know. I'm sorry." Derek lifts Stiles into his arms.

"What are you doing?"

Derek enters the bedroom with Stiles cradled in his arms. He tucks Stiles into the closet bed and pulls the covers up to his neck. "Stay. I'm going to run you a hot bath."

Stiles nods. Derek disappears into the adjoining bathroom. Stiles hunkers down into the warm down comforter as he hears Derek run him a bath. He can't stop shivering. His skin is even paler than usual and his lips carry a bluish tint.

Derek comes back into the room. He climbs into the bed with Stiles and wraps himself around his husband.

"You're like an oven and I feel like I spent a week at the South Pole."

Derek rubs Stiles' hands together with his own. "That's why I'm trying to warm you up while the tub fills."

Stiles trembles in Derek's hold. When he woke up from blacking out, he was naked and beneath a quaking Derek covered in cum. Derek had apparently, while Stiles was passed out, came, and decided to do so all over his chest and stomach. They were near the edge of the cliffs with the cold, mountain air breezing down on them. Stiles' only shield was Derek, who at the time, was just slowly recovering from his primal state. Derek had lost complete track of his clothing and where it might be, and Stiles remembered Derek attacking him, tearing his clothes off him with his claws.

Derek didn't hear anyone else in the woods, or make out their heartbeat, and assumed they had all went back to Hale House. With no other choice, he grabbed Stiles and they circled back to the area they had initially fooled around at. Derek added angry to the list of emotions that ran through his husband when they took noticed to the shredded state of Stiles' clothes. Which Derek understood, given they were miles from the house, naked, with no shoes, and no cellphones. For a werewolf, such a state meant very little, but to a human it was destitute.
They had two options: try and find someone in the nearest town to help, and let them use their phone, which seemed unlikely given they were two strange, and naked men, or Derek could shift into his wolf and run back home with Stiles on his back. Derek hated the idea of being treated like a pony at a petting zoo, but it was their only option. They couldn't go back to Gerard's cabin because a) they'd end up leaving fingerprints at a crime scene, and b) Lydia gave Isaac, Cora, and Malia specific instructions on how to burn the place to the ground and make it look like faulty wiring. Pony-Derek it was then.

"We have to talk to Chris today."

"I know." Derek's hands rub all over Stiles' body. He'd be turned on if he weren't so cold. And pissed. That was his favorite hoodie. For obvious reasons.

"Where is he? Still with my dad and Thomas?"

"I don't know. I heard Thomas and Laura on the preserve last night."

"Then where is he?!"

"Calm down. He's one lone hunter with no weapons on wolf property. Plus, your dad would have called mine if there was an issue."

Stiles nods. "Right." He can't stop shaking and chattering. "Can you check on that bath?"

"Sure." Derek climbs out of bed.

Stiles is in Derek's lap, his head against Derek's broad chest as Derek softly cards his hand through Stiles' wet hair. Stiles pulls away, twisting in the warm water, to face Derek. He straddles Derek's legs and kisses him tenderly.

"Did I hurt you last night?"

"I'm a little sore, but it's nothing."

"It's something if I hurt you."

"Derek. Stop. I'm okay." Stiles knows he has to be finite and stern with Derek when it comes to them having rough sex. Derek's cut him off before when Stiles has been a little too bruised from all the marking and manhandling by Derek's wolf. It was only for a couple days, but it was enough to annoy Stiles into hating Derek treating him a little too much like antique china.

Derek cups Stiles cheek in his hand. His thumbs graze Stiles lips, having returned to their normal pink color. "Your eyes changed again."

"What? That hasn't happened in years... It must've been my magic."

"I don't know. I don't think so."

"Then what?"

Derek shrugs. "Don't know. We'll figure it out though."
"Okay." Stiles knows they will. It’s the fourth time it’s happened. The first three times his eyes changed like a wolf’s, he was so overcome with rage he was shaking. And each time he was fighting with Derek. This time though, he and Derek were making love. It was vicious and intense, but he certainly wasn’t angry. He was in fact bowled over with pleasure. Whatever was going on with him, he knew they needed to find out, in case it was serious.

But first, they have a treaty to sign with Chris Argent.

Derek signs and initials in specific areas on a handful of papers on Theo’s desk. He slides the papers over to Chris Argent who does the same, then slides the papers back.

Stiles signs his full name on the first sheet.

Chris peeks over at his signature. "How exactly do you say that," Chris asks.

"Slowly," Stiles responds.

Derek smirks. Chris rolls his eyes.

Stiles hands the pen to Theo. Theo signs the first sheet and hands the pen to Talia who does the same.

Talia hands the pen to Deaton. Deaton signs the first sheet. "It seems the Hale/Argent Peace Treaty is official."

"Wait. John should sign, too. He’s the sheriff of this town," Chris suggests.

The rest of the room nods in agreement.

John steps forward and puts his signature to the treaty.

"Now, the Hale/Argent Peace Treaty is official," Stiles says, proud that his father was apart of something so profound with him.

"Seems so," Deaton says.

"Who keeps it," John asks.

"Deaton," Stiles suggests.

"Deaton," Chris asks incredulously.

"He’s as neutral as you’re going get," Derek tells him.

He is, and Chris knows there’s no point in fighting it. He nods in concession.

Derek extends his hand to Chris. Reluctantly, Chris grasps Derek's hand. Chris attempts to show a bit of muscle, squeezing Derek's hand a little too much, but Derek reciprocates, making Chris wince. "Sorry," Derek smirks.

"Are we done here," Chris asks bitterly, rubbing his hand.
"Very much so," Derek answers him curtly.

"Chris. There’s been too much bloodshed between your clan and our pack for far too long. I sincerely hope the peace we’ve brokered today will end that," Talia says.

"That’s what it’s for, isn’t it?"

"Yes. It is. I’ve always felt it better to be allies instead of enemies."

"You’re still criminals. In our world. And it still bleeds into the other every now and then. Those are the times when you won’t have an ally. When innocent people are hurt."

"We try to make sure that never happens," Stiles informs him.

"But when it does, just know that I will honor my code. We agreed to that."

"And expect no less for you," Talia says without any heat. She knows he'll be honorable to his code, which entails him keeping humans from harm and preventing weres from letting harm come to them, and she understands that. But she also knows it means their pack will have to tread lightly and cover their tracks with even more precision now.

"Good. Glad you understand." Chris walks out.

"...Well...that was pleasant," Stiles says.

John snorts at his son and his sarcasm. "I got to get to work. Hope this whole treaty thing works out. Makes my job a lot easier if it does."

"I believe it will," Deaton says.

John hugs Stiles and Derek. Deaton grabs the treaty, and he and John leave.

"Well, I certainly feel like a weight has been lifted," Talia states. She truly does. So many years fighting, with loss on both their sides. She sighs, relieved of the future bloodshed that has officially ended. She nuzzles Derek, then pecks Stiles' cheek. "I should help Danny and Kira with lunch." Talia makes her way out of the room, her step a little lighter than usual.

Derek turns to Stiles, "We should talk to Laura, Val, and Peter, then the betas."

"Okay," Stiles nods.

Derek and Stiles turn to exit as well--

"Stiles," Theo calls.

Stiles stays put. Derek knows better. He leaves, closing the study door behind him.

"Yes, Theo?"

Theo stands and approaches. He inhales the air between him and his son-in-law. "Come closer."

Stiles steps closer.
"Closer."

Stiles steps into Theo’s personal space. Theo buries his nose in Stiles’ neck. Stiles has been married to Derek Hale, and been apart of the Hale family for 5 years now. He’s been apart of a pack for almost a decade. Werewolves scenting him, in his personal space, is so beyond the new normal for him that it’s as second nature as Derek expressing his feelings through his eyebrows. It’s old hat.

Theo pulls away after one long inhale. A proud, happy smile grows on his face at Stiles. "Thank you."

"For what?"

"Being a member of this family."

"It’s an honor." It is. Stiles has never felt so worthy. So many years either ignored, dismissed, bullied, avoided, and laughed at, and now he's an Alpha in the most powerful pack on the western side of the country. There's not a soul in Beacon Hills that doesn't know his name, and crumbles in fear, or sidles up to him with obsequious flattery. He's been underestimated by everyone who's known him, all except his father, Scott, Lydia, Derek and the rest of the Hales. They've all seen in him what no one else had ever bothered to witness. He was valued here. In this family. In this pack. And it meant the world to him, so he'd always fight tooth-and-nail for it, and for the people apart of it.

Theo nods a 'thank you'.

Stiles exits the room.

Chris leaves out the front door, approaching his RAV4 parked out front.

"Dad!" He turns to Allison running out of the house. She rushes into his arms. They clutch each other for dear life, sobbing with hitched breaths. For each other. For themselves. For Kate. And Gerard. And Victoria. For the blood spilled and the lives lost and the distance it created between them.

They crumble to the ground, not letting go; still wrought with grief. With mourning. With shame. For letting their lives become what they are. What they’ve been for years. And for what it’s cost to try and right 1/15th of the wrongs they’ve caused.

But in this moment, they can have each other. They can know that there’s love between them. Out of all the pain and suffering and abuse and carnage, there’s love. They have it. And they can use it to start over. They can be new. It’s a beginning. Their beginning.

She manages to pull back, looking at him. Her eyes wet and red and old. Aged by the sorrow she’s accumulated over the last few weeks. "I'm so sorry."

He kisses her forehead and brings her back into his arms. "Me, too, baby girl. I let you down. I should have done this in the beginning. I should have never--"

"Just hold me. Please. Don’t let go."
He squeezes her tighter.

Scott watches Allison with Chris through the front window, hidden by the curtains.

"There’s no need to spy. She’s fine."

Scott turns to Peter standing in the living room entrance eating a banana.

"I’m not spying. I’m...looking out for her."

Peter snickers. "Yeah. Okay. Sure."

Five seconds in a room with Peter and Scott’s already annoyed. Must be a new record. "Something you wanted, Peter?"

"Derek’s done talking to senior pack. Wants all you little betas in there now."

"I’ll wait for Allison."

"Looks like she might be a while."

Scott looks out the window again. Allison and Chris are still wrapped around each other whilst sitting in a heap on the front steps. "Yeah. Looks like it."

"They’ve got what, 8 or 9 years of forgiveness to bestow upon each other?"

"Nine. We’ve been together for seven."

"That’s right. You didn’t find out the Disney Princess was really Xena until a year later, then there was that year you spent being a dick to Kira and Isaac. That must of sucked though, finding out she was really just using you to try to get to Derek and Theo."

"Is Stiles or Lydia not around for you to go bother?"

"I just had my fun with Stiles. I’ll move on to Lydia after your little beta pow-wow."

"What’s the deal with you and Stiles? Lydia I get: powerful banshee. Sexy red head. Genius-level smart. Sharp tongue like a razor. Immune to weres. But Stiles... He’s my best friend and all, but I don’t get your weird, 'stranger-danger' obsession with him."

Peter smiles brightly. "You really want to know?"

"Enlighten me."

Peter steps close to Scott. "Stiles, is a wave of energy. And I’m not talking about his ADHD and mile-a-minute-snark that’s actually tampered down a bit over the years. What I’m talking about is the fact that he, is the very thing that keeps this pack together, and has brought it out from the darkness. We’re as strong as we are because he’s apart of this family. Lydia’s a genius, but that kid’s a master; never to be underestimated. He’s pure, raw power. Wrapped in a pale, tight body with amber eyes and sweet lips. Derek’s a smart guy, but he’s more brawn and action than anything. He’s got rage. And all that fury is bound to be attracted to the resting puissance that’s
inside Stiles. He can out-smart and run the best con on anyone. His brilliance is ingrained. It’s rooted in him. Just like his fearlessness...and violence. You’ve seen what he can do. How he is. You know. You were there that night, when he killed that hunter. You can’t tell me you weren’t terrified of what you saw in him. The fierce length he was willing to go to to protect Derek. To protect all of you. It’s unnerving how much he cares. How much he loves. Because it makes the distance he takes in protecting you all terrifying. I don’t think Stiles is part Fae. I think Stiles is part daemon.”

Scott swallows hard. Peter's assessment of Stiles is probably the most accurate description he's ever heard anyone make of his best friend. Stiles is all those things, and Scott knows it. He knows Stiles is downright horrifying if pushed, and his acumen makes him all the more scary when threatened. He goes to extremes and drags you with him, and while there, makes you witness the extent of his devotion to what it is he's fighting for. "And you're attracted to that?"

"Yes. I know if it were me running around the preserve that night, I would have definitely bit the right boy."

"So I’m the 'wrong boy'?"

"Yes. And you know it. It took you years to truly accept what you became and the magic that surrounds it all. Stiles isn’t even a wolf and he took to it like a duck to water. He sees it. Understands it. Appreciates it. The things that go bump in the night peak his interest, they don’t scare him. That’s why he’s a human, mated to a True Alpha. And you’re a beta spying on your hunter girlfriend."

"She hasn’t been a hunter for a long time. She gave that up."

"When Stiles figured it out and busted the little con job she was pulling on you."

Scott’s eyes flash gold at Peter, feeling as though this whole conversation is simply Peter calling him ‘stupid’.

"You’re a good beta. Good pack-brother. Good muscle. Good Prince Charming to the Disney Princess out there, but you will never be what Stiles is."

"Which is?"

"Essential."

"I could say the same about you."

"That is true. You could. And you’d be right. Very few of us in this family are."

"If you hate me so much, why’d you tell Allison you killed Gerard last night?"

"I don’t hate you, Scott. You’re pack, I can’t hate you. Be annoyed and nauseous with your Romeo and Juliet love affair with the Disney Princess, yes. But I don’t hate you. I just understand things as they are. I see the truth, plainly, and with no filter."

"But why cover for me?"

"Because she’s no good to you, or us, broken. Gerard was right. She would have never forgiven
you. She would have said she did, and worked real hard at pretending to, but in the end she would have become damaged with knowing her husband, the father of her children, snapped her poor paw-paw's neck. She’d end up being Kate."

"Never."

"She would. You know that. Whether you admit it now, or years later sitting on your front porch watching her play with your grandchildren."

Scott doesn't hate Peter. He doesn't even dislike him. What he does hate, what he does dislike, is the small seed of guilt, of doubt, Peter plants into his head about Allison and the path she might have taken had Peter not taken the credit for killing Gerard. Because in a matter of moments that seed has grown and sprouted into an oak tree and its roots are digging deep in him, wrapping around his heart. That's what he hates; the truth. The fact that Peter just planted a cold, hard truth in him that he can never get rid of. And so now, and forever, he has to lie. He has to lie to the face of the woman he loves everyday. Every time a memory floods her head about Gerard reading her bedtime stories or letting her dance on his toes to soft, jazz music on his record player, he has to lie, never letting her know how satisfied he was in killing the old man that taught her how to ride a bike with no training wheels."You know, Peter, if you weren’t such a dick all the time, you’d be just as essential as Stiles."

"That’s probably true. But what fun would that be?" Peter finishes his banana. "They’re waiting for you in the living room."

Scott gives one last glance out the window before he crosses the foyer into the living room. He slides the doors closed behind him, glaring at Peter.

Stiles is in the kitchen making himself a sandwich. Talia and Theo come in. They’re both all smiles and sunshine, beaming at him.

"Hey, in-laws. Want me to make you a sandwich?"

"No, thank you, Stiles. Not at the moment," Talia politely turns down.

"Okay."

"I’d like to ask something of you though."

"Shoot, mama-wolf."

"During the senior pack meeting, you and Derek said you’ll be going home in two days."

"Uh-huh."

"We were wondering if you wouldn’t mind staying until after the holiday."

"Sure. I don’t see why it would be a problem. I’ll talk to Derek."

"Stiles," Theo starts, knowing Stiles may not be getting what Talia was asking, "Talia and I would like for all of you to stay until after the holiday. The whole pack."
"Oh. Uh... I don’t know about the whole pack. I mean, Derek and I can swing it for the week, but we need the rest of the pack getting back to business. Our next plan of action is that new agent on our case. Danny thinks he might’ve found something on him based on Scott and Erica’s recon."

"Sweetheart, we know, but we’d personally feel comfortable if you all stayed for a bit longer. So we can figure things out," Talia says.

"What things?"

Talia and Theo exchange glances. "Just...certain things we’d like to get squared away before you head back to San Francisco," Theo answers evasively.

"Right... What’s going on with you two? Why aren’t you anxious to get us out of your hair? Because I can safely assume that you’d enjoy going back to a quiet, peaceful house."

"Oh, no, Stiles! We’re a pack. Bonding is very important. You know that. We love having the house erupt with noise," Talia tries to reassure him.

"I wouldn’t use the word ‘love’..."Theo grumbles under his breath.

Talia elbows her husband in the ribs.

"Guys, look, if it’s important or dangerous, please tell me."

"Stiles, there’s nothing dangerous going on that you have to worry about. We just want you all to stay just a few days longer," Talia tells Stiles.

"I also said 'important' which I've noticed you haven't commented on."

Theo can't help the slight smirk on his face at the cleverness of his son-in-law.

"We're just asking for a week, Stiles. Please," Talia responds.

Stiles looks at his in-laws and their pleading eyes. They're practically bouncing, waiting for his answer. "Um, okay. We'll stay during the holiday. Just so long as whatever it is you guys are hiding isn’t apocalyptic and Earth-shattering."

Talia is beaming, all smiles and excitement. "Great! And we promise, Stiles, it’s nothing you need to worry about. We’d just feel a little safer if all of you didn’t rush off so quickly after everything."

She rounds the island to Stiles and hugs him tightly. She buries her nose in his neck and inhales deeply.

She pulls back, looking fondly at his face. Her soft hand cups his face. Stiles swears he can see tears in her eyes.

"Talia..." Stiles says warily.

"Oh, I’m fine, sweetheart." She pecks his cheek.

Stiles watches as she and Theo have a hushed argument as they leave the kitchen. He wonders about them. They’re not the secretive, ambiguous type. Talia is beyond direct and Theo hardly speaks, but when he does, what he has to say is concise and important. Yet, he knows they’re
hiding something. Something important, and it has to deal with the whole pack... He’ll come back to it. After his sandwich.

"You want everyone to stay?! For how long?!

"Until the 6th. After the holiday."

"Mother, Derek has everything under control. It’s fine."

"I’m none too concerned with hunters and the FBI at the moment. I would just like for everyone to be under the same roof for a little while longer for a different reason."

"Jason has to get back to work."

"I’m sure you can pull some strings and get him the extra time off, Valerie."

"Peter has a farm of goats!"

"Which Braeden is handling for him, I’m sure."

"Because mercenaries make great goat farmers."

"Valerie! You are all remaining here for the next week. End of discussion." Talia flashes her Alpha eyes at her daughter.

Valerie reluctantly concedes by quieting.

"Thank you," Talia says before walking back downstairs.

She's 38 years old but her mother can still dictate to her like she's fifteen all over again. You never stop becoming your mother's child. Further proved by Valerie groaning in frustration before she slams her bedroom door shut!

Derek lies on the sofa reading Edmond Rostand’s *Cyrano de Bergerac.*

Stiles saunters in. Derek’s nose is still in the book. "I love that play."

"Because you’re not-so-secretly a tragic romantic."

"And you’re a not-so-secret sweep-her-off-her-feet bleeding heart. I bet you’ve read that thing a hundred times."

"Shut up."

Stiles pushes Derek’s feet off the sofa and takes a seat where they were once resting comfortably. Derek’s feet return, but in Stiles’ lap. "Two things."

"Shit."
"One-- Allison and Scott left to go have dinner with Chris Argent."

Derek raises an eyebrow. "That worries me."

"They’re fine. Scott can handle Argent. They’re in a public place and I told my dad and Deaton where they were in case something happens. Which it won’t."

"I’m holding you responsible if it does."

Stiles rolls his eyes. "Two-- your mom and dad are acting weird. They want us to stay until after the 4th of July."

"I know. I told them we would."

"They tell you why."

"No."

"You don’t want to know why?"

"I’m not nosy...like a certain someone."

Stiles pinches Derek’s thigh. Not that it would even phase Derek in the slightest. "Me being nosy is the reason we met."

"Well aware of that."

"Wow. You are on a roll with the snark today. It’s almost fluent."

"No one’s as fluent in snark as you, Stiles."

"Then stop trying to compete."

Derek can’t help but let a small smile grow on his lips at his husband’s quick wit.

"Like I was saying--"

"They just don’t want us rushing out the door so soon after all that’s happened. They want a moment of recovery, Stiles. It’s taken 400 years for the Hales and the Argents to reach peace, and we managed to do that yesterday. I mean, two members of our pack are getting married and one of them is an Argent. Plus, when’s the last time we’ve all been down here together, whole, like a pack? Last Christmas everyone was scattered all over the damn globe. It’s nice being here, in the house like this. They just miss it is all. Stop being sneaky."

"I’m not being sneaky!" Derek gives him a dubious look. "I’m not! And stop looking at me like that Derek Stephan Hale!"

"Bringing out the big guns. Full names and all."

"I hate you sometimes."

Derek tosses his book onto the coffee table. He knows how to end this: "Kiss me."
"No," Stiles teases.

"Kiss me."

"Make me." Within a blink of an eye, Derek grabs Stiles and drags him up his body and presses a hard kiss on his lips. "I love when you kiss me like that."

"I know."

"Asshole."

Derek’s lips return to Stiles’ with a soft, chaste kiss.

"That one's even better. You break it to the puppies that we’re staying a little longer?"

Derek nods. "Jackson asked if he and Boyd can have the guest house back."

"What you tell him?"

"Fuck no."

"It does seem a little unfair, seeing as how your old room only has one bed."

"It’s a Queen size. They’ll be fine. Or Erica and Jackson can switch rooms. That way Jackson can stay with Lydia and Erica and Boyd can share my old room."

"Are you sure you want your boyhood room violated with Boyd spunk and Erica’s overpowering perfume?" Derek didn’t think of that... "You want to trade rooms now, don’t you?"

"Or at the very least set some ground rules."

Stiles chuckles. "Okay. But first..." Stiles sits up and takes off his shirt.

Derek surges up and kisses him wildly.

The whole pack-- minus Scott, Allison, John, Melissa, and Deaton-- eat dinner together on the veranda. Once again Theo is at the head of the table with Talia on his right, and Derek at the other end with Stiles on his right. This time though, there’s enough room for Malia to sit at the ‘adult table’.

As the food passes, Stiles takes hold of a serving dish with rare cuts of venison on it. He forks two large pieces onto his plate before passing it to Derek. "What are you doing?"

"Trying to pass you a platter but for some reason my hand is suspended mid-air waiting for you to take it."

Derek takes the serving dish. "There’s two pieces of venison on your plate. You hate venison."

"Felt like giving it a second try." Stiles then takes a serving bowl of sauteed spinach from Boyd and drops a hearty helping on his plate. He passes it to Derek.

Derek takes it, placing a kiss on Stiles’ cheek. "Eat all the venison you like."
Stiles shoves a big piece of it in his mouth. "Intend to."

At the other end of the table, Talia and Theo exchange knowing glances with one another, regarding Stiles.

Kira is drying and putting away the last of the dishes.

Scott enters. "Any food left?"

She turns to him. "There’s some strawberry salad and stuffed mushrooms left. Stiles ate all the venison and lamb."

"Stiles hates both of those."

Kira shrugs. *But he ate it all, so...?*

"Strawberry salad it is then."

Scott takes off his jacket, draping it on the back of one of the bar stools at the *island*. He rounds the island for the fridge.

"Didn’t you just come from dinner?"

"Yeah, but I hardly ate anything."

"Why?"

"I don’t know."

"Too focused on Chris Argent?"

"Just didn’t want to be distracted by anything going on between him and Allison."

"And eating was a distraction?"

"Occupy too many senses. I wouldn’t have felt that focused."

Scott takes a container of the salad from the fridge and grabs a fork from the utensils drawer.

"Make sure you clean those please."

"Sure. You wash dishes by yourself?"

"Malia was helping but Star and Rose demanded she play ‘supermodel’ with them."

Scott smiles. "Cute."

Kira looks at him. How can this boy here, the one with the sweet smile and big, puppy eyes, be the same boy that broke her heart? The one that apologized over and over and over again while she wailed until her throat was sore when he told her he was still in love with Allison. The same boy that came home to the apartment they shared for the last month, smelling like jasmine and guilt, with his head hung low and voice soft and sorry when he admitted to spending the night with the
girl that broke his own heart a year before.

The girl who lied about being a hunter. Who lied about being an Argent, no less. The girl that spilled secrets to her grandfather, her father, and her aunt about the pack Scott had fought Derek so vehemently about making her apart of. The girl that was tasked with poisoning their Alpha, but confessed when Stiles discovered her deception.

That same girl had still held Scott’s heart in her delicate hand. Still kept him awake at night, and wandering around in the dark room when he couldn’t go back to sleep. That same girl left her scent on the boy she loved while whispering apologies and love declarations in his ear as he made love to her under dim lights and on a bed of blankets piled on the hardwood floor. She smelled it. All of it on him. And it made her fox whine and howl.

That boy, and the one before her with the adoring smile, picking around the walnuts with his fork, were the same person. And it was hard to look at the one in front of her, and not think of the one she knew then. Despite them both having the same smile.

"You smell hostile."

Kira drifts back into the present at Scott’s nonchalant statement. "I’m tired." She folds the dishtowel and drapes it over the edge of the sink. "Goodni--"

"You happy? In Peter’s territory?"

"Yes." She is actually. Fresno’s not so bad. She’s met some cool people. Cool artists and musicians and organic farmers. She and Ethan and Braeden spend a lot of time together, either just hanging out, or tightening their grip on those who choose to test Peter’s power as leader of their territory. And Peter himself is never one for a dull existence.

"Good. I’m glad to hear it."

"I don’t care what you’re glad to hear." And Scott hits her with his ‘wounded puppy’ look. Maybe she did smell hostile...

"I’m sorry--"

"Don’t be. You were just...just being honest. Truthful."

"I didn’t mean to snap at you though."

"And I didn’t mean to sound conceited when you answered."

"You didn’t. I overreacted."

"I just..."

"I don’t want to do this."

"Do what?"

"Have the ‘let’s-try-and-be-friends’ conversation. The ‘I’m-sorry-I-shit-all-over-your-heart-and-hope-you’re-happy-now-so-I-don’t-feel-guilty’ conversation. I think it’s clear I’ve moved on from you. Maybe not completely forgiven you, and Allison, but it’s been 7 years. I stopped crying over
you a long time ago. And I think it a testament to how far I’ve come with being able to spend nearly 3 months in a house with you and her. You made your choice and it was Allison. I get that, and understand it. I still hate how you went about making that choice, but you’re probably already filled with enough shoulda-coulda-wouldas for the both of us. So I don’t need to relive everything all over again with an earnest conversation just so you can have closure. Okay?"

Scott nods, a little taken aback by her boldness.

"Good. We’re betas in the most powerful pack on the west coast. Let’s continue to act like it."

Scott nods again. "Okay."

"Goodnight, Scott."

"Goodnight, Kira."

"Make sure you get the light when you’re done."

"Sure."

Scott watches the fox leave the kitchen. It's the most they've said to one another since being at Hale House. And the most they've said since last Thanksgiving. Kira's good. That's all he wanted to know. But she was right, he only wanted to know selfishly; for his own closure. His own peace of mind. So he could marry Allison without guilt still looming over his head with how shitty he treated two people who deserve better than him.

He finishes his salad, dumping the avoided walnuts in the trash before washing the container and fork, and putting them where they belong. He grabs his jacket off the barstool and hits the lights on his way out. Just like Kira asked.

Laura sparks up an aconitum-laced joint. She takes a deep hit, causing a harsh coughing fit. She takes another hit when her coughing ceases. She passes it to Valerie, who takes a satisfying hit.

They’re sitting on a large log on the edge of the clearing with Derek and Cora.

The sky is open above them, and they can clearly see the moon and stars. They’re a good distance from the house, but it’s still visible in all it’s glory and light.

Valerie passes it to Derek. "Stiles is going to kill me," he says.

"Shut up and take a hit," Lura tells him.

Derek does. He coughs violently. "Shit. What kind of wolfsbane is in here?"

"I think it’s ‘Maiden’s Dream’. Stole it from Peter’s stash," Laura says.

Derek passes it to Cora who asks, "Should we have invited him?"

Derek and Laura answer with a resounding ‘no’.

"I don’t think so either. I like it being just us out here," Valerie says.

"Me, too," Laura says. She takes two short puffs before handing it back to Valerie.
"I don’t think I’ve realized how much I missed you guys until all this happened," Valerie tells them.

"You always get sappy when you’re high," Laura teases her sister.

"I’m serious. I need to see you guys more," Valerie says.

"Nothing’s stopping you," Laura tells her.

"...Yes, there is." Valerie looks at the ground with a pitiful look on her striking face.

"Vee, you are a strong beta. The strongest on your family’s pack. The largest and most powerful pack on the west coast. You operate an entire territory of 21,000 square miles with only yourself and four other betas, all the while managing to raise two sweet girls and keep a very happy husband. You shouldn’t have to hide who you are. You shouldn’t have to hide who we-- your family-- are from those girls. We know you want to keep them safe, but you shouldn’t shelter them either," Laura tells her.

"We’re not sheltering them."

"Yes, you are," Derek tells her. "The longer you wait to tell them what their mother is, and the rest of their family, the harder it’ll be for them to grasp."

"Kids adjust far better to the strange than adults do," Laura adds.

"Who you calling ‘strange’," Cora says playfully.

"You don’t think being a werewolf isn’t strange?"

Cora shakes her head.

Laura turns to Derek. "I know you do."

"You think being a werewolf is weird, Derek," Cora asks surprised.

"Isn’t it, Cora? I mean, come on..." he responds.

"I think it’s no more strange than anything else that occurs in life," Cora tells him.

"That’s because you’ve been raised in all the supernatural things more than the rest of us have. Witches and vampires and trolls and faeries are commonplace with you," Laura says.

"You make it sound like you’re so old and haven’t had to deal with any of that yourself," Cora says.

"Supes being out in the open for the last 100 years seems like a long time, but when you really think about it, it feels like it was just last Tuesday sometimes," Laura says.

"Plus, all those vivid stories of what grandpa used to tell us it was like before... Horrifying," Valerie remembers.
"But he told us those stories to warn us to always be safe," Derek reminds her.

"And be skeptical when trusting humans," Cora recalls.

"That part I hated," Valerie says.

"...Me, too," Derek agrees solemnly.

"He had every right though," Laura says. "He was one of the first ones out the ‘werewolf closet’. And lucky. Some of his friends didn’t fair so well back then."

"But he did. Because he had a pack. He had support. The best support. That’s what you have, Val. If you want to tell your girls, then you should. You can’t shield them from everything," Derek says.

"I hate hiding the truth from them. Makes feel as though I’m ashamed, and I’m far from it."

"Then you and Jason need to really talk about all this...and not kill my buzz with your melodramatic shit," Laura teases.

Valerie snickers, which turns into a boisterous laugh. Laura’s joke wasn’t nearly that funny, but Valerie’s high, so it’s the best thing she’s ever heard at the moment.

Soon, the rest of her siblings join in, laughing at Valerie’s overreaction and the realization it’s because she's stoned. And their fits of laughter quickly match hers in volume and length and ridiculousness as the fall off the log, bowled over cackling.

Two twin-size beds are pushed against the far-right wall. Stiles and Lydia sit on the bed closest to the door. Her feet are in his lap. He paints her toenails a soft pink color.

"So they didn’t say exactly why they wanted everyone to stay a bit longer?"

"No. But I mean, it’s Talia and Theo. Whether they tell me or not, it’ll definitely be for a good reason."

"...Derek tell you to leave it alone," Lydia asks, knowing Stiles and that he’d never give such a plain, ignorant answer.

"He called me ‘sneaky’!"

"You are." His mouth gapes open. "This can’t be something you’re not aware of."

"No, but it is one attribute about myself I don’t find flattering, and don’t appreciate my husband pointing it out."

Lydia smiles. "If it makes you feel better I’m sneaky, too."

"I know. It’s one of the reasons why this pack would be lost without us."

"One of the many."

Stiles delicately paints her pinky toe. "I shouldn’t have said that. It’s mean and cocky. Makes it seem like everyone else is stupid but us and that’s not true. Everyone’s got their strengths. And
"weaknesses."

"What are my strengths?"

"I’m not going to sit here and rattle off all your amazing qualities like you don’t already know."

"Fine then. What are my weaknesses?"

"You have none. You’re Lydia Martin."

"Come on, Stiles. You’re the only person that knows me inside/out. What are my weaknesses?"

"You have none. You’re perfect."

She rolls her eyes and pulls her feet from his lap, swinging them over the side of the bed and looking disappointed.

Stiles is taken aback. He had no idea she wanted a real, genuine answer.

They sit in silence for a good minute, Stiles mentally debating if he should answer, and Lydia stewing in his avoidance.

Finally-- "You oversimplify people’s emotions. Boiling them down to simple, snide analogies, or compartmentalize them into neat, pretty little boxes instead of truly trying to comprehend them and the complexities around them. You make everything quantifiable."

"So I am a robot."

"No. It’s just how you process things. How you deal with things that you find intangible and put in your pretty boxes. It just so happens that those things are people’s emotions. Who said you were a robot?"

"No one... Me... I was thinking about Isaac and Scott. They’re such bleeding hearts. Scott manages to be this force to be reckoned with, but he can wax poetry about Allison’s hair simultaneously. And Isaac is such a puppy it’s sickening. But when he fights it’s fierce. With his whole self. He’s not trying to keep from dying so much as he’s trying to keep everyone else from it. He fights like Derek. With everything he’s got. With this built in rage. But the rage is all for whoever dared to think it was a good idea to hurt the people he loves."

"Derek does fight like that. You’re right. Isaac does, too."

"I was wondering how they do that. Why they do that. Why are they both so willing to fight to the death for other people?"

She looks at him. Her friend. Her best friend, looking at her, a tad worried. Lydia’s not this girl. She doesn’t care about how she’s perceived. She knows how she is and how she feels about things. But this girl. This girl next to him, looks unsure and self-conscious.

"Oh, come on, Lydia. You’re making it sound like you’re heartless. Like there’s nothing but a block of wood where your heart should be and that’s bullshit. You’re fearless and fight just as hard for the people you care about."

"But do I care about you all because I know you, because we’re a pack and I’m supposed to, or
because I love you, therefore I care about you? Familiarity doesn’t equal affection. That I do know. Example: my parents. I know them, and can’t stand them; haven't visited them once since we've been here."

"But you love me. Maybe not the way I wanted you to all those bright, naive years ago, but you do. You love me. It’s a different, better kind of love, even though you think you might not because it’s not resting in the palm of your hand. And I love the fuck out of you, too."

His soft, amber eyes plead with her to understand, to give up this doubt that’s creeping over her and making her second guess what type of woman she is.

She places her hand gently atop Stiles’ own. "When you went to jail, and Derek went...whatever that was, I got it. But I didn't get it. I understand he loves you more than life itself, but I don’t get why-- Not like that, idiot! I don’t get what it is about you, this other person, that makes him fall apart like that. I don’t get the feeling he has when he can’t have you. Or when he does have you. And it’s not magic. Or at least, it’s not just magic. He loves you completely, with everything in him. Just like how he fights. What’s in another person that makes someone so...overwhelmed? So beside themselves? I’ve been contemplating it for so long and I still can’t wrap my head around it. It’s like if I can’t see it, if I can’t touch it, put it in my hand, then it’s not real. And with all the weird things that’s gone on in my life over the last 10 years, you’d think I was more open-minded, Stiles, but I’m not. There are some things that escape my understanding, and it scares the shit out of me that it’s how people feel that's the main one. Especially when that emotion is love."

"Didn’t you love Jackson?" He knows she didn't, but hopes she'll give a different answer he can use to build her confidence on.

"No. I thought I did, but I was 17 years old and we were together and I was scared. For the both of us. Scott just got bit and... I wasn’t with him because we were in love, Stiles. I couldn’t have been. Not when I don’t even know what that is. What it feels like."

Stiles’ eyes narrow at her, looking, trying to figure something out. "...You’ve just realized something. That’s what this is. You’ve been in here beating your head against a wall because after years of mulling something over, it all came into place for you, in a matter of seconds. That’s what this conversation is about. An epiphany. A scary one. You’re terrified of something. Something more dangerous than hunters and the FBI. Don’t tell me you’re not because I’ve been there so many times, too. Thoughts like that creep up on you like a thief in the night are always ones about how you feel, not about what you should do."

Tears flood her eyes.

"Lydia." He twists her hand from his, letting him hold hers tight and comforting. "What’s scaring you?"

"...I’m 28 years old, and I’ve never been in love. And I’m not so sure it’ll ever happen. I don’t deserve it if I don't know what it is. I'm going to end up alone."

He wraps an arm around her shoulder and pulls her close. He lets her cry softly; tears falling from her blushed face and dropping onto his jeans.

"First, I don’t know where in the hell you get the impression you’ll never be in love, let alone deserve not to be, but that’s just a big pile of horseshit. Like, the smelliest, stinkiest mountain of complete horse manure. Just because you don’t quite fathom romantic love, doesn’t mean you're incapable of other types of love. Remember when I told you you loved me a minute ago? That’s
true. You love me. You love Derek, and Scott, and Isaac, Boyd, Erica, Danny, Cora, Jackson, and Allison. You’re pretty much a friendship-slut." She manages a chuckle through her tears. "Second, twenty-eight isn’t bad. It’s forty that’s worrying. If you’re forty and never been in love, then we’ll send you to a shrink. Then you’re allowed all the breakdowns you want, with all the Chunky Munkey you want, too."

She sniffs. "I don’t like Chunky Munkey anymore. Chocolate chip cookie dough."

"That’s a good one. Not as good as rum raisin, but a good one." Lydia can count on one hand in the 22 years she's known Stiles how many times she's cried on his shoulder, and each and every one of those times, he's managed to pull her back from a depth she hadn't meant to fall in. No one else can do that. Allison tried once, and failed miserably, leaving Lydia to chart a plane all the way to Spain, just to have Stiles mend her open wound and make her feel anew again.

"Only you would like an ice cream that disgusting."

"Malia’s fault. She turned me on to it."

"God. I forgot you two used to date. What a disaster."

"Our relationship wasn’t bad for the most part."

"I meant between you and Derek. A jealous Derek is not a fun Derek."

"But he is a sexy Derek." Lydia lifts her head from Stiles’ shoulder. He wipes her tears away with the cuff of his shirt. "There you are. Much better."

How could she have never been in love with this boy? This sweet, loving boy beside her who wiped her tears away and listened to her panic about not knowing what love is and what it feels like. For a brief moment she thought if she should have ever hoped to feel it, to know love, she hoped it was with Stiles. But just as quickly as that thought popped into her head, it vanished. Stiles was taken. Taken and claimed and marked by a man who wouldn’t hesitate to die for him, and went feral at losing him, if only for a few weeks. Stiles was once hers, but he never will be again.

"Stiles."

"Hmm?"

"What’s sex with Derek like?"

"I’ve told you. Countess times."

"No. We talked details and facts and you spoke in hyperbole about the size of his penis--"

"It’s huge! Way bigger than when I was with 'He-Whose-Name-That- Shall-Never-Be-Spoken'!"

"But you’ve never told me how you feel about sex with him. What’s it like for you?"

"Why?"

"Because sex with werewolves and vampires and faeries are supposed to be Earth-shattering. I’ve
been with all three, but for me it’s just always been ‘really nice’. I actually like that vibrator you got me more. What do you feel with him?"

Stiles thinks a moment. Trying to find the words that’ll make her understand. To grasp what he feels when Derek touches him, kisses him, makes him come... "It’s...everything."

Lydia rolls her eyes. "Do better than that please."

"Okay... Okay... It’s... He’s...

And then a far-off smile forms on his lips... "It’s him carving his name in my skin. Dragging his claws across me, writing his name and it burning there in my chest like a tattoo that only I know is there. It’s him howling in my ear until all I hear in my head is that howl. It’s his tongue licking into my mouth and leaving bruising kisses that last for days. He digs in deep, leaving traces of himself to find later. And it makes me climb the walls when he looks for all the clues he left in me. Clues that solve the riddle. And the answer is ‘mine’. He lets me know every time we make love, who it is I belong to."

Lydia stares at him with her mouth parted open. "That... That was... I don’t know why I thought Scott waxing poetry was romantic, because you certainly destroyed that notion right now."

"It’s hard to talk about him like that sometimes. I never feel like what it is I say does him any justice."

"I disagree. Way to have hot, banging sex, Stilinski-Hale."

Stiles blushes.

Lydia swings her feet back into his lap. He picks up the bottle of nail polish. They return to him painting her toenails.

Derek is at the sink brushing his teeth.

Stiles comes in to pee. "You smell like ‘Maiden’s Dream’... Asshole."

"It’s only pot, and I only smoke when I’m with my sisters."

Stiles finishes and moves to the sink to wash his hands. "You’re just so weird when you do it. It’s like watching some club kid on ecstasy. You start preening and rolling around and wanting to be naked and touch everything."

Derek snorts. "I thought you liked when I was naked."

"I love when you’re naked. Just not when you’re all...gooey, and stoned."

Derek grabs Stiles by his waist and lifts him atop the sink. "I know. That’s why I always wait until my high is gone before I come back home."

Derek kisses him. A soft kiss that quickly turns hard and heavy.

"I can’t believe you gave Boyd and Jackson back the pool house."
"I couldn’t stand the idea of one of them fucking in my bed."

"By 'one of them' you mean, Jackson, right? Boyd would never be that disrespectful. No matter how much Erica flitted and flirted."

They continue kissing.

"Everyone’s going to hear," complaining, but not really doing much to stop it.

"So? We used to have sex all the time when the pack lived with us. Not to mention, the infinite number of times we’ve fucked in public."

"God, I miss the third stall at that werewolf bar in New Orleans you took me to."

Derek’s mouth moves to Stiles’ neck. Pointy canines drag along the pale skin making Stiles moan. Derek’s hands find their way up Stiles shirt, claws scraping him lightly while Derek sucks a hickey on his neck.

"Fuck, Derek..."

Stiles’ fingers squeeze Derek’s shoulders hard. "Ow!"

They stop.

"W-What? What’s wrong?"

"You were pushing on my shoulder."

"And...I...hurt you?"

"Are you kidding me?"

Stiles looks at him confused and Derek simply smirks. Derek removes his shirt. Stiles notices a deep, imprint of a purpleish bite mark on Derek’s right shoulder!

"Oh, my God, Derek! What the hell happened?! Who bit you?!"

"You did, you animal!" Derek grabs Stiles face and kisses him hard. But Stiles is preoccupied with the bruising bite on his mate’s shoulder.

He pulls their lips apart. "I didn’t bite you!"

"Yes, you did." Derek’s eyes turn red and fill with lust. He leans in to kiss Stiles again, but Stiles pulls back.

"How the hell did I not see that?! When did I bite you?!!"

"After we fought the hunters. In the woods. Your eyes turned orange and you bit me. Come here." Derek wants his lips all over Stiles, but Stiles-- curious, and perplexed, Stiles-- wants to figure this out.

"There’s no way I could bite you. Or would bite you. There’s definitely no way I could bite you and it wouldn’t heal right away."
"I don’t know. It’s just taking longer to do so is all."

Derek takes off Stiles’ shirt.

"Why would I bite you?"

"You’ve bitten me during sex before."

"Not like this. This looks like..." Lightblub! "I was trying to mark you?!"

Derek’s eyes manage to turn a deeper shade of red at Stiles revelation of marking him. He tears Stiles’ pants-- underwear and all-- off his body! And in one quick move, bends Stiles face down on the sink! Derek holds Stiles in place with one hand while he rummages through the cabinets for something.

"That’s werewolf instinct. I’m not a wolf."

Derek leaves the bathroom, frustrated with not finding what he’s looking for. Stiles remains where he is. "Why can’t I remember biting you?"

Derek returns, naked, with a tube of lube and a condom. He stands behind Stiles’ bare ass again.

"Seems my attempt at marking you is something you like."

Derek merely growls in response. He grabs the lube and pours some in Stiles’ hand. Stiles slicks Derek’s cock and works his slick fingers in and around his puckered, pink hole. "You like that? You like watching me fuck myself on my fingers? Fuck myself open for you? Get myself ready for your big, fat cock?"

Derek grabs a hand full of Stiles’ hair. Stiles lets out a whimper.

Derek leans into his ear: "I’d much rather you bite me again." Derek licks a long line up Stiles’ neck making him shudder like a virginal schoolgirl.

Chapter End Notes

Stiles is not a daemon, or part daemon! I promise you! Just Peter's exaggerated assessment of him.

Conversation between Scott and Peter inspired by THOSE WHO SEE by miss_aphelion, whose PACK WARS fic I adore.
Mpreg hints inspired by I Think I Might Have Inhaled You by Madalynn_Bohemia.

* Derek uses the condom because clearly, he's unaware of what you and I already know ;)
"Stiles. There is no Deucalion..."

Chapter Summary

Derek reveals a big secret about Theo to Stiles.

Chapter Notes

Questions? Ask me in the comments and I will most definitely answer :)

See the end of the chapter for more notes

A pan of bacon burns to a crisp, smoking heavily and nearing a fire.

Derek and Stiles crash into the refrigerator! Stiles’ legs are wrapped around Derek’s waist as Derek sucks greedily on Stiles’ neck.

"Derek... We’re in the kitchen."

Derek lifts his head to kiss at Stiles’ mouth. "We’ve fucked in the kitchen before."

"At our house. Not at your parents’."

Derek’s hand grips Stiles cock through his shorts.

"Derek!"

"I can’t help it. You smell so damn good." Derek nuzzles Stiles’ neck.

"I do?"

"Yes. You smell sweet. Like I could eat you. In fact..." Derek moves from Stiles, letting his legs slide down his waist and plant on the linoleum floor. Derek drops to his knees, unbuttoning Stiles’ shorts.

"Oh, my God, Derek! Hey, hey, hey! Wait!" Stiles grabs a fist full of Derek’s hair, yanking it, to gain his attention.

"Stiles!"

"You need to stop before--"

Cue the SMOKE ALARM going off!

"Oh, shit!" Stiles rushes to the burning pan of bacon as the kitchen begins to fill with smoke!
Derek opens the patio doors to let the smoke out and fresh air in, then grabs a chair and pushes it against the wall to stand on. He tries desperately to remove the smoke alarm from the wall, to take the battery out, and stop the incessant beeping, but it won’t budge.

"Boys!" Theo, Talia, and Laura enter the kitchen. They look on curiously at the scene before them: Stiles running cold water over a charred pan of blackened bacon strips with his fly unzipped and Derek failing miserably to dismantle a noisy smoke alarm as grey smog wafts out the patio doors. "What happened?"

"Are you two alright," Talia asks.

"I will be when I can shut this fucking thing off!"

"Maybe it’s a child-proof smoke alarm," Laura teases her brother.

Derek is not amused. He punches the alarm with one swift jab and it crumbles into a heap of broken parts, going dead silent.

"Breakfast is going to be another hour. I got...distracted," Stiles says.

Talia raises an eyebrow at Stiles. She knows what ‘distracted’ means. She and Theo were once young and newly married, too...

"What’s that smell," Laura asks curiously.

"‘Cajun pig’. New thing I’m apparently trying," Stiles says with a frown. Stiles tosses the pan into the trash. It’s not salvageable.

"No. It’s not food. It’s something else... Something..." Laura sniffs the air again...

Her eyes fall on Stiles and go wide.

"What," he asks nervously.

"Stiles--"

"Stiles don’t worry about breakfast. I’m sure some of us wouldn’t mind going out for some food, seeing as how we’re no longer bound to the house by an unstable threat," Talia interrupts her daughter.

"Oh, shit. You don’t trust me in your kitchen now," Stiles whines.

"I trust you in here more than I do Laura and Cora, and they’ve done far more damage than burn a frying pan. It just might be good for everyone to go out and spend some time apart for the day. You know, there’s a gourmet brunch place just outside town that’s amazing! You and Derek should go."


"We’ll do a nice dinner tonight instead."

"Okay."

"Good," Talia smiles. Theo, Talia, and Laura turn to leave.

Talia gives her eldest a warning glare.

"Uh, no. You don’t smell. It must have been the bacon," Laura lies.

"Okay," Stiles says, a little weary. he may not be a werewolf, but he can detect a lie as good as one.

They three Hales walk out of the kitchen.

Derek barely manages a step in Stiles direction before-- "You stay right there, troublemaker," Stiles barks at him.

"What? Why?"

"Because I just looked like a horny, disrespectful ass in front of your mother and father and your wounded-wolf eyes are not going to get me in anymore humiliating situations."

"Stiles, I’m not going to let you heel me like a disobedient dog."

"I’m not trying to heel you. I’m just letting you know that all future Derek/Stiles sexy times will now take place in your bedroom with the door locked while here."

"Stiles--"

"Nope. You’ve abused your sex privileges while here and now I have to do something about it. So go take a long, cold shower while I put all this stuff away and then we can go to that brunch place your mother was talking about."

Derek opens his mouth to protest--

"Go before I take away shower sex, too!"

Derek rolls his eyes, and like a petulant child he sulks out of the kitchen grumbling under his breath.

They made it halfway down the road, about a half a mile from Hale House before they had to pull over. Derek put his hand on Stiles' thigh, which lead to a kiss, which lead to Stiles groping Derek through his jeans, which lead to Stiles unbuttoning said jeans and giving Derek road head. For all his werewolf senses and reflects, Derek couldn't concentrate on the road and was swerving all over the place. Stiles, not wanting his father at the scene of his accident to be told his son died giving his husband a blowjob on their way to breakfast, suggested they pull over. Derek didn't hesitate, and pulled to the side of the road to let Stiles finish sucking him off. Derek reciprocated after coming down Stiles' throat, and Stiles came so hard he unwillingly kicked Derek's bruised shoulder, making him howl in pain.

When they finally made it to brunch, Stiles was starving. He ordered Eggs Benedict, buttered toast, fruit salad, a western omelette, and bacon-wrapped asparagus. Derek would have been shocked had he not spent the last 5 years married to him and known that Stiles may be human, but can most certainly eat like a wolf. Stiles wanted to go to a movie afterward, but Derek reminded him they needed to talk to Scott, Erica, and Danny about Agent Haigh.
On the way home, Derek had tried to initiate another road head scenario, but Stiles was far too full of food to act as an interested party, and wanted nothing more than a nap before having to talk pack business with their betas.

He collapsed on Derek's bed and knocked out as soon as his head hit the pillow while Derek went for a short run, then played a game of chess with Jackson before waking up Stiles and pulling his betas into the library.

"Vampire dens," Stiles asks.

Scott and Erica nod.

"Spends at least one night a week there," Erica replies.

"Sometimes two or three. If he’s feigning bad," Scott adds.

"You sure he’s not just doing some undercover work there?"

"Pretty sure. He looks really blissed-out when he leaves...the next morning," Erica tells him.

"How bad is his kink?"

"I hacked into his bank account. Bad. He’s spending some serious money there," Danny answers.

"And no one from the FBI has noticed?"

"I’m assuming it’s because he was a pretty low-level employee until Chris and Kate were thrown off our case and he was promoted. And if he’s that into supe clubs, then he probably has found someone with a little power to help him fool a piss test," Danny answers.

"I want numbers."

"His savings account has been overdrawn since January. Total withdrawals from it equal about $17,000."

"Agents make about $80,000 a year, tops. For him to take out all that cash is serious. How long has he been taking money out of it?"

"Since last September. Two months after his birthday. Since then there’s been the same number of withdrawals from his savings once or twice a week," Danny tells him.

"Regularly..." Stiles thinks out loud.

Danny nods.

"Makes sense why he owes Edmund so much money," Scott says.

"He owes Edmund money?"

"We think so. We saw a couple of his guys take him into an alley. When he came out he looked like he pissed himself with fear."

"You got to have one serious habit to be desperate enough to owe Edmund money," Erica adds.
"No. A habit doesn’t cost you your entire life’s savings in 5 months," Stiles says. "It’s--"

"A girl," Derek interrupts. "It’s a vampire working at the den. He’s spending cash to see her. And on her. Could you get inside?"

Scott and Erica shake their heads. "Not without a ‘member key’," Erica tells him.

"We need to find out who this girl is and use her as a weapon against Agent Haigh."

Stiles nods, agreeing. "And the money and drugs."

"How," Scott asks.

"Can’t you guys and Jackson rough up some vamps to get info," Danny asks innocently, pointing to Scott and Erica.

"No. We have a truce with Edmund, remember? Pissing him off by handing out ass kickings will null that and create new problems," Stiles reminds him.


"Not me," Erica says with a wicked smile. "That was a good bloodbath. Best Valentine’s Day ever." Erica and Scott fist bump.

Derek’s already in bed; under the covers and with Tolstoy’s Anna Karenina in his hands. After talking with Scott, Erica, and Danny, Cee ran to Stiles eager for her next swimming lesson. Stiles had offered to teach her since her arrival with Jason. Neither Valerie or Jason professed to be great swimmers, and Stiles had exaggerated being something of a ‘merman’ and decided to give her lessons. Everyday at three-thirty on the dot, Cee was in her bathing suit and floaties, ready for Stiles’ teaching. Admittedly, Stiles was a great swim coach, and Cee a very good student who was fearless and a fast learner. Afterward, Cee and the rest of his nieces dragged Stiles into the rec room for a game of Candy Land and Twister. So Derek took the opportunity to hunker down in the library and read. Boyd apparently had the same idea, and joined him as they sat silently and read until dinner.

After they ate, Stiles was dragged into the family room by the pushy, young girls for a movie. Stiles had insisted they let him pick, because he could no longer stand to watch another straight-to-DVD Barbie movie. So Derek went to his room, took a shower, and then picked up his book where he left off.

Stiles comes in. "You have to explain to me how your nieces have never seen The Lion King. It’s the kid’s version of Hamlet!"

"Before their time, Stiles. It’s probably outdated to them."

"No, they loved it! That’s it. I’m going all-out Disney with them tomorrow. I’m talking The Little Mermaid, Frozen, Aladdin, The Frog Princess, Beauty and the Beast-- all of it. Then, after that, we’re moving on to Pixar movies. Having never seen Toy Story is a crime against humanity."
"I think 12 million Jews would be a little disheartened by your hyperbole just now."

"Was my exaggeration really that bad?"

"On a scale of 1 to 10, it was about a 2.5; enough to gain attention, but not gringe-worthy. You’re still in light-hearted territory."

Stiles rolls his eyes. Ten years ago he never thought he’d see the day his tight-lipped husband would ever be comfortable enough to banter with him as they do now. He kicks off his shoes and changes into his night clothes (his underwear and his Stanford University tee).

Derek watches blatantly.

Stiles started out a lanky, pale kid with no definition. But over the years he grew into his body and filled out more. He was still tall and pale, but years of chasing monsters and being a ruthless crime lord, gave him more muscle, well-toned to fit his form, with hairier limbs.

Derek eyed the faded claw marks along Stiles’ side. They were barely visible, they happened so long ago, but they still made Derek tremble with shame whenever he got a good look at them, knowing he put them there, all because he couldn’t control himself during a full moon. He hurt Stiles. His husband. His mate. His everything. And it killed him inside knowing he did that. The slashes were nowhere near fatal, or even serious enough to warrant a trip to the hospital, just superficial, like a bad scrape after a fall on the hard pavement, but Derek cried like a baby after discovering what he’d done to Stiles and begged Stiles’ forgiveness.

Stiles told him over and over and over again that he was fine and he didn’t need to worry and how unnecessary it was for Derek to be so upset, but as a wolf with a mate, as a True Alpha with a mate, Derek was supposed to protect Stiles; not damage him. He’s given a precious gift and he caused harm to it; the last thing he’s ever supposed to do. Derek had never felt like such a failure. Not since Laura and Thomas and his dad were targeted by Kate and the rest of the Argents.

"Stop."

Derek snaps back to reality. "What?"

"You know what." Stiles climbs in bed. "What are you reading?"

Derek shows him the front cover. Stiles scrunches his nose up at the novel.

"It’s a beautiful love story," Derek defends.

"Not as beautiful as Rebecca. Or Parade’s End. Or Atonement--"

"All British novels with a slow build."

"Fine. How about...? Their Eyes Were Watching God. Or Giovanni’s Room, or Blood & Chocolate."

"Blood & Chocolate, really," Derek says with a dubious grin.

"Allison gave it to me. I liked it."

"Enough for you to believe it trumps Anna Karenina apparently."
Stiles tucks in closer to Derek and puts his head in his lap. Derek continues reading, comforted by Stiles’ closeness.

"Know what’s weird," Stiles asks.

"Our lives."

"Ha Ha. I’ll be sure to tell the boys back at the office that one. No. When I was watching *The Lion King* with the girls, it reminded me of your dad."

"How so?"

"Mufasa. Just...this royal, king-like presence. I thought the same thing when I read them *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*..." Stiles cuts himself off, his mind adrift...

Derek can smell the cognizance roll off of him. He carefully closes his book. "Stiles..."

"Oh, my God..."

"Stiles..." Derek sits up straighter.

Stiles bolts up right! He’s facing Derek but his eyes are darting around in his head like he’s schizophrenic. He’s having a complete John Nash moment. "Derek..."

"Okay." Derek puts the book down on the nightstand, easy and cautious, like Stiles is a rabid dog baring his teeth. "Stiles, I need you to listen to me--"

Stiles is practically shaking. "Oh. My. God."

"Baby, please--"

"Oh! My! God!"

Derek wraps a hand around Stiles’ mouth!

Theo and Talia are in bed. Theo is reading Lao Tzu's *Tao Te Ching* while Talia knits quietly beside him.

Her spine stiffens at Theo going rigid. "What is it?"

A smile grows on Theo's face. "Stiles. He’s figured it out."

"Figured what out?"

His eyes flash the brilliant shade of violet again, answering her question.

Talia throws the covers back. "I should go and talk to him."

"No, my love. It’s fine."

"He has to understand--"
"Derek will explain it to him."

"Maybe he shouldn’t. Maybe he should tell Stiles to leave well enough alone. I’ll tell him."

He stills his wife with a gentle brush of his knuckles on her cheek. "It’s fine. Everything will be alright."

"I’m concerned, Theo."

"I can see that."

"Don’t tease."

"He’s a smart boy. He won’t say anything. We’ll let Derek handle it."

"How does he know? Did he see you shift," Talia asks.

"No. Came to it all on his own."

"That young man is far too clever sometimes. He must have been a handful when he was a child."

Theo chuckles. "You see pieces of yourself in him."

"...At times."

"So do I."

Talia's eyebrows knit together, notably like her son's, and her eyes narrow at her husband with a slight smirk on her lips. "You favor him."

"In pack there are no favorites," Theo says, turning back to his book, avoiding her stare.

"You do. You favor Stiles over Thomas and Jason."

"I do not. I merely just admire his intelligence greatly."

"Theodoric Leander Hale, I heard that blip in your heartbeat."

"There really is no privacy in a house infested with weres."

She rolls her eyes with a smirk and returns to her knitting.

"You don’t think it’s too early for that?" He nods to her pastel yellow, wool knitting.

"No. I started this early with Laura."

"What is it?"

"You’ll see."

Theo takes notice of the happy smile on his wife’s face while she knits, eying the wool yarn like it’s spun gold. "I love you."
She turns to him with a bright smile. "I love you, too."

After 41 years, it’s still the most honest thing he’s ever heard her say. Never a blip in her heartbeat. Not once. And he rewards her with a grateful kiss. Like always.

"Shhh! Okay, I need you to be quiet. Can you do that for me?"

Stiles shakes his head.

"Try."

Stiles shakes his head again.

"Fine. If you’ve just realized, what I think you’ve just realized, then I don’t need to tell you how important it is that you do not breathe a single word of it to anyone. The only people that know are me, my sisters, my mom, Deaton, and Peter. And Peter only knows because he’s a sneaky, conniving bastard who figured it out years ago. And the only reason he hasn’t said anything is because he’s terrified of my dad and couldn’t bare the thought of my mother never speaking to him again, or ripping out his spine through his chest if he did say something. A secret this huge, this important, can never, never, be known. Because if it is, then my dad’s life will be in danger."

Stiles simmers down a bit at the thought of his blabbing causing Theo any harm.

"And so could yours. Because no matter how much Talia Hale loves me, and loves you, she will kill you if you cause any harm to come to her mate. And I could never hate her for it, because you know what I’d do if anyone ever put you in danger."

Stiles eyes turn from excited to meaningful. He understands. Gets it. He nods.

Derek removes his hand from Stiles’ mouth slowly.

Stiles clenches his fists and takes a deep, calming breath.

"You okay?"

"Will you at least let me say it out loud?"

"Quietly."

"Your father, Theo Hale, is a motherfucking werelion! That, is the most badass thing I will ever know," Stiles says in an intense whisper, yanking Derek's T-shirt in his fists.

Derek can't help but smile. "Yes. It is."

Stiles read all about other wereis in Deaton’s bestiary, and none were more legendary than the werelion. They held the ultimate power and were treated like royalty within the supernatural world. Supes may all fight and kill one another, but werelions were like the Odins of Asgard; they were respected, valued, and obeyed. For the most part.

Some thousands of years ago, a witch had called upon a werelion to grant her permission to kill a human man that had murdered her cherished son. The werelion refused the witch’s request, citing her son’s murder as an accident, and the witch became vengeful for being denied. She cursed the
werelion and those like him. A curse so strong it took all her power and with it her life. She cursed the werelions that they should know pain through loneliness and heartbreak and that they shall be the very last of their kind, as the death of her son made her the last of hers.

All werelions that had offspring-- hearing of the witch’s curse-- encouraged their children of capable age to breed, ensuring their bloodline. But the witch’s curse was strong, and only a few of them could continue on the bloodline. The loophole being that those mated to another supernatural creature had a better chance, than those that were mated with humans, which many were.

And as humans began to overpopulate, and wrought the world with disease, war, and famine, supernatural creatures dwindled, and those hiding as human, living as such in fear, were swept into the ‘plagues of man’ and died just as they did. Including werelions, and those carrying the genes to create one.

It was rumored that the last werelion died after the Civil War had ended...on Good Friday...at Ford’s Theatre...with a bullet to the back of his skull...shot by an actor. That particular tidbit had always fascinated Stiles to no end.

"That’s why he never runs with you guys! Because he’ll shapeshift into a fucking lion! Have you ever seen him do it? Does he roar like one? Is Talia one, too? Are you part lion? I thought they were all extinct! How many other werelions are out there? Is he the only one? What about Abraham Lincoln? Why the hell didn’t you tell me?!!"

"Slow down."

Stiles takes short breaths, filled with so many, many questions.

"Yes, that’s why he doesn’t run with the rest of us, and because lions aren’t affected by the moon, so there’s no reason for him to. But he does shift and go to the cliffs sometimes on his own."

"Like Pride Rock?"

"You’re a dork, but yeah, sort of."

"What type of lion does he look like?"

"Like a black mane lion; he’s beautiful. And yes, I’ve heard him roar."

"What’s it sound like?"

"It’s...the most incredible sound you’ve ever heard." Derek, since he was a child, had always been in awe, in complete wonder and admiration of his father, and his supernatural state. While most boys grow out of that phase, and become rotten, sullen teenagers, Derek had always maintained the close relationship envied by other fathers, with Theo. He's 34 years old and still finds himself looking at his father as though he created Heaven and Earth. He only hoped his kids would one day be the same with him.

"Wow."

Derek can’t help but smile at Stiles’ child-like fascination with discovering his father is a werelion. He’s like a kid at a dinosaur exhibit.

"Is Talia one?"
"No, my mother is not a werelion. Just a werewolf. Like me and my sisters."

"How are you guys werewolves and not werelions?"

"Roll of the dice. Genetics. Just like Val and Jason’s girls are human even though Val is a wolf. It’s just about whose genes were stronger."

"Wouldn’t Theo’s be stronger?"

"I don’t know. I think it might’ve had something to do with him being the last of his pride."

"He’s... He’s got no one to carry on his were-genes?"

A sorrowful look takes over Derek’s face. "No."

Stiles takes Derek’s hand. "You really going to feel guilty about not being born a werelion like your dad? He loves you, lion or wolf."

"I know. Just... It breaks my heart."

"How many are left?"

"Ten."

"That’s it?"

"That’s a lot considering most don’t know they exist anymore."

"Why keep that there are werelions a secret?"

"Hunters. Killing one is like stealing the Hope Diamond, or the Mona Lisa."

"It’s not lost on me that both those treasured pieces are cursed."

"Things that are priceless usually are."

"But then they’re not priceless, because you’re paying for it one way or another."

The corner of Derek’s mouth turns up. More than banter and cuddling and strategy planning and romantic dinners at home, and caring for their pack, Derek loves this. He loves Stiles’ intellectual insight. When they bounce off each other’s knowledge and deep thought. When they talk about philosophy, poetry, art, literature, history, and politics thoughtfully, or in quick-witted jabs that sound like riddles to anyone else. This is the part of Stiles he loves the most: his intellect. It was the very thing that drew him closer and closer to Stiles when they met. He loved the fact that Stiles could quote Oscar Wilde while reading Nietzsche then go into a rant about the military industrial complex of the 21st century as he listens to an audio recording of Maya Angelou’s poetry.

The world, knowledge in general, fascinates Stiles, as it does Derek. They both understand that the planet is a vast and brilliant place, and they are just small specks within it, and soaking up all they can makes for a better life experience, whether through books, art, or travel.

Derek knows Stiles’ interest in culture, logic, and facts is mostly peaked by his hyperactive
disorder, but it makes him love Stiles all the more. Stiles could find disruptive and destructive means to curb his ADHD, but he doesn’t. He chooses to feed it with Plato, Lord Byron, Monet, the Polish-Teutonic War, and communist China.

It’s those moments Derek finds to actually be their foreplay, and not the dirty talk and touching that happens right before they make love.

"Where are they?"


"You’ve met them? When?" Stiles squeals his question like Derek just told him he met the president.

"When I became a True Alpha."

"And...?"

"They’re great. Just like my dad. I didn’t spend much time in their presence. My dad had to council with them and I wasn’t allowed inside the chambers."

"They 'council in a chambers'. So cloak and dagger and cool."

Derek chuckles.

"Wait. By any chance, when I was in London, did you ask a certain werelion to look out for me?"

"I might’ve asked my dad to ask for me..."

"You overprotective ass."

"Shut up. You were in a major European city by yourself and you didn't know a single soul there. I'll take being overprotective over being without you any day." Derek kisses him.

Stiles can't argue with that, so he kisses Derek. Derek seizes the opportunity to clamp his mouth on Stiles' neck.

"Oh, my, God, no. Wait. You're distracting me."

"Sorry," Derek says, reluctantly pulling off Stiles' pulse point. "What were we talking about?"

"Where does Yasmine live," Stiles says, picking up where his train of thought got left at the station.

"New York City."

"In the open like that? In a big city?"

"She’s been doing it for over 110 years. I think she’s fine."

Wait. What? 110 years?! Stiles eyes blow wide at his husband. "How old is your dad, really?"
"...One hundred and three."

"Jesus, Derek! 103 years old and he looks like George Clooney with a beard?! I can’t believe you
didn’t tell me any of this."

"I wanted to. But I couldn’t. My dad would have been hurt if someone found out. You do
understand that, don’t you?"

"I wouldn’t have said anything!"

"You’re a far better secret-keeper now, but 5, 6 years ago? You really don’t think you wouldn’ve
told Scott? Lydia?"

Stiles mouth gapes open. He wants to rebut Derek’s accusation...but he’s got nothing. "Well, it
would have been the best kept secret for at least 6 months."

"Lydia would have gotten it out of you in 3 days."

"...Maybe."

"Don’t be mad. Please."

"I would never knowingly do anything to hurt Theo. I love him. He’s your father. He’s half the
reason you exist and I have you."

Derek tries hard not to blush. It’s the best compliment he’s ever gotten. "I feel the same way about
John."

Stiles cheeks turn red, chest full of pride. He loves that his husband and father are so close.

Derek notices Stiles’ expression change, moving so quickly from beaming happiness to pensive.
"What?"

"Derek. Is... Is Theo being a werelion what Kate tried to get out of you?"

"...Yes. I didn’t tell her. That I could never do."

Stiles pecks Derek’s lips. "Then thank you for telling me instead."

"I didn’t. Your genius brain figured it out. Should have known."

"Does Deucalion know?"

Derek looks a little confused. He’d have thought out of everything, Stiles would have figured that
one out... "Stiles. There is no Deucalion."

All the air has been sucked out of the room...

"What? What do you mean ‘There’s no Deucalion’? Who have we been working for this whole
time? Who runs all of the west coast, and Alaska and Hawaii?"

"My dad. Until he handed it over to me. To us. Deucalion is just a cover to keep my dad’s real
identity a secret."
"Oh, my God. You’ve been running the entire west coast this whole time, and didn't tell me?"

"And part of Idaho."

"You run Idaho?"

"Part of it. Just Boise. There’s two Mormon packs that run the north and south ends."

"Wait a minute. So Scott blew up a city hall in your own territory? We should kill him."

Derek laughs.

"So...why exactly couldn’t we go to LA, or San Diego to hide out again?"

"It’s unprotected. There's no Alpha, or Beta that I trust, running that area. My dad gave all of SoCal to my mom's younger sisters, my aunt Salina and aunt Ella, when he married her. You know my aunt Salina is human, and refuses to be turned, but my dad thought she could protect the territory better if she accepted 'the bite' and were a wolf. Especially after she almost lost it to that pack from Tijuana and my dad had to go down there and fix everything. She still refused to be turned, so my dad took San Diego from her and gave my aunt Ella all of SoCal. But aunt Ella met some wolf in Italy on vacation when I was barely a toddler and married him and brought him to California with her. And the whole thing went to shit: riots, gang wars, police abuse, human bystanders getting hurt, or killed. When my dad found out she was pretty much letting her husband run the whole thing while she fed her addiction, he told her to either get clean and divorce Carlo, or lose her territory. She chose Carlo, so my dad had no choice but to banish her."

"Where is she?"

"I don’t know. She and my mom don’t talk. Laura said she’s somewhere in Italy."

"So no one’s been running SoCal?! No one’s down there?!

"Only we know that. As far as anyone else is concerned, Deucalion is living in a mansion in Malibu, keeping a watchful eye. Me, dad, and Laura fly out there once a month, and if we hear things are getting hairy somewhere. Same with Idaho."

"Does that mean Yasmine runs the whole east coast?"

"And the south. The Midwest is left to it’s own devices. There’s not many people, or packs there, and it’s always quiet, so we and Yasmine leave it unguarded and step in if we hear rumbles about anything. But there is a Native American pack that's pretty big in Oklahoma that we've sort of let become the unofficial leader of that whole region."

"I can’t believe you control that much territory."

"You keep saying 'you'. It’s 'we.' What do you think you’ve been doing with me this whole time?"

"Apparently, un-appreciating the word ‘empire’. Derek, someone has to run SoCal. It’s too populated not to be guarded."

"I know. I’m giving it to Cora. If she wants it."
"I don’t think she will."

"Maybe. If she doesn’t then I’ll hand it over to Laura."

"Then who will have Beacon Hills?"

Derek just smiles. A fond, affectionate smile that hides a secret behind his lips. "It’s late. We’ll talk about it later."

"You’re avoiding."

"I’m tired," Derek says coyly.

Stiles raises an incredulous eyebrow at him. A slight smirk on his face. Stiles pulls Derek close for a kiss. "Fine. I’ll let it go. For the night. But tomorrow you’re going to tell me if whether or not Abraham Lincoln was really a werelion."

Derek kisses him back. "Okay."

They settle into the bed. Derek turns out the light. The room goes dark.

After a good minute Stiles remembers. He can't believe it wasn't his first question. "What color does his eyes turn?"

"Purple."

"Cool...but red eyes are a lot sexier."

Derek pulls Stiles a little closer to him.

Chapter End Notes

You guys are so sweet, and so amazing! Thanks for all the kudos and extra love! I more than appreciate it!

More to come... :)
Chapter Summary

Laura and Valerie spend some quality time together, Jackson makes a love confession, and Stiles turns down curly fries (!!!).

Chapter Notes

Some of guys are way ahead of me, figuring things out! I must either be terrible at building suspense, or you guys are just super-smart fic readers! I think it’s the latter :)

Laura and Valerie walk along the upper level of Beacon Hills Mall Plaza as their girls run ahead of them to the Barbie store.

"Oh, my God," Valerie gasps. She starts to tear up.

"Don’t get sappy, Val."

"How could I not be? I’m so happy for them. Admit it, you are, too."

"Of course I am. I ran to the bathroom right after I figured it out and cried happy-tears on Thomas’ shoulder for 10 minutes, but I didn’t break down in a mall."

Valerie playfully swats Laura’s arm. "That’s why mom wanted us to stay," Valerie figures out.

"Yup. She wants pack to be close to help him emotionally when he finds out."

"And I snapped at her. I’m such a jerk." Valerie’s mind wonders thinking about Laura’s gossip. "Wow. Derek’s going to flip."

"I know. I can't wait," Laura grins devilishly.

"I cried when I found out you were. Every time."

"Same here. With you."

Valerie takes her sister’s hand, affectionately. "We used to hold hands all the time. When did we stop?"

"Couple years ago, I think."

"It’s a habit I’d like to pick up again."
"Me, too." Laura squeezes Valerie’s hand.

They continue holding hands as they make their way to the Barbie store.

They stand in front of the encompassing, hot pink shop with all its bright, overwhelming light, sugar-y pop music, and screaming prepubescent girls going ape-shit inside over plastic dolls and cheap accessories made in China.

"You ready for this," Valerie asks.

"How did we end up agreeing to this," Laura says. "Stiles is right. I really am a marshmallow when it comes to my girls," she whines.

"And you’ve managed to drag me along with you."

"Really," Laura says, giving her younger sister a dubious look.

"Yes, really! I’m the stern one. Jason’s the one wrapped around their finger. You’re your girls’ ‘Jason’.

"Seems like it, so I must deserve this."

"You are the marshmallow. Accept it, then embrace it."

"Don’t let go of my hand. This place looks like hell."

"I got you," Valerie tells her with a smirk.

And like the brave mothers they are, they step into their parental doom.

"Let’s get 6 more pounds of venison," Isaac tells the butcher."Four more pounds of lamb, couple of more steaks--"

"Bacon," Jackson adds.

"Two pounds of bacon, 20 pounds of ground beef, 15 chicken breasts, and, uh, one pound of rabbit," Isaac finishes.

"Werewolves," the butcher asks curiously.

Isaac and Jackson nod.

"Explains it. You guys are going to put both my kids through college." The butcher moves to take care of their order.

"Where else do we have to go," Jackson asks.

"Farmer’s market and the bakery," Isaac answers.

"How did we get stuck with the grocery shopping?"
"It was our turn."

Isaac’s cellphone chimes. He takes it out of his pocket. Text.

Jackson catches him giggling while reading it and watches him send a text back.

"Who you talking to?"

"Cora."

"You two been real chummy lately."

"Yeah. I think she’s trying to become closer to everyone, feeling guilty because she doesn’t really know everyone as well as she feels she should."

"She hasn’t tried getting to know me," Jackson scoffs.

"She will. Give her time."

"She should’ve lived at the house when we all did."

"She wanted her own space," Isaac shrugs. "She grew up in a house full of werewolves. I can understand being an adult and wanting time away from something you’ve always been surrounded by."

"Well, Derek should have made her live there, too. He made all of us move in."

"He already has a bond with Cora. He needed to bond closer to the rest of us then. Besides, just because we all shared a den doesn’t mean we’re close, or know each other as well as we think."

"Yes, it does," Jackson responds, a little defensive.

Isaac shoots off another text before tucking his phone back into his pocket. "If you say so."

"You don’t think we’re a close pack?"

"Of course I do. I think we’re a strong pack because we’re all so close. Too close in fact."

"Jesus," Jackson grumbles.

"What?"

"You going to put on a sappy face and mentally mourn Scott now? ...Again?"

"No, Jackson, I’m not."

"Good. I’m sick of all your unrequited Scott-love."

"I’m over Scott. And have been for a while."

"Really," Jackson asks, raising a skeptical eyebrow.

"Yes, really."
Jackson listens to Isaac’s heartbeat. He’s telling the truth.

"If I wasn’t, I would have left the pack by now."

"You would have let your little puppy-love affair with Scott turn you into an Omega?"

"First, what Scott and I had was not puppy-love, or an affair. It was meaningful. It’s just that it was more meaningful to me than it was to him. Second, I would never willingly become an Omega; not for Scott or anyone. I was talking about switching houses. I’d go to Sacramento to be in Valerie’s crew, in her territory. Her girls are so cute."

"So you’d pull a Kira instead of just sticking it out and finding someone else?"

"There was nothing wrong with Kira leaving over Scott. She couldn’t be a good beta, good pack-sister, after Scott treating her like that. The tension and all were too much for her. For everyone. It’s good she left. She’s happy with Peter."

"I’ll say."

"It’s not like that with them. Or at least I don’t think..."

Isaac turns to the window and people-watches for a moment.

Jackson cracks his knuckles, eyes on Isaac. He wants to ask, but is too afraid of the answer.

"You smell nervous," Isaac says suddenly.

"I’m not."

"You crack your knuckles when you are; trying to fill the silence with that horrible noise."

Jackson puts his hands in his pockets. Isaac continues people-watching.

"I can’t believe Gio’s Pizza is still standing. That place is notorious for food pois--"

"If you’re over Scott then why’d you end things between us," Jackson blurts out.

Isaac turns his attention to Jackson. "There was no 'us'. We had sex during the full moon, and after fights, and when you couldn’t pull some random were-slut in a miniskirt you met that night."

"If... If you wanted more, why didn’t you tell me?"

"Because I didn’t want more, Jackson. We’re not good together. You don’t care about me."

"That’s not true!"

"I mean, I know you care about me, as a close friend. A fellow beta and pack-brother, but... You don’t love me. Not romantically. Not like a mate."

Jackson opens his mouth to respond--

"Order’s ready guys," the butcher calls. Isaac breaks from the window to retrieve it. He pays, then hands Jackson two bags.
They exit the butcher shop and approach Lydia’s rental car. Jackson unlocks it with the remote and helps Isaac put the bags in the backseat.

Isaac closes the door-- Jackson pushes him against it and plants an endearing kiss on his lips!

Isaac...lets himself become wrapped in the swoon-worthy kiss.

Two teenage girls walk by and wolf-whistle at them. They break apart, blushing beet red all over their faces, with pink-tipped ears.

They stand awkwardly in front of one another for a minute. Isaac taken by surprise and not knowing what to say, and Jackson a little shocked at his own actions.

He rarely kissed anyone in public. Lydia used to complain all the time about his lack of PDA, so he thought he'd appease her by always making sure he held her hand. But kissing... Kissing was another matter. Jackson had always valued kissing over sex. It was more intimate, and private. He felt a good kiss was like a secret you didn't want to share with anyone else. He always saved it for when he was alone with someone. Especially Isaac. Even when they made love outside, during the full moon, Jackson always wanted to make sure they were secluded somewhere no one could see them. Then he'd kiss him. He'd kiss him slow, and soft, worshiping his mouth with his own. For as long as Isaac would let him. And Isaac would always let him, for minutes on end, that felt like long, passionate days to him. Sometimes that's all they did, and it was enough to make Jackson whimper and soak his boxers with his excitement.

"I'm not your mate. I know that...but I do love you. And I should have said so sooner."

Isaac’s at a lose for words. A love confession is the very last thing on the planet he’d expect from Jackson Whittemore.

Without another word, Jackson rounds the car and climbs into the driver’s seat.

Isaac snaps back to reality. Of course Jackson would kiss him like they were in a movie, utter 19 soul-crushing words about his feelings, then want to drive off like nothing happened.

Jackson starts the car.

Isaac climbs into the front seat.

Stiles is naked from the waist down. He’s spread out in the backseat, one foot on the console and the other pressed against the rear window while Derek pounds into him.

Derek’s jeans and underwear are bunched at his ankles. For such a small space, he seems to be flexible enough to satisfy his mate.

"Oh, fuck, Derek, I’m going to come!"

Derek lifts Stiles’ shirt, exposing his belly. Stiles shoots thick, white cum all over his own bare stomach. Derek grips the grab-handle above Stiles and comes with Stiles’ name on his lips.

They remain in their awkward position, trying to recover their breath...

Stiles swallows hard. "Not that I’m complaining, but what has gotten into you the last couple
days?"

"I don’t know. I just wanted you so bad."

"We definitely have to clean this rental car before you return it."

Derek chuckles. He leans over into the front seat.

"What are you doing?"

Derek opens the glove compartment and rifles through it. He hands Stiles napkins from a fast food restaurant. "Oh, thank, God! I thought I was going to have to walk through the store with dried cum all over me."

"As opposed to asking me to clean it off you myself...with my tongue."

"Don’t say things like that, or we’ll never get out of this car."

Derek raises an eyebrow.

"We have to get out of the car, Derek! We’ve been in it for an hour and a half and had sex twice!"

They had pulled into the parking lot when Stiles reached into his pocket and pulled out his eyeglasses to put on. Derek never thought he had a thing for glasses until Stiles had bought a pair last summer when he kept forgetting to renew his prescription for his contacts.

Stiles got them as an emergency for when his scattered brain had too much going on, and contact prescriptions didn't even make the list. He was better at remembering to bring his glasses than he was with his contacts, and their impromptu hiding at Hale House was a prime example.

Derek immediately thought they were incredibly sexy on Stiles, and would sometimes encourage him to wear them more often. But today, in the car, when he slipped them on his face-- and coupled with the sweet smell pouring off his skin-- Derek had lost it. He grabbed Stiles’ face and kissed him hard and greedy. Which lead to Derek going down on him, followed by their clumsy climb into the backseat where Derek took Stiles' pants off and fucked him. Twice.

Stiles nudges Derek with his foot.

Derek pouts and grabs an empty to-go cup out of the cup holder. He slips the condom off his cock- noting how often they have sex in cars; keeping condoms in the glove box-- and dumps it into the cup, then pulls up his pants while Stiles cleans himself with the napkins.

Derek climbs out the backseat, dressed, and with the styrofoam cup.

After a minute, Stiles stumbles out, trying to get his right shoe on.

Derek snorts.

"What?"

"All the grace of a newborn giraffe."

"Shut up."
Derek locks the car and they approach the store.

He tosses the cup into a trash bin just out front of the store.

"What are we looking for again?"

Stiles smacks Derek’s arm. "A gift for Scott’s birthday! And I need a new red hoodie. Some 'wild animal' tore my old one to shreds."

"We're getting Scott a birthday gift at Target," Derek asks, ignoring Stiles latter comment. "Last year, for Christmas, I got Scott a $15,000 Rolex-- which he never wears, by the way-- but this year we’re at Target, getting him something?"

"I told you to get Jackson the watch and Scott the concert tickets, but you didn’t listen."

Derek’s eyes narrow at Stiles, scrutinizing. "They swapped gifts didn’t they?"

"What ever do you mean," Stiles feigns.

Derek raises an incredulous eyebrow.

"Jackson wears the watch on dates to impress girls and Scott said it was the best Coachella he’s ever been to," Stiles confesses.

Derek rolls his eyes. "Are we at least here for something specific?"

"Yes."

"Good."

They continue down the aisle.

Derek absently takes Stiles’ hand into his. A warm gush flows through Stiles and his cheeks turn pink. They’ve been together for 7 years and married for six of them, and it still makes him feel like melted butter when Derek is affectionate in public.

He had never expected Derek to be so open with his feelings for him. Derek didn’t seem like the romantic, PDA type, but when they finally stopped circling each other and decided to make something real happen between them, Stiles was floored with just how mawkish and doting Derek was.

Stiles had always assumed he’d be the one to go all-out for birthdays, and Valentine’s Day, and anniversaries, but Derek always beat him to the punch with either something over-the-top romantic, or small and intimate, just for the two of them. He thought he was the one that was going to play Florence Nightingale to Derek’s wounded soldier, but it was Derek who was at his beck-and-call whenever he was sick, or got hurt during a fight, or practicing magic.

Derek was always first to get Stiles a gift, just because he saw it and it made him think of Stiles, or get him flowers just because, and text him when they were apart, just to say ‘I love you’. And Stiles needed that. He was always the one in “relationships” to fall first and love the hardest. First, with Lydia, then Malia, Heather, and then ‘He-Whose-Name-Shall-Never-Be-Spoken’. Derek was different. He saw Stiles and appreciated him for what he was: his, and showed Stiles every day just how grateful he was for him. Blowjobs and sex in a rental car at Target was no exception. Neither
was holding hands in a department store.

"Oh! Over here."

"Kitchen wares? Stiles, you like to cook, not Scott. I don’t think he even knows what a frying pan looks like."

"Scott can cook. He’s just lazy. So, I thought about getting him something simple to use and cool at the same time." Stiles grabs two items off the shelf.

"What are those?"

"This is a pizza cone maker. And this, is a hot dog toaster."

"My husband and his best friend are twelve."

"You can not tell me this pizza cone maker is not cool, Derek! It’s pizza, in the shape of a cone. And this gift-to-all-mankind invention cooks your hotdog and bun at the same time. How do you not see the divine inspiration it took to make such wonderful cooking apparatuses? Bonus-- if Scottie doesn’t like them, we’re totally keeping them."

"Notice the awestruck joy on my face."

"You’re the worst. And just for that, we’re getting a game console, too."

Derek and Stiles make out burningly slow and soft.

Someone clearing their throat, causes them to abruptly break apart-- a carhop waitress, in a 50’s diner getup and on roller skates, stands by Derek’s window. "You ready, sweeties?"

"Yes. Sorry about that. Can I get two double-bacon cheeseburgers-- no tomato, or mayo, American cheese, extra mustard, on both-- large fries, onion rings, and large Pepsi. And he wants a double cheeseburger with everything, two orders of curly fries, and a large Mountain Dew."

"Okay. Is that all?"

"Y--"


"You don’t? You always got that when we came here."

Stiles leans over Derek obnoxiously to talk to the carhop waitress. "I want two burger patties, no bun, no extras-- nothing. And I want it rare, like really, really fucking rare. Bloody. I want the goddamn cow it came from to still being mooing in the wrapper. And I want a side of pickles big enough to stave off an elephant’s hunger, and the biggest fucking strawberry milkshake you can make. If you have to put it in a bucket that’s cool." Stiles clumsily slides back into his seat.

The carhop waitress looks at Derek: Is he serious? Derek nods. "Okay. You got it, honey."

She skates off.
"That’s what you wanted?"

Stiles nods.

"You didn’t get curly fries."

Stiles grimaces at the mention of curly fries.

If Derek’s eyes were any wider they’d fall out of his head. "I’ve seen you trip an old lady at Arby’s when they ran out and said they only had enough left for one more order. It was a side item choice at our wedding reception. I gave you the Heimlich maneuver on our second date because you choked on them, having stuffed a whole box in that black hole you call a mouth. You don’t want curly fries?"

"God, no!"

All Derek can do is stare in stunned silence.

"What? Taste buds change. Maybe I’m sick of them."

The carhop waitress reappears at Derek’s window. "Here’s your drinks, sweeties."

Derek passes Stiles a 42oz cup.

"Is that big enough for you, honey," she asks.

"I guess," Stiles pouts, disappointed.

"He’s fine. Thank you."

"Alright. Food’s coming up soon." She skates off again.

"Really," Derek says, turning to Stiles.

"Does no one make 60oz cups?!"

"No, thank, God."

"Well, someone should."

Derek shakes his head at his ridiculous husband.

Stiles’ cellphone chimes. He takes his phone from his pocket checking his message. "Well."

"What?"

"Jackson finally confessed to Isaac that he’s in love with him," Stiles says nonchalantly.

Derek chokes on his soda, spitting Pepsi all down the front of his shirt.
"Why the hell would he say that?! Why say it now," Isaac shouts as he paces along the lit grass on Beacon Hills High's lacrosse field.

"From what you said happened, it sounds like he found the courage to finally tell you how he feels, finally knowing you aren’t hung up on Scott anymore," Stiles offers.

Isaac text Stiles that he was at the lacrosse field, then sent Cora and Malia an SOS telling them where he was at. Derek dropped Stiles off after he ate his ridiculous "meal" and Cora shot him a text saying she was headed there, too, and that she'd bring them all back home.

"I thought you said all the fights you guys have been having were about you not wanting to sleep with him anymore," Malia says, confused.

"They were. I thought..."

"They were, but that was only apart of it, apparently. The 'surface reason'. The real reason beneath it all: he’s in love with Isaac and felt inadequate because he thought Isaac could never love him back because he assumed our curly-haired friend here was still in love with Scott. Now that Jackson knows he isn't, it’s like Stiles said, he probably feels free to tell you how he feels now," Cora tells the coyote.

"Sleeping with you after a full moon was probably as close to you as he thought he’d ever get, and you took that from him. So he was pissed, like only Jackson could be," Stiles adds. "Isaac," Stiles says with caution in his tone. "How do you feel about Jackson? Do you love him," Stiles asks earnestly.

"No."

"Are you sure?"

Isaac nods his head. "He doesn’t feel like mine."
"Did Scott?"

"No. But I at least wanted him to. With Jackson... No. I’m not in love with him. I care about him. I think he’s fantastic, but for someone else. I don’t want him like I wanted Scott. Jackson was just sex. He was tension release. I never wanted more with him."

"Then you need to tell him that. And you need to tell him that you still care about him as a friend, as a pack-brother. Let him know you’ll always be there for him and you mean that with everything in you," Stiles tells him.

"I do. I don’t want to loose him. I just don’t love him."

"Don’t try and force yourself to. Don’t beat yourself up over you not feeling the same way. It’ll only hurt him more," Malia says.

Stiles gets the distinct impression she isn’t just referring to Jackson in her advice. "Right," he agrees.

"Be honest and direct, but gentle when you tell him so," Cora advises.

"And do it right away. Don’t drag it out. You’ll give him the wrong impression." Malia glances at Stiles.

_Yup. She’s definitely not just talking about Jackson._

"Okay. Okay. I have to tell him. We can’t leave what he said just hanging in the air like this."

"Good, pup," Stiles says.

Cora nods encouragingly.

Isaac sits on the grass with them. "Thanks, guys."

"Of course, puppy." Stiles squeezes Isaac’s shoulder. Stiles looks around. "Is it just me or is this place smaller than I remember?"

"Yeah," Isaac agrees.

"It’s because we were kids the last time we were here. High school seems massive, the end-all-be-all, when you’re a teenager," Cora states plainly.

"I can’t even recall all the memories I have of this place," Stiles says innocently.

"Well, that’s a shame," Malia responds with a tightness in her voice.

"I didn’t mean you, Malia. I remember everything about us. And I don’t regret a single second of any of it," he says sincerely.

She manages a small smile as Stiles sweetly moves her hair from her shoulder.

"I certainly remember everything from high school and wish I didn’t," Isaac groans.

"Hey. What did I tell you about that? Stop," Stiles admonishes.
"I liked high school," Cora announces proudly.

"Of course you did, Queen Bee," Stiles says.

"I wasn’t that bad," Cora replies.

"Lydia was afraid of you. Do you know how much evil power you have wield to cower, Lydia Ashley Martin? You were a year ahead of us and terrifying. You were valedictorian, president of the student body, head cheerleader, homecoming queen, and a fucking Hale for God’s sake. I’m surprised rose petals weren’t thrown at your feet as you walked down the hall," Stiles says.

"Would have been prom queen, too, but Janette Libby and her crew of jackals stuffed the ballot box," Cora says bitterly.

"Now, Janette Libby is a good memory," Isaac smiles. "Lost it to her my sophomore year after the winter formal."

"You and every other guy on the lacrosse team," Cora scoffs.

"Don’t care. Still the best head I ever had. And that includes both Scott and Jackson."

"I’ve heard you recite Shakespearean sonnets about Scott’s blowjobs and go on pornographic tangents about Jackson’s ability to deep throat you. If Janette Libby gave head that good then I can only assume it’s because she had no teeth," Stiles snaps at his baby-wolf.

Cora snorts.

"I’m telling you, I passed out when she did it."

"I’m just going to chalk up your Janette Libby blowjob exaggerations to you being a 16 year old virgin when she did it," Cora says rolling her eyes.

"I think I’ll coattail on Cora’s assertion there," Stiles smirks.

Cora winks at Isaac.

"I thought the three of us were supposed to be a coalition, Cora."


Isaac, Cora, and Malia fall silent.

"Of what? You guys can tell me."

They each advert their eyes, looking elsewhere, hoping vampires attack so Stiles can be at the very least momentarily distracted from the current topic of conversation.

"You guys, come on. There’s nothing embarrassing you can’t share with me. You know that. Isaac. Cora."

Isaac and Cora share a glance.
"I’m the king of ridiculousness and humiliating scenarios. It’s a perfected art at this point. Tell me. You might as well because all three of you know how nosy I am and I’ll either figure it out or get one of you to crack and spill the beans."

At that, Cora and Malia glare at Isaac as though he’s already told Stiles.

"What? I can keep a secret from Stiles!" Even Isaac knows he lying to himself.

"Oh, come on, Goldilocks. All I need is 5 minutes alone with you and I’ll know what’s going on," Stiles says.

"Ugh. He’s right. Just tell him," Cora sighs.

"We... We’re..." Isaac tries.

"We’re tired of being alone, or with the wrong people," Malia blurts out.

"We kind of formed this sort of... Lonely Hearts Club thing. Think we should invite Danny," Cora asks abruptly.

"I was thinking that the other day. Why not," Isaac shrugs.

The three of them shrug in agreement, wanting Danny to turn their little triangle into a square.

"I get that. I do. But you three aren’t the only ones without someone special in your lives. I know it looks like you’re surrounded by couples all the time, but everyone’s looking for the same things you are, too."

"No. Everyone’s looking to hook up and share a warm bed for the night with someone else. We want to share a life with someone," Malia says.

"Like you and Derek," Issac says.

"Or Uncle Theo and Aunt Talia," Malia says.

"And Laura and Thomas, and Val and Jason," Cora adds.

"...Scott and Allison," Isaac says.

"You want mates," Stiles comprehends.

They nod.

"You guys do know how mates work, right? You can’t force it. It’s serendipitous. You find each other by chance. By magic. It has to happen on it’s own."

"We know. But in the meantime, we can at least stop relying on pseudo-quasi-relationships based solely on sex," Issac replies.

"Or drunken hookups," Cora adds.

"Or waiting for someone you love to love you back." Malia’s pitiful stare burns through Stiles.
He knows she’s never gotten over losing him, especially since it was to her own cousin. To Derek. He had never meant to hurt her. He did love Malia at the time, and they both thought of each other as mates. But it wasn’t until he met Derek that he knew what he and Malia had was merely ‘young love’ and nothing more. Derek was something beyond solid, something beyond permanent. He felt him drawn on his skin, carved on his bones, and breathed in his lungs. Derek hung the moon and thoughts of him kept him up all night in a panic. He felt sick with need after the first time they met. The need to hear his voice, to see those mint green eyes stare back at him, to have those, rough, hard hands leave purple bruises then soft caresses on his skin. He wanted to kneel before Derek and bare his neck the instant they saw each other.

And alone, in bed, in the dark, he admitted it quietly to himself with his hand inside his boxers, wrapped around his swollen cock as his release flowed down his hand and coated his underwear.

He had never felt that way about Malia. And knew after meeting Derek, that he never could, but he stayed with her. Too scared to let go. Afraid of this new, all-consuming wave that had crashed over him suddenly out of nowhere, disguised as tall, black-haired muscle with eyes like green flourite and dark, expressive eyebrows.

That is, until another pack tried to take over Derek’s territory and Stiles’ feelings for Derek were exposed, right in front of Malia...

"So, we’re sort of helping each other out, by being there for each other. Making sure we don’t fall into the same old traps. We’ll wait patiently for mates, but we don’t need to end up in the same romantic dead ends like before," Isaac tells him.

Stiles nods understandingly. "I like that. I like that you’re supporting each other. And I like that the three of you are determined to find someone worthy of you. I like that you know you’re worth more than what other people made you think you were." His eyes meet Malia’s. "No matter who they were."

"We deserve better. And we know that now," Isaac says.

A happy smile forms on Stiles’ face. His pups finally know what he’s known all along. "Good."

Peter sits on his bed watching True Detective.

A soft knock on the door.

"Yes."

Derek opens the door. "Can I come in?"

"Of course, dear nephew."

Derek steps into the room. He closes the door.

"To what do I owe the pleasure?"

"I want to talk about Braeden."

"The one that got away?"
"Hardly."

Peter turns off the TV. "What about her?"

"Why didn’t you tell me she was in your territory?"

"Didn’t find it relevant."

"Really? My ex-girlfriend is suddenly pack-adjacent in your territory and you didn’t find it necessary to tell me?"

"Should I have? You still carrying a torch for the cutthroat mercenary?"

"Who are you trying to piss off? Me or Stiles?"

Peter smirks.

"Stiles," Derek figures out.

"I’m not trying to piss him off. Just like worming my way into his skin a little."

"Why?"

"Figure it out. Can you do that without Stiles present?"

Derek steps closer to Peter, still resting on his king-size bed. "You didn’t start being such a dick to me until Stiles and I started dating."

"It was actually a little before that. When I started smelling him on you."

"You mean to tell me this is all about Malia?"

"Some of it. She is my daughter after all."

"I didn’t steal Stiles from Malia."

"But you didn’t actually push him away, now did you?"

"As a matter-of-fact, I did, Peter. Which is how I ended up with Jennifer."

"Could have sworn that had something to do with a love spell."

"That, too."

"So you didn’t fuck the little, whiskey-eyed boy when he was dating my daughter?"

"No."

"But you did do something with him..." Peter says, raising an eyebrow at the Alpha.

"We kissed. Once. And agreed to never let it happen again. At least not with him being with Malia."
"But it was enough to break her sweet, coyote heart."

"He didn’t love her anymore, Peter. He couldn’t. You know this. Which is why it’s kind of gross that you’re using Malia as an excuse for treating me like an asshole."

"You implying I don’t care about my child’s broken heart? That has yet to mend, by the way."

"You’re implying. I inferred."

Peter’s eyes turn beta gold.

Derek doesn’t want to argue with Peter. Let alone a physical fight. He’s his uncle. The same one that used to take him for rides on his motorcycle when he was young, and snuck him candy when Talia wasn’t looking, and held him close while he cried over Paige’s lifeless body. Those two men seemed so different now, but yet they were the same person. The fun, loving uncle Peter used to be was still somewhere inside this one, the conniving instigator flashing his yellow eyes at him. "I know you care about Malia and the protection her heart deserves. I know you love her. Maybe not more than yourself, but you do love her. Just as much as you love my mother."

Peter’s eyes fade into their normal color.

"So maybe being a jackass to me does have something to do with Malia, but like I said, and I’ll say over and over again, I didn’t pursue Stiles. At least not out of spite. I was drawn to him, and you know that that can barely be helped with our kind. And I’m sorry. I’m sorry Malia got hurt in the process. She’s my cousin and my beta and I love her. I don’t ever want to hurt her."

"You’re a True Alpha. I expected you to be stronger than Stiles."

"A kiss between us was about as strong as I could muster, Peter."

Peter snorts. "...I guess when it comes to Stiles a kiss would be just enough to put me on edge, too."

"How can you not find it disturbing that you’re attracted to a man that’s slept with both your daughter and your nephew?"

"Well, first, I try to block those parts of him out of my head, Derek."

Derek lets a slight smirk appear on his lips at Peter’s irritable tone.

"I find your husband interesting enough to lust after. I’m not in love with him. There are actual times when his geek-star doth shine too bright for my taste I’m afraid. But he is yummy, nonetheless."

"Then why this bullshit with Braeden? You know he’s insecure about her."

"And should he be?"

"We both know there’s no cause for him to be."

"Then there isn’t a thing to worry about."
"Sometimes I don’t think you’re a wolf, but a chaos daemon.” Peter grins, taking Derek’s statement as a compliment. Derek rolls his eyes.

"Braeden is a hired gun. She’s never anywhere longer than a job requires her to be. Settling down isn’t her style, or allowed of her. You offered her something to stay. What was it? It wasn’t money. She makes enough as a mercenary. It’s not adventure, because she gets plenty of that. What do you have that she could--"

"Stability. Stability, Derek."

Peter’s heartbeat is even. He’s telling the truth. Derek raises an eyebrow at his uncle; confused and curious.

"It may not seem like 'settling down is her style' to you, but it’s what she wants now. And has for a while. Ever since she met a particular werewolf with an affinity for clever, human boys. But it seems said wolf didn’t want to settle down with the badass druid girl with the wolf claw scars. I tried to explain it to her: mates. That it wasn’t her. That it wasn’t Malia. That once a mate is found, there is no other. She seemed to understand, but appear a little wounded still."

"Why you? Why’d she come to you?"

"Where else was she supposed to go? Val? Val wouldn’t house her. She’d feel it was disrespectful to you and Stiles, taking your ex on as one of her betas. Here? In Beacon Hills? With Laura, Talia, Theo, and John? She damn sure couldn’t go to San Francisco. So why not to me? Why not put down roots on a nice goat farm in Fresno?"

"She lives with you?"

"In the back house. With Malia. They get along famously. And Malia could stand the company. She’s tired of running, Derek. She needed a break."

"She has friends in Mexico, Germany, Italy, Japan--"

"Those aren’t friends. They’re contacts. There’s a difference. I’m not fucking her."

"Too busy fucking Kira?"

Peter shrugs. "Kira and I scratch an itch for each other when it arises. That’s all it is."

"She’s a nice girl, Peter--"

"I’m not Scott," Peter says sternly, with a little heat behind it. He’s offended Derek would even think he’d hurt and manipulate Kira.

"No. You’re not."

"I like the undertone. Very biting."

"Goodnight, Peter."

"All out of questions?"
"You don’t seem to be lying--"

"Because I’m not."

"So there’s nothing more to ask."

Derek makes it halfway out the door before--

"Stiles smells weird. Have you noticed," Peter goads.

"No. Because he smells amazing. Try not to be too much a dick to him about this whole Braeden thing. I know irritating him is your way of flirting, but still."

Derek leaves, closing the door behind him.

Peter chuckles to himself. "Maybe he’s not a bad Alpha after all, Pete."

Peter lies back down on his plush of pillows and turns the TV back on.

Jackson sits at the edge of the pool, back to the house. His pants legs are rolled up, feet resting in the chlorine water.

He hears the patio doors open and close. He bothers not to turn around. He knows who it is.

Isaac sits beside him and slips off his flip flops. He dips his feet in the water with Jackson.

They’re silent. Quiet.

Isaac’s shoulders are hunched up around his ears, nervous and guilty. Jackson just keeps staring at his feet in the clear water...

Finally, Isaac opens his mouth to speak--

"I know. You already told me," Jackson says.

Isaac closes his mouth; Jackson already beating him to the punch.

"I should have told you three years ago, instead of...instead of being a dick. I just thought that you were still so gone on McCall, and I felt--"

"Inadequate?"

"You talked this out with Stilinski. Great."

"You think I don’t know the definition of ‘inadequate’?"

"Of course you do. It’s just something Stiles would say. Or Cora."

"I’m sorry. I didn’t know what to say to you. I needed help."

"Stiles told you to be honest, but gentle. Reassure me that you still care about me and that you love me, but only as a pack-brother. Is that about right?"
"...Yeah. He said that."

"And that’s really how you feel?"

"Yes."

"Did you ever love me?"

"...No."

"Because I was a dick? Because I am a dick."

"There’s so many great parts to you, Jackson. I really wish it wasn’t only me and Danny and Stiles who you let see them."

"I don’t really know why I’m so guarded. I got a couple of theories though."

"Me, too."

Jackson chuckles lightly. "I bet everyone does. But you’d be the only one who’d probably come close to being accurate... And maybe Stiles."

"Not Lydia?"

"Lydia is my old, high school girlfriend who I occasionally have sex with...every time a blonde, curly-haired boy turns me down."

"You said we weren’t mates."

"Doesn’t mean I can’t be in love with you, Isaac. Stiles used to love Malia. Derek loved Paige. She died because he loved her so much, and they weren’t mates."

"I’m sorry I can’t give you want you want."

"Me, too."

"Are you going to leave now," Isaac asks nervously.

"No. I like being near you. Even if you don’t feel the same way about me that I feel about you. Besides, I’m curious."

"About?"

"What your mate will be like."

"You sound so sure that I have one," Isaac scoffs.

"Most wolves do. It’s all about timing, right? You’re a good guy. Of course you’ll find a mate."

"You will, too."

Jackson chuckles dryly.
"I’m serious," Isaac says sincerely.

"That’s why I laughed."

"You deserve love, Jackson."

Jackson nods. But the gesture lacks confidence. And his eyes are back on his feet.

"I wish I did love you."

Jackson finally looks up at him. He eyes move around Isaac’s face, soaking it all in. Making a memory of his face. The face of the first person to ever break his heart, but still manage to leave him feeling whole.

Isaac wasn’t lying. Jackson heard it in his heart. Isaac does wish he could love him, but Jackson is. And Jackson isn’t Isaac’s mate. No matter how badly he wants to be.

"Kiss me. For the last time."

Isaac, with hesitation, leans into Jackson and their lips meet in a chaste kiss. Jackson’s hand cups Isaac’s face, fingers in the hair at the nape of Isaac’s neck. Isaac’s hands gently hold at Jackson’s neck as Jackson slips his tongue past Isaac’s lips, deepening their kiss.

The fingers at the nape of Isaac’s neck dig into his hair and grip him firmly as Jackson’s tongue tries to reach the back of Isaac’s throat.

Isaac is just as greedy, with his own hands fistling into Jackson’s T-shirt--

Jackson abruptly breaks their kiss.

Isaac looks at him and knows why. Jackson’s eyes are gold, but Isaac can see what’s past them. A plea. A hope. A want. The things he can’t give Jackson because he’d just being lying to him, leading him on. He’d be Scott.

"We should stop. I got carried away. I’m sorry," Isaac apologizes.

Jackson nods, slow, and regretful. His hands slip off Isaac’s skin. "I should go to bed."

"Yeah. I should go, too."

Jackson pulls his feet from the water and hurries to the pool house, not bothering to look back at Isaac and completely ignoring Isaac saying “goodnight.”

But Isaac is pretty sure Jackson heard him as he slides the pool house doors closed, giving the golden-haired beta one last look before turning out the light.

Chapter End Notes

SPOILER: Chapter 17 is when Stiles finds out why Derek thinks he smells so damn good ;) So bare with me. I don’t want you all to think I’m stringing you along. That’s
why I wrote all these chapters in one day; to get all the 'filler' out of the way first, before we get to the meatier part of the story, i.e. MPREG!!!
Cora makes a starling confession to Stiles and Danny, and Derek has to go back to San Francisco for a 'business meeting'.

Stiles hears Derek calling him.

"In here."

Derek opens the door. "St--"

Stiles is at the sink using a pair of hair clippers to shear off the last of his hair in a familiar buzzcut.

Derek can only stare with his mouth agape.

Stiles finishes and puts the clippers down. Clumps of brown hair cover the sink and counter. Some on the floor around Stiles’ bare feet. He runs a hand through his head. "Oh, God! That feels much better!"

"What did you do?"

"Okay. I know you like my hair longer, but Derek it is midsummer in California and hot as balls out. I had to shave it off."

"Couldn’t we have discussed this first?"

"A discussion? About the length of my hair? No. We talk about everything. Some things, like my hair, don’t need an lengthy conversation. Or that scowl on your face, sourwolf."

"I’ve kept this beard since we started dating because you like it so much."

Stiles already knows where Derek’s going with this, and he doesn’t like it. "Touch that fucking beard as retaliation and I’ll kill you."

"Why not? You’re right. It’s hot. Maybe I want to shave my face."

"No!"

"Oh, do we need to have a discussion about it?"

"No. Because you love your husband and aren’t going to do anything that will cheese him off, like shaving your face naked."

Derek raises a mischievous eyebrow at Stiles.
"Aw, Derek, come on! Please don’t shave your beard! I love stubble kisses and beard burn on my thighs! Besides, my hair was like this when we met!"

"You were 18 years old when we met."

"And you thought I was cute then, didn’t you?" Stiles steps closer to Derek and kisses him. 
"There’s pieces of hair all over me. Will you take a shower with me to help get them off?"

Stiles deepens the kiss. Derek falls into it, hook, line, and sinker. "You play dirty."

"Of course."

"Not in the bathroom the rest of us have to share, please," Erica shouts through the wall.

Shit. Busted.

"Come on." Stiles takes Derek’s hand to lead them to Derek’s own bathroom.

"Clean up the hair first," Lydia then shouts at them through the wall.

Stiles and Derek groan. "Fine!"

"Thank you," she replies.

"I’ll get a broom," Derek says, and walks out of the bathroom, grumbling to himself about nosy female betas.

Derek may have not liked the idea of Stiles buzzing all his hair off, but he certainly didn't act like it, running his hand absently along Stiles' head when they were close, his fingernails gently scratching at Stiles' exposed scalp. It made Stiles keen, and resulted in two disappearing acts from them even before lunch.

Cee had interrupted the last one when she knocked on the door to remind Stiles that he promised her he'd show her how to do a backstroke today and not to forget. The sound of the eager little girl's voice was enough to give them both pause and stilt their arousal, promising one another to pick up where they left off later.

When they finally emerged from Derek's room, Cora had cornered Stiles and asked to speak with he and Danny privately before Cee's swim lesson.

Stiles, Danny, and Cora walk into the sunroom. Cora closes the doors.

"I don’t think a private conversation in a house with a bunch of wolves is going to be any more private with the doors closed," Stiles tells her.

"Appearances. If anyone wants to barge in they know not to because we’re clearly engaged in an intimate discussion."

"About what? You said you wanted to talk to us, but what about?"

"Isaac thinks we should try online dating."

"Absolutely not," Stiles snaps as Danny comments on it being "interesting."
Cora and Danny turn to Stiles.

"There are far too many sickos out there and the internet is the perfect place to find them all! No! You don’t know those people! They’re all liars and murderers!"

"Stiles, that’s not true! Don’t be such a pack mom," Danny chides.

"You won’t be saying that when the police call me at two in the morning to tell me they found you in a ditch somewhere naked and with your throat slashed! No! Absolutely not! I forbid it! And you tell that curly-haired nymph, Isaac, I said so!"

"And what am I supposed to do, Stiles?! Go back to the bar scene?! I’m trying to stay away from all that, remember? At least online I can make a personal connection with someone first," Cora says.

"And I can’t stand random hookups at clubs anymore," Danny says.

"Have either of you ever seen Catfish?"

Cora and Danny sigh in frustration at Stiles inability to be brought to their way of thinking.

"Would it make you feel better if I ran a thorough background check on whoever we liked before we go out with them," Danny offers.

Stiles mulls it over for a minute, biting his bottom lip as the thinks... "Day-dates and in public! No going to anyone’s house! And the first official date you have with someone after 5PM is chaperoned!"

"No way," Cora exclaims.

"That's too far, Stiles! Chaperoned dates," Danny snaps.

"Okay. Fine. You give me the address and I hang out in the background and won’t interfere."

"How about we give you the address, text you when we’re there, then text you when the date is over," Cora suggests.

"You give me the address of the place you’ll be, call when you’re there, then come to my house when the date is over so we can talk about it."

Cora and Danny exchange looks. It’s the best deal they’re going to get with Stiles and they know it.

"Fine," Danny groans.

"But only with the nighttime dates do we come over and talk about it with you," Cora adds.

"...Okay," Stiles concedes.

"And once we’re comfortable, you back off," Cora tries to slip in their deal.

"Never. You’re known members of the Hale Pack. Some will see you as a target. I don’t back off until I feel comfortable and I know you pups are safe. Take it or leave it."

"You’re worse than my mom mom," Danny says with an eye roll.
"Seriously," Cora agrees.

"I take pride in that. And I’ll relay our agreement to both Isaac and Peter."

"Why Peter," Danny asks.

"So he can handle Malia how he sees fit."

"Peter’s a pretty hands-off kind of dad," Danny snorts.

"That’s what he wants people to think. Sadly, I know him better than that. Now, is the private conversation over? I have to finish Cee’s swimming lesson before I get changed for dinner tonight."

"Strangely, the online dating wasn’t what I wanted to talk to you two about," Cora says, looking a little worried.

Stiles takes a seat, noting the serious look on Cora's face. "Okay. I’m listening."

"I just... Is it... I wanted to know if..."

Stiles and Danny exchange nervous glances. It’s Danny’s turn to sit. Cora doesn’t get nervous. She has more confidence in her pinky than most do in their whole being.

She takes a deep breath. She closes her eyes, giving herself a minute to find the right words in her head. "Is dating harder when you’re gay?"

Stiles and Danny are so taken aback by the question they draw silent for a moment.

Stiles finally pipes up, "Um, why-why are you asking us this, sassy-wolf?"

"Because..." Cora takes a seat in the armchair across from them. "Because I’m gay."

"Since when? Because I think should have totally picked up on that," Danny questions. Stiles nods, in shock.

"Since...forever. I mean, I dated boys in high school, but I never did anything with them and it always felt weird and didn’t make sense to me. It wasn’t until I went to Berkley and met a few girls that it all clicked. It felt...right. It was like that weirdness I felt vanished, because I got it. I understood why I was like that with guys, and why I felt differently with girls."

"Oh, my God. I’m such a horrible mother. I should have known this," Stiles buries his face in his hands.

"It’s not your fault, Stiles. I hid it pretty well."

"Why? You didn’t need to do that. Cora, you could have been out with us. I mean, take a look around you: I’m bisexual, so is your brother. Danny’s gay, Ethan's gay. Isaac, Jackson, and Scott are bi-curious-- which is annoying-- Lydia’s sapiosexual, and Peter’s pansexual."

"Actually, I think both Derek and Lydia are sapiosexual," she corrects.

"Stiles, regardless of how friendly the environment you’re in, it’s still hard to come out. You know how much Scott cares about you, and that you’ll be his best friend no matter what, but weren’t you scared to tell him? And your dad," Danny reminds Stiles.
Danny’s right. Stiles knew his dad and Scott loved him unconditionally, no matter who—or what—he was attracted to, as long as he was happy, but it didn’t mean he was any less terrified when he told them both that he found both men and women attractive. Let alone that he was in love with a male werewolf.

"I’ve got hippie, anti-government liberal parents, but it doesn’t mean I wasn’t scared to death to come out to them," Danny adds.

Stiles nods. He gets it. Understands. He turns to Cora, "So, Talia and Theo don’t know I take it," he asks.

She shakes her head.

"Do you want to tell them?"

"Derek didn’t tell them about you."

"I think my relationship with Derek was a little different and shouldn’t be an excuse for you not to tell your parents."

"I will. Just not yet. Not until I’m in a serious, committed relationship."

"Is this why you didn’t want to move into the ‘pack house’ back then?"

"Part of it. I didn’t want everyone poking their nose in my business and making assumptions. I grew up in a house like that. I was done living like that. I don’t know how Derek could stand it."

"He’s an Alpha. He likes closeness and unity. It makes him stronger and more comfortable. But trust me, when everyone moved out, we were both a little happy about the privacy," Stiles leans in, curious about the heart of this conversation. "Cora. If you’ve been with girls, presumably had sex with them, why are you asking us about dating?"

"Because I’ve never really been on a date. I go to the bar, meet a girl, we talk and it’s okay, then I go home with her and I leave in the morning. I have a hard time connecting with someone beyond a one night stand."

"That might be because you’re not out, Cora."

"If you’re not open with your sexuality, it’s going to be hard to make a personal connection. Your head will be everywhere but in the moment, not focused on the person in front of you," Danny tells her.

"Well, that’s why I was excited about this whole online dating thing."

They ignore Stiles’ groan at the mention of online dating.

"I don’t really have to be out just yet to anyone but the people I meet online. I get to know them that way, open and free, and if we like each other and want something serious to happen, then I can come out to everyone else."

"I see what you’re saying, but it would still be better if you told the people you care for about your sexuality beforehand," Danny advises.

"Yeah. Springing it on the whole pack by introducing them to your girlfriend at Christmas doesn’t seem so tactful, Cora," Stiles says.
"Or considerate," Danny tacks on.

"Trust me. That 5 second look of shock on Talia and Theo’s faces when they realized I was Derek’s mate is something I’ll always remember, and always want to take back," Stiles says honestly.

"I think that had less to do with you being a guy and more about you being the sheriff’s son," Cora tells him.

"But you get what we’re saying, right?"

"Yeah. I do. I don’t like it, but I do."

"Cora, it’s up to you how you want to play this. However you feel comfortable. We’re just giving advice," Danny says gently.

"From experience," Stiles says.

Danny nods, agreeing with Stiles.

"Okay. I’m going to think about it. Thanks, guys."

Cora stands. She turns to leave--

"To answer your initial question," Danny starts, "dating is hard for everyone. But yes, I think it’s harder if you like someone of the same gender. Only because the dating pool is relatively small. We make up 5% of the population in this country, and trying to cast your net in such a small pond, hoping to catch the person of your dreams, can result in disappointment."

"And loneliness," Stiles says.

"I’m already lonely," she says, and it breaks Stiles' heart.

"What I’m saying is, you might fall for someone you can’t have. Someone straight. It happens more often than not with such a concentrated group of people. You meet someone not of said group and... We know better than anyone that you can’t help who you fall for. So be smart, and protect your heart," Danny advises.

"You just told me to come out to everyone. To be open."

"I said protect your heart. Not keep secrets and build walls."

"Right. Thanks. You, too, Stiles."

They watch Cora walk out, leaving the doors open.

"I hope to God you weren’t talking about Jackson or Ethan just then," Stiles frowns at Danny.

"Those two? Really, Stiles?"

"Thank, Christ. I’m so sick of how incestuous this pack is."

Danny laughs.

"She’s not going to listen to a single piece of advice we just gave her, is she," Stiles asks, already knowing the answer.
"Nope."

"Thought so."

"Just be there for her when she needs to pick up the pieces."

"Aren’t I always?"

Danny smiles at his friend. He is. Stiles is always there for everyone and anyone. He has the biggest heart there is. "Yeah." Danny stands. "You are, Stiles. Come on. I’ll help you teach a little girl how to swim."

Danny and Stiles walk out the side door to the patio.

Beacon Hills has only one really nice, fancy restaurant called Greenberg's. It looks out of place in the small, NorCal town with it’s rich interior of cream colors matched with pinstripe chairs, open wine bar, and slick art deco paintings on the walls. It’s all very 1920s New York with a live jazz band playing softly in the corner of the dining room.

Derek and Stiles share a round table with Talia, Theo, Laura, Valerie, Thomas, and Jason. Couples' night out.

Their table is shrouded in comfortable laughter:

"Can we please be done with the embarrassing Derek stories for the night," Derek groans.


"'Never' is a strong assertion. I’d go more with ‘rarely’."

"Fine. You rarely tell me any funny anecdotes about you as a child."

"Tonight proves the reason why."

"If we weren’t eating I’d tell you about the time he crapped the bed and smeared it all over the walls in his room when he was four," Laura teases.

"Or I could tell you about where Laura really went on spring break during her junior year at UCLA," Derek retaliates.

"I’d love to hear that story," Laura says with a raised eyebrow.

"Me, too," Theo says curiously.

"Oh, you’re one dirty fighter, Derek Stephan Hale."

"Thank you, Laura Briony Hale-Pryce."

"Play nice, children," Talia scolds playfully.

Derek’s cellphone vibrates. He takes it from his jacket pocket and checks the caller ID.

"Who is it," Stiles asks.
"Business." Derek pecks Stiles. "Excuse me." Derek parts from the group to take the phone call.
Their waiter approaches the table. "And how is everything this evening?"
"Wonderful. Thank you, Andrew. We’re having a lovely time," Talia tells the sweet, young boy.
"I’m glad to hear it. Is there anything else I can get you?"
"No, thank you."
"I’d actually like a glass of cabernet sauvignon before dessert actually. The Chateau Cote de Baleau please," Stiles cuts in.
"Excellent choice, sir. I’ll be right back with your wine." Their waiter parts from the table for Stiles’ wine.

Stiles takes notice of the exchanged glances shared by everyone at the table. "What?"
"Uh, nothing. Nothing... Nothing," Laura says nervously.
"You say nothing one more time and I'll begin to think it's something," Stiles says, raising a skeptical eyebrow at his sister-in-law.
She laughs nervously, admitting a snort. It's become obvious Laura is horrible at hiding things.
"Are you alright, Laura," Stiles asks.
"Yeah."
"You sure about that?"
"Maybe a little too much wine," Thomas teases.
Stiles nods, accepting Thomas’ "save" as a legit answer.
"Excuse me. I need to use the ladies’ room," Talia says, sauntering away from the table just as Derek returns.

Stiles takes notice of the heavy look on Derek’s face. "What’s wrong?"
"That was Edmund. He wants to talk. In person."
Derek nods.
"About what?"
"He didn’t say. Wants me to come to his club tomorrow night ‘to chat’."
"Does he know that Scott and Erica were tailing Haigh?"
"He didn’t say. He was just his usual, cryptic self."
"I hate when Edmund wants to ‘chat’. It starts off decent and ends with death threats and violent promises. You’re not going alone."
"And you’re not going at all."

"Derek--"

"Not an argument or a discussion."

"I let you cow me with that when Chris Argent was wandering through the preserve. Not now. I went with you last time. I'm going this time."

"We’re changing the topic of conversation."

"I think that may be a good idea," Jason agrees.

"I don’t," Theo says. "Stiles. You know I only involve myself in the business if either you or Derek need, or want me to, but I have to speak my mind and agree with Derek on this. I think it a bad idea if you come with Derek to his meeting with Edmund. Especially if meetings with him end in two very angry parties exchanging death threats more often than not. Edmund, as I remember him, is not above hurting humans. For any reason. He merely just hasn’t been caught by authorities yet. And you may have just been lucky the last time you met him."

Talia returns to the table. "Serious faces abound. What did I miss?"

"Edmund wants a meeting with Derek," Laura tells her.

"Vampire Edmund? What for?"

"Didn’t say," Derek tells his mother.

"Who’s going with you," she asks.

"I’d like it to be me," Stiles says crossly, eyes glaring at Derek.

"I’m not so sure of that, Stiles. Edmund has a reputation for not excluding humans from the wrath of his temper."

"Alright, fine. If you won’t take me, then take Boyd. And Val," Stiles barks, annoyed at everyone's opinion of him going with Derek to meet with Edmund.

"Hang on a tick. You’d like to literally send my wife and your husband into a vampire den?"

"No, I wouldn’t 'like to', Jason. But they were invited."

"Derek was invited."

"Jason," Valerie says with a warning on her tongue.

"And if he’s going, then he needs back up. Preferably, our two best fighters in case they’re in a jam," Stiles says.

"This sounds dangerous. Very dangerous, Valerie," Jason says.

"My Alpha and his mate are commanding my assistance, Jason. We’ve talked about this." She takes his hand. "What is it that you think I do all day? You are very well aware what this family’s business is. And going to San Francisco to talk to unstable vampires is apart of that sometimes. Have I never come back home to you? To our girls?"
"I’m not concerned with the past. It’s the future. I concerned about the day you don’t come back home to me."

"Jason. You’re not alone in that particular worry," Stiles apprises.

Derek takes Stiles’ hand and kisses it softly. "Not in the least."

Thomas runs his knuckles gently down Laura’s face. His palm opens and she nuzzles into his large hand.

Theo pulls Talia close.

Stiles turns to Jason. "Not a single person at this table could help falling insanely in love with their mate. It was-- it is, beyond our control. And it’s that indescribable intensity you feel for Valerie that gets the two of you up everyday, and also keeps you in constant fear, because you know without her, you’re nothing, and you will wither and die and fade away. She’s not replaceable; you can never get another ‘Val’, another mate. She’s the beginning, middle, and end of you. And you’re all of the same to her, too. But none of it changes the fact that your wife is a beta in a pack." He leans in and whispers, "And an underboss in her family’s supernatural crime syndicate. She does things that are dangerous, and sometimes immoral. Yet, you love her anyway. Knowing this, you still worship the ground she walks on. Which makes it hard for you to be apathetic toward the very real danger she faces day-to-day in her business. So do what I do."

"Forgo a blind eye and involve myself completely," Jason says sarcastically.

"It’s a thought... Or you can look her right in her sparkling eyes and say: ‘Come back to me, or I will kill you’." The mood at the table lightens a bit. Jason manages a small smile at his amusing brother-in-law.

Derek pecks Stiles’ cheek and whispers in his ear: “Always.”

"Val is a force to be reckoned with. Trust me," Stiles says confidently.

Valerie winks at her husband.

He squeezes her hand. "Come back to me, or I’ll kill you."

"Always."

He kisses her cheek.

"Maybe I should bring Jackson, too," Derek says.

"No. Three betas looks like you’re dying for a fight. Two says you’re benign but not stupid. Plus, Jackson is too hothead for such a tactful meeting," Stiles says.

Stiles was made for this. He’s so involved and knowledgeable about it all. It’s scary how it all comes naturally to him, reminiscent of Peter’s conversation with Scott. In the beginning, Jackson used to make jokes about Stiles being more of a ‘mob wife’ than a ‘pack mom’. Clearly, he’s both.

"Not to mention all the scantily clad vamp girls gliding around him. Too distracting for him," Laura smirks.

"I’d suggest you take Peter, he’s friendly with a few vamps, but...it’s Peter," Stiles moans. Everyone at the table exchanges agreed glances and shrugs.
Their waiter returns. "Are we ready for dessert and coffee?"

"Andrew, I’m sorry, but I never got my glass of wine."

"Oh..." The waiter meets Talia’s fierce glare. She could honestly kill with that stare. "I’m afraid a gentleman bought the last bottle."

"You have a whole rack of them at the bar."

"Empties. For aesthetic purposes. I apologize," he lies.

"Oh," Stiles frowns, disappointed.

"Choose another wine," Derek suggests.

"I’d much rather move on to the last course," Valerie says a little too brightly, jumping in. She snatches the dessert menu from their waiter. "I would love to try the bananas foster flambe. Stiles, will you share it with me?"

"Hell yeah!"

Talia’s worried expression fizzes at Stiles forgetting all about his glass of wine in favor of dessert. "Three cappuccinos, three café au laits, an espresso, and an Earl Grey tea for my son-in-law."

"I can only drink tea at night, before bed. How can you have it all day," Stiles asks Jason.

"The tea is for you," Talia tells him.

Before Stiles can respond in protest--

"And the chocolate mousse," Theo annexes onto Talia's coffee request.

"I like where your head’s at, Theo," Stiles says, easily distracted by dessert again.

"You’re sharing a dessert already with Val," Derek says, eyebrows knitted together.

"I ate all my vegetables. I can have two desserts."

Derek fixes Stiles with a lusty stare, then leans into Stiles’ ear and whispers.

Laura groans. Werewolf hearing. "Ugh. I heard that."

"And I truly wish I hadn’t," Theo regrets.

Valerie blushed.

It’s doesn’t take a genius to figure out that Derek has made a sexually explicit reference to either he or Stiles being dessert later.

Stiles’ eyes don’t leave Derek’s. "I’m fine with the bananas foster flambe," he tells their waiter.

Stiles gives Derek a slow, salacious kiss.

"God, you two are gross," Thomas nettles.

Stiles manages a smile through his kiss with Derek at Thomas’ teasing.
The beginning scene is just because I've always loved buzzcut! Stiles more than too-much-hair-gel-90s-boy-band-chic haired! Stiles as of late.
Derek and Stiles stand on the front steps kissing. Slow and teasing just like at the drive-in burger joint. Stiles may like when Derek kisses him chastely, but this is Derek's favorite kiss: slow, and sweet, where he can take his time and suck, lick, bite and savor all he wants. He didn't kiss Stiles often like this, always wanting to save such passion for when they were truly alone and he could take all the time he wanted. But Stiles had pulled him close and took control of his mouth, wanting a repeat of their earlier make-out session...

"Uh, guys."

Nothing. Derek and Stiles’ lips are still glued to each other.

"Guys... Guys...? Derek!"

Derek breaks their kiss, turning to the bold voice calling him. Boyd. Leaning against Derek’s rental car. He taps his watch at the amorous couple.

"Right. Sorry."

"Sorry, Boyd," Stiles apologizes.

Valerie exits the house. Jason, Rose and Cee behind her. She kisses both girls. "Mommy will be back in two days."

"Mummy better be. Unscathed," Jason says.

Despite Valerie possessing the ability to snap Jason’s spine like a twig in less than 5 seconds, it turns her on immensely when Jason’s demanding, direct, and absolute.

She always trembles a bit when he speaks to her as though she weren’t a beta in the most powerful pack in the west, as though she weren’t a werewolf, stronger and faster than him, as though she weren’t the daughter of a werelion. It made her pool between her legs that Jason saw them as equal.

This human man with his commanding tone makes her quiver in all the right places when he’s like that, ignorant of his “place.”
She assumed most human men couldn’t handle a relationship with a she-wolf, their insecurities and doubts getting the best of them. Not Jason. He always remained assertive, never abrasive, and never, ever passive.

"Not a hair out of place. I promise."

Jason places a hard kiss on her mouth.

Rose and Cee chorus with a loud “EW!” They laugh at their daughters reaction to their searing kiss.

"Behave for daddy. And Stiles. And grandma and grandpa."

Rose and Cee nod. Valerie kiss them once more.

Valerie descends the steps approaching Derek’s rental car. Boyd, a chivalrous gentleman as always, takes her overnight bag and puts it in the trunk.

"Thank you, Boyd."

He nods politely.

"How is he single," she whispers to Stiles.

"He’s quiet. Shy," the Alpha-mate answers.

"We need to fix that."

"Valerie! Are you trying to get me to conspire with you in an evil, romantic plot?" Stiles fake gasps! "I’m shocked!"

"An acting class called. They want back all that scenery you were just chewing."

Derek laughs hard at Valerie’s joke.

"I do possess the power to turn you both into rodents, you know," Stiles says.

Boyd opens the front passenger door for Valerie.

"Fair warning. It’s pretty potent in there," Stiles says.

Valerie climbs into her seat-- "Oh, dear, God! You weren’t kidding! Why didn’t you air it out?!!"

"Derek’s riding in the backseat. Where the smell is the strongest," Boyd frowns, shaking his head at his Alpha. He climbs into the driver’s seat. And rolls down all the windows.

"Like you two have never smelt sex before…" Stiles says.

"Hey. Look at me," Derek says. "I love you."

"I love you, too. Come back to me, or I will kill you," Stiles says with every ounce of seriousness.

"Always."

They kiss, quick and rough.
Derek climbs into the backseat. "Behave yourself," he says through the open window.

Stiles rolls his eyes.

Boyd starts the car and pulls away from the house.

Valerie leans out her window, waving to her husband and their daughters, all the way down the driveway and past the iron gate, until she can no longer see them in the distance.

The **rec room** is packed with nearly everyone in the house: Peter and Theo play a concentrated game of chess. Stiles and Scott play *Call of Duty* wearing headphones so as to not disturb anyone else in the room. Isaac, Ethan, Danny and Thomas play a card game at the game table. Jackson and Erica play pool, while Talia knits quietly in the corner. Lydia, Allison, and Cora sit at a small table by the pool table and sift intently through wedding magazines again.

The peaceful quiet is disturbed by Star and Luna as they run into the room excitedly toward Stiles: "Uncle Stiles! Uncle Stiles!"

Stiles pauses his game with Scott and takes off his headphones. "Yes, my lovelies?"

"We drew you a picture of you and Uncle Derek so you won’t miss him while he’s gone," Luna says proudly.

"That is the sweetest thing I’ve ever heard! Thank you both! Show it to me."

They both take an end of a large sheet of paper with colorful, child-like drawings on it.

"It’s gorgeous," Stiles exclaims. He sounds as though he's paying endearing lip-service to his nieces, but every wolf in the room can hear the happy thudding of his heartbeat.

"That’s Uncle Derek and that’s you at your house in San Francisco," Star shows him.

"It’s big. Like your real house," Luna adds.

"I see that. But why is my belly big, too? Am I fat?"

"You’re not fat. That’s the baby," Luna laughs.

Talia, Theo, and Thomas go still, causing every other were in the room to stiffen as well.


"Oh, shit," Theo says. All eyes fall on him. He *never* swears.

"The baby in your stomach," Luna says casually.

Star gasps! "Luna! We weren’t supposed to tell, remember?!"

"Oh, no! I forgot! Sorry."

"Excuse me?" Stiles asks, confused. "Why-why do you two think I have a baby in my stomach?"

The girls go quiet. No longer wanting to add to the secret they already let slip.
Stiles’ eyes draw toward Luna. "Girls..."

She sighs, knowing she’s no match for Stiles and his hard, motherly stare. "Because mommy and grandma smelled it on you."

"Luna," her sister scolds again.

"What? Cat’s already out the bag now," Luna shrugs.

The two young girls hand him the picture and scamper out.

A deafening silence falls on the room. You could hear a pin drop...

Stiles is frozen. He can’t move. Can’t speak. Can’t think. All he can do is stare at the picture his nieces drew of him with a swollen belly, apparently full with a baby. A baby. A baby in my stomach...

Everyone’s on edge, waiting for him to respond. To do...something. Anything...

Lydia. Lydia makes the first move. She stands and approaches Stiles carefully. "Stiles? Stiles?"

She puts a gentle hand on his shoulder. "Stiles?"

Laura rushes into the room, wet and in her bikini, having heard what happened from her daughters and feeling every were in the house turn to stone.

"Do I...smell...p-pregnant," he asks Lydia.

"I-I-I don’t know." She’s not a wolf. She can’t tell.

"Scott."

Scott tentatively leans into Stiles and sniffs. "I don’t know. You do smell...different. You smell--"

"Sweeter?"

"Yeah. Like moonflower, and snow, and honey."

He finally looks up at his best friend. "Derek said I smelled sweet."

Erica, Jackson, Isaac, Kira, Ethan, Malia, and Cora charge at Stiles and take in a deep inhale of his scent!

Their wide eyes answer for them.

Stiles stands abruptly.

Everyone stares at him. Waiting for the panic...

He clinches his fists and takes a deep breath, pushing the panic down as hard as he can. "...I’m going upstairs and I’m closing the door. I’m not coming out until somebody gets me a pregnancy test."

Stiles runs out of the room!
They listen as the door to Derek’s bedroom slams shut!

A beat of awkward silence suffocates the room...


"Yes. I believe so," Talia answers.

The heavy information just offered creates another shocked silence...

"Okay," Lydia’s using her typical take charge tone, because of course she is. Someone has to grab the reigns of this mess. "He’s in super-panic mode, so that means Scott and I have to bring him down to his usual level of panic. He wants a test, so--"

"I’ll go get it," Allison says.

"You can’t. Someone might tell your dad they saw you buying a test," Scott tells her.

"And you can’t exactly tell them who it’s really for because some nosy, busy-body in this small town will run off and tell the sheriff. Plus, it has to be a male pregnancy test," Lydia adds.

"I’ll get it," Jackson offers.

"Really," Erica asks, stunned he would even consider doing something like that. Even for Stiles.

"Yeah. I’ll get it. It’s fine."

"Thank you, Jackson. Scott," Lydia says.

Scott breaks from the sofa and follows Lydia out of the room.

"He’s going to kill us," Laura says bleakly.

"Then Derek’s going to come home and kill us again because we gave Stiles a panic attack," Thomas groans.

Scott and Lydia hang outside Derek’s room. They’ve been standing there for 20 minutes now. 18 of those minutes Scott had his hear pressed against the door. He told Lydia all he could hear was Stiles’ heartbeat, just a little faster than normal, but not frantic. Lydia took the lack of heavy breathing or gasping sounds as a good sign of there being no panic attack. She had given up any semblance of trying to coax Stiles out of the room, or for him to let her in when she knocked the first time and told her to "Fuck off until I get my goddamn test." Stiles may be a wizard at getting Lydia pulled back from the brink of losing it, but Stiles has always been a lot more stubborn.

Jackson races up the stairs with a Walgreens bag in his hand. "I got them. I got three different ones like you said. And the way that cashier looked at me... Let’s just say I deserve to have the kid named after me."

Lydia snatches the bag from him, ignoring his complaint. She knocks softly on the door. "Stiles. Stiles? We got the test. Can you let us--"
Stiles swings the door open, snatches the bag from her, and slams the door shut!

They hear the lock slide.

"...Guess he needs some more time," Lydia says.

Stiles closes the **bathroom** door. He rips open every test, puts on his eyeglasses, and quickly reads the directions for each one.

He drops trou and sits on the toilet. He grabs the first test off the sink and sticks it between his legs to pee. He figures taking the test sitting down is a lot better than standing up and getting urine all over his hands, trying to find an appropriate angle.

He's never had a hard time going to the bathroom, but right now, he's like a dusty, old volcano that hasn't erupted in eons. "Come on. Pee. Pee."

He leans over the sink and turns the faucet on, hoping the running water will help.

It doesn't.

"Fuck!" He takes a deep breath, stilling his shaking, nervous leg. "Calm down, Stiles. Breathe. Breathe... Breathe... Breathe..." *In, and out. In, and out.*

His psychiatrist in high school taught him a few breathing exercises when he told her he experienced panic attacks after his mother died, and most recently at the time, when his father was nearly stabbed to death, breaking up a rough bar fight. It was the only useful thing he felt he gained from seeing a shrink, so he tried it.

*In...and out. In...and out. In...*

Urine dribbles on the back on his hand and he adjust himself enough to aim it on the little plastic stick.

The bedroom door swings open. Lydia on her knees having picked the lock with a bobby pin, tired of Stiles' Gollum-like solitary and hitting her own panicked worry. Scott and Jackson are behind her.

"The weird things you know how to do are both scary and sexy at the same time," Scott admits.

"Seriously," Jackson adds.

"I know. Jackson wait out here."

Lydia and Scott come in and quietly close the door.

"Is he okay," she whispers to Scott.

"All I smell is panic and piss."

The bathroom door opens slightly, like an invitation...
Lydia and Scott immediately cross the room toward it, almost toppling the other over.

Stiles stands in front of the sink, staring at all three test.

Lydia and Scott can’t see them; Stiles is blocking their view as he stands there, still and quiet. Stiles is never still, let alone quiet.

"Stiles? Dude...?"

"I’m pregnant." It comes out low and soft, but they still hear it. "I don’t understand."

"You-You don’t understand how babies are made," Scott asks seriously.

Stiles whips around to them. "Of course I do, Scott! I don’t understand how I’m pregnant! Derek and I always, always, always use condoms! We used one in the parking lot at Target! It’s not that we don’t want kids! Of course we want kids! We’ve talked about it at nauseam! We weren’t going to start trying until next year but then there was Chris Argent, and Kate, and the FBI, and you and Allison got engaged, so we thought we’d wait one more year! What’s the rush, you know?! I’m only 28 years old and Derek’s thirty-four! It’s not like we’re old men or anything! We’re older than I wanted us to be when we decide to have kids, but we’re still not elderly!"

"Stiles, calm down," Lydia tells him, soft and easy.

"I love Derek! I’ve wanted to have his baby for forever! And I was 1000% positive I did when I got out of prison! But he’s not here! That asshole is back home, hanging out with slutty vamps at Edmund’s club! He needs to be here! He needs to be here so I can tell him that this is the absolute, happiest day of my life because I’m going to have his baby! Because I’m pregnant with Derek Stephan Hale’s baby and it’s the only goddamn thing I’ve ever wanted!"

Scott and Lydia let smiles blossom on their faces at Stiles rambling confession.

Stiles takes a breath. Tears run down his blotchy, red face.

"Stiles," Scott says with a smile.

"...I never been so fucking happy, Scott."

Stiles and Scott move into a bruising embrace.

"Me, too," Lydia shouts, wanting to be apart of their hug. They open their arms to pull her in. The three of them hold one another long and hard.

For the longest time it was just them against the world, and they had always thought that it would only be them. Then their whole world changed and they managed to do the impossible: become closer. They had always considered themselves close, closer than most would consider a friend, but Derek entering their lives made them pack, made them family. Neither of them could picture their lives without the other, and now they had new people they felt close to and could call family, too.

But it had always been the three of them, and a small part of each of them knew that they carried a special, secret place in their hearts for one another that no one else could touch. That no one else could come close to. And a baby did nothing but fill each of them with the utmost happiness. Stiles wasn’t pregnant. They were pregnant; the three of them, because they knew just as much as Stiles would love his child, they would love it just as much, too.
"Am I the only one crying," Stiles asks.

They pull apart, his two best friends' faces, wet with happy-tears.

"I love you two so much. Jesus. This is like my wedding day all over again," Stiles says.

"Except this time we're in a bathroom and not a dry cleaners," Scott observes.

Stiles laughs. They join him in laughing, recalling the memory.

Lydia grabs some toilet paper and dries her eyes. "I guess we should go tell everybody else, huh?"

Stiles and Scott nod, wiping away their tears with their sleeves.

"Come on." Lydia takes Stiles' hand as the three of them walk out of the bathroom.

Stiles opens the bedroom door. The entire pack is standing there on pins and needles, pulsating with anticipation. Scott and Lydia stand behind Stiles.

"So...I’m pregnant."

An eruption of SCREAMS OF JOY fill the hallway! Everyone is eager to get their hands on him for a hug as they clamor over one another talking about Stiles giving birth to the newest addition to their pack.

While hugging Danny, Stiles notices Malia break from the scene and head toward her room and close the door. Peter goes after her, talking quietly at her door. Eventually, she opens it and Peter steps in, closing the door behind him.

"Derek is going to flip," Thomas yells, excited.

"Oh, my God! No one, I repeat: no one, tell Derek yet. I want to tell him when he gets home. Not a single word, understand? Or I will sic Lydia on you."

"Trust me, people, you don’t want this as your problem." She's all smiles, but they know better. Lydia. Will. Kill. Them.

They all simultaneously agree to be mum on the whole thing.

"Okay. First, I want to talk to you, you, and you. Privately." He points to Talia, Theo, and Laura. "Then I want to call my dad over and tell him."

"Can I tell my mom," Scott asks.

"Yes. Tell her to come over if she can. She can bring Deaton, too, but they are not to tell my dad anything. I want to do that. Then I’m going to have a very, very private talk with someone else." His eyes fall on Malia and Kira’s guest room.

Stiles enters the parlour, trailed by Talia, Laura, and Theo. Theo closes the doors.

"I want every question I have answered, honestly and directly, okay? No matter how bad you think I’ll freak out, okay?"
The three Hales nod.

"Good. How long have the three of you known I was pregnant?"

"Dad figured it out first," Laura says.

"The day we signed the Peace Treaty with Chris Argent. You smelled different. Sweet, like Derek said. I assumed you were, so I told Talia and she confirmed," Theo says.

"And you figured it out the day the smoke alarm went off," Stiles asks Laura.

She nods. "I told Val, too."

"Shit, she’s going to tell Derek!," Stiles says, worrying.

"No. She’s not. I already text her."

"Good. Thanks. Why can the three of you tell and not the other wolves?"

"Laura and I have been with child. It’s an easy smell to recognize when you’ve been pregnant yourself," Talia explains.

"Okay. Once you had your suspicions, why didn’t you guys tell me?"

"We wanted to be sure. Your smell and other things were small signs but it’s not until a little later that you begin to show more apparent signs."

"Is this why you wanted us to stay longer?"

"Yes. I wanted you and Derek here, with pack, when you found out. I wanted you two here for this, to ask anything you want from myself and Deaton."

"I knew it! And Derek said I was just being sneaky..."

Theo can’t help but chuckle. "Pregnancy in packs, cubs, are very important. If a pack member is with child, the rest of the pack feels an overwhelming desire to be closer together. Everyone’s behavior will change with you, Stiles. They’ll feel very protective of you and your child. Especially given it’s the Alpha’s child. You’ll have very little privacy and very little personal space."

"Oh, so it’s like a Tuesday."

Laura snorts at Stiles’ sarcasm.

"I know weres are very abrasive in those areas already, and it can be too much for a human at times. I just wanted to warn you that it may get even worse while you’re pregnant," Theo tells him.

"You said 'other things'. What other things?"

"All the rare meat you’ve been eating. That’s a wolf you’re carrying, kid," Laura says.

"Oh, shit.‖ Stiles’ mind drifts to he and Derek in the woods.

"Stiles," Talia says, taking note of the worrying look on Stiles' face.
"I tried to mark, Derek! Is that a sign?!"

"To be honest, I don't know. You're not a wolf, so it's odd. Maybe subconsciously the baby wanted other wolves to know Derek was mated, and with a cub."

"Definitely a werebaby in that belly," Laura repeats.

"Stiles. We also wanted you here to tell you first, what your doctor and Deaton are going to tell you, too," Talia starts. "Male pregnancies are high-risk and rare. Even with weres. You have to take very good care of yourself if you want to bring a healthy baby to term."

Stiles’ arms hug around his stomach protectively.

"That’s what we’re here for. To take care of you. To relieve any stress you might have and make sure your health is good. The closeness of a pack can really strengthen a pregnancy."

"I will do, whatever I have to, to keep this baby alive and well," Stiles says seriously.

"We know you will."

The very real thought of losing something he wants so badly before he's even had a real chance at having it, scares him to death. "I really wish Derek was here right now."

"He’ll be back in two days," Laura tries to reassure him with a soothing hand on his shoulder.

"Suddenly, that feels like a lifetime."

"We’re here for you. We’ll take care of you until he comes back."

"Why don’t you go upstairs and call him. Then take a nap. I’ll make you something to eat when you wake up and then you can call your father," Talia suggests.

"Okay." He hugs Talia. "Thank you."

"Of course, my darling."

Stiles then hugs Laura and Theo next, before leaving the room.

"I’ve seen what that boy eats on a regular basis: cookies, Mountain Dew, and a silo’s volume of curly fries," Theo worries.

"Which is why when he wakes up he’s getting a garden salad, toast no butter, and mineral water," Talia says/ She exits the parlour, on her way to the kitchen to make Stiles' meal.

"Ugh, God, I do not miss her making my pregnancy meals," Laura says, relieved.

Theo laughs.

"Wow. Stiles is going to have a baby," Erica says, flopping on the bed with a bounce. "I’m going to be the most badass aunt."
"I pretty sure I’ll be the most badass aunt," Cora says competitively.

"You don’t even wear leather."

Allison snorts at the serious tone in Erica’s voice.

"I’ve never been apart of a pack with a baby on the way before. It’s exciting," Kira says.

"Old hat," Cora waves off flippantly.

"Really? 'Old hat'? It’s the Alpha’s baby," Allison remarks.

"Tell you the truth, most of the time I see Derek as just my big brother more than I do the 'almighty Alpha'."

"Liar," Erica accuses. "I heard that uptick in your heartbeat. Stop trying to sound cool and admit you’re over the moon like the rest of us."

Cora quickly flashes her beta eyes at Erica.

Erica simply smirks, having enjoyed calling Cora out. "And that is why I’m going to be the most badass aunt."

"Maybe. I’m sure Lydia is cooking up plans to out shine you both. Right, Lyds," Allison teases.

Lydia is focused intently on her laptop at the small desk by the window.

"Lydia. Lydia?"

"Oh, what? Huh?"

"Earth to Lydia Martin. You okay?"

"No. I’m not."

"What? Why? What are you doing over there?"

"Research."

"For what?"

"Male pregnancies. And it’s not good."

The worrying tone in her voice draws all of their attentions. "What’s it say," Erica asks.

"That Stiles is at high-risk for miscarriage. That he has only a 25% chance of bringing the baby to full term, and that’s mainly due to Derek being a werewolf. If he’d gotten pregnant by another human then it’d be less than 10%. His Adderall also adds to him being high-risk. Not to mention the garbage he eats, and I’m pretty sure the three major trips to the ER he’s taken over the last 10 years don’t help either."

"Lydia, don’t do this. Don’t make yourself and us crazy with all this. Not now," Allison tells her
friend.

"I have to. I have to know. Because I have to understand and be there for him if it doesn’t work out. If he loses... I’m not trying to be the grey cloud over the picnic."

"I know, but--"

"He’s my friend. I love him. I love him more than anyone. Nothing against you guys, but he’s my favorite. He understands me and knows me. I understand him and know him. And I know that he’s completely wrapped up in joy right now, and I will not take that from him, but I also know that he will wreck himself completely if something bad happens. He will blame himself to no end and will fall so deep I don’t know if me, or Scott, or even Derek can bring him back. Because he wants this. More than anything. But he’s not thinking about risks and statistics and ugly facts, so I have to. I have to prepare him and myself, if he goes off the deep end because something bad happened. I will jump for joy and be the best godmother on this Earth when Stiles reaches his second trimester and everything’s okay. Until then this is what I’m doing."

"Driving yourself sick with worry?"

"Yes."

"You don’t really need to. I’m sure once Derek finds out he’ll take over that position from you," Cora jokes, trying to lighten the mood in the room.

"He can try."

Allison approaches Lydia. She rest her hand over Lydia’s, forcing her to stop typing. "You’re a good friend, Lydia. A great one."

"I just want Stiles happy. And if he can’t be, if something happens and takes that all away, then I want to be there to help fix it."

Allison bends down and pecks Lydia’s cheek. "How could you ever think you were incapable of love?"

Lydia’s brow furrows at Allison. How does she know about my conversation with Stiles?

"Walls are thick, but werewolf ears are thin. Scott could hear you."

"Your fiancé is nosy. I’ll have words with him later."

It’s all Lydia offers before she returns to her research.

---

STILES: I miss you already.

DEREK: I know. I miss you, too.

STILES: Can’t you tell Edmund to ‘fuck off’ and just turn around?

DEREK: You know I can’t.
DEREK: I'll be back in 2 days. Promise.

STILES: You’re going to miss Scott’s birthday.

DEREK: Oh, no! I’d hate to miss his reaction to the hot dog toaster!

STILES: You really are the worst.

DEREK: ;)
DEREK: But you still love me.

STILES: With every bit of me.
STILES: I have a surprise for you when you get back...

DEREK: With you, I always find myself cautious when it comes to surprises.

STILES: Hey! My surprises are awesome!
STILES: I didn’t hear you complaining when I surprised you for your birthday last year. ;)
xxx

DEREK: Why’d you bring that up? I’m already sitting in a car that smells like sex with you... Now, I have an erection.

STILES: Think about dead puppies. Or that troll you killed three years ago. Or Scott’s horrible dirty talk. Lol
STILES: Or my dad’s face that time he caught us on his couch.

DEREK: Dead puppies and slobbering trolls it is.
DEREK: What’s the surprise?

STILES: Wouldn’t be much of one if I told you, now would it?

DEREK: Can I have a hint...?

STILES: Nope. You’ll just figure it out and ruin everything. I want to see your face when it happens.

DEREK: Is it a good surprise?

STILES: The best surprise.

DEREK: Is it as good as my birthday last year?

STILES: Dead puppies, remember?! Lol


STILES: Kate Argent’s mangled, dead body...
STILES: ...Too soon?

DEREK: Nope. Did the trick though.
DEREK: Is it fucked I feel...better, with her dead? Having killed her myself.
STILES: NO! NEVER! She deserved to die and I’m glad you’re the one that got to do it! She was a horrible, evil person, Derek! Don’t you ever feel guilty about that!

DEREK: Okay. Just checking.

STILES: I love you. No matter what.

DEREK: I know, baby. I love you, too.

STILES: Please be safe. All of you. I’m worried.

DEREK: Say it.

STILES: Come back to me, or I will kill you.

DEREK: Always.
DEREK: I love you, Stiles.

STILES: I love you more.

DEREK: Not possible.
DEREK: Two days. I promise.

STILES: Okay.

DEREK: Bye.

STILES: Bye.

STiles puts his cellphone down on the nightstand. He lies down, staring at the ceiling, rubbing his flat tummy in soft circles, with a wide smile on his face. "I can not wait to tell your daddy about you."

He yawns, big and wide. "I think that’s your doing. Because it’s only three in the afternoon and I’m exhausted."

Stiles gets comfortable on the bed. "Alright. If you’re tired, we’ll take a nap."

Stiles grabs Derek’s pillow and pulls it close to him.

He yawns again. And in a matter of seconds, he’s out like a light...

Chapter End Notes

Did you like it...?
It’s night. The front step and path lights create a glow within the blackness. Lightning bugs help illuminate the dark as well.

Stiles sits on the front steps, with a smile on his face, listening to the crickets and katydids from the surrounding woods. He hasn't been able to rid himself of the wide grin since this afternoon, when he found out he was pregnant. It took ever ounce of strength he had not to tell Derek when they text, but the desire to see the werewolf’s face when he tells him was greater than the excitement of the moment.

In the distance, two bright lights move at a high speed toward Hale House.

Stiles keeps where he is, smiling even bigger to himself.

The lights get bigger, closer. It’s a car.

Stiles stands and opens the front door. He reaches his hand in the house, touching something along the wall in the foyer. He hits the code, opening the iron gate, and Stiles sits back down on the steps.

The car speeds through the gate! It’s the sheriff’s cruiser! It pulls to a stop, right in front of Stiles! John jumps out and rushes to Stiles. "Are you okay?! Is Derek okay?! You said it was an emergency!"

"I’m fine, dad. Derek’s fine, too. He had to go back home for a couple days, but he’ll be back."

"Then what is it? I called Melissa but I couldn’t get an answer."

"Sorry. I didn’t mean to panic you. I just knew you were working and really wanted to talk to you right away."

"So no one’s hurt or dead?"
"No."

"There’s no pack war we need to fight or anything? The FBI isn’t here?"

"Nope. Sorry."

"Stiles, do you know the definition of ‘emergency’, right?"

"Of course. Like when Derek and I run out of Nutella. That’s an emergency."

"I’m going to strangle you."

"There's no way you'd do that with me carrying your grandchild." Stiles watches his father's face change from white-hot anger to complete shock with an amused grin on his face.

"...What?"

"I’m pregnant. I’m going to have a baby."

"Stiles, stop--"

"I’m not joking."

"Are you--"

"The wolves are pretty sure, I need to schedule a doctor’s appointment when Derek gets back, but I think I am. Deaton thinks I am."

"Deaton...checked?"

"Not thoroughly, but yeah. Melissa’s here, too. I wanted to tell you alone, like this."

John sits beside Stiles, the heaviness of Stiles' news wanting him to be off his feet. "Does Derek know?"

"You think if Derek knew he’d be in San Francisco right now? He’d be closer to me than my own shadow."

John chuckles. "Yeah. He would be, wouldn’t he?"

"You haven’t said anything. Are you happy? Are you excited to be a grandpa," Stiles asks nervously.

'Grandpa'. John had always been an ally of the Hale Pack, way before he was elected sheriff of Beacon Hills (which they publicly endorsed and financially supported, thereby all but insuring him the position), but when Stiles told him that he and Derek were mates, he was a little more than weary, to say the least. Derek, though a good man in John's book, lived a dangerous, and criminal life, and John wanted better for Stiles. He didn't want him involved in the seediness of that world, the very world he himself had become apart of through his association with the Hales. But Derek promised to make sure Stiles finished school before anything serious, like marriage, happened between them, and he was true to his word. He knew Derek would give everything and anything it took to make Stiles happy, that he had no doubt about, but John wanted Stiles safe, and away from
harm. He didn't want him mixed up in any part of the 'business'. But Stiles being Stiles, not only made himself apart of it, he made himself and Derek kingpins, feared and revered all along the west coast.

It was then that he feared for his son, and the future children he knew he wanted with Derek. Not only was he scared that something could happen to his only child, but to his grandchildren. Every year Stiles wasn't pregnant, John had felt was a blessing in disguise; another year he felt a weight lift from his chest. But sitting here, now, with Stiles' big, bright eyes, filled with worry, hoping John's happy for him, happy for himself, the only emotion he feels is complete and utter joy.

John grabs Stiles and pulls him into a tight hug. Tears well in both their eyes answering Stiles’ worried questions.

"I wish mom were here. I wish I could tell her."

"Me, too. She’d be so happy."

"Yeah?"

John pulls them apart. He looks at Stiles. His son. His son with Claudia’s eyes and her smile. It hurts to look at him sometimes, he reminds John so much of her. Sometimes he even hears her in his voice, when it’s calm and thoughtful. But he misses her most in these moments. The ones where he’s proud of the man he’s raised and wishes she were here to see it. To see him graduate high school, sharing co-valedictorian with Lydia. To see him graduate with honors from Stanford. To see him save his friends countless times like a superhero and find the love of his life while doing so. To see him marry and create a unit so strong it’s feared by many and coveted by most. And now this. Now he’s starting a family. Having children of his own and there’s nothing he wants more than for her to be here, sharing this moment with him.

"Of course. You’re happy, so she’d be happy."

"She’d think Derek would be a good father, right?"

"Your mother would love Derek, and think he was the best father."

Stiles wipes his eyes, tears having made their way down his cheeks. "I’m terrified, you know. I’m probably not even a month along and I love this kid more than my own life."

"Yeah. That’s pretty much how it goes. Kind of never ends either."

Stiles hugs his father again. "I love you, dad."

"I love you, too, kiddo."

They squeeze each other a little tighter beneath the glowing lights and hum of nighttime bugs that fill their happy silence.

May 2016

*Derek enters the warehouse, looking more annoyed than anything. He’s in a suit, collar undone and tie loosened. Scott, Erica, Jackson, and Malia follow him inside with the same cool, apathetic attitudes.*

"Now, now, kids. Show some respect for our guests. It’s clearly their first time at a hostile takeover," Derek smirks. The betas laugh outright smugly.

A tall, man, about late 20s, with long, blonde hair in a leather vest and motorcycle boots stands before them-- Roman. He’s backed by two other men and a woman.

"Hale."

"Alpha Hale," Derek corrects.

"This is your pack? They look like children."

"They practically are, but nonetheless, excellent at what they do. Which you’ll find out about soon enough. What do you want, Roman?"

"Fresno."

"Can’t have it. Not only have I given it to my uncle Peter, had I not, I still wouldn’t give it to you. For one, it’s my fucking territory. Two, you’re not a Hale, so why would I even consider rolling over and giving you something you don’t deserve? And three, this feeble attempt at stealing my territory ranks about a 3.1 on my scale of weak pack wars. So I’ll tell you what I am going to do: I going to let my betas subdue your betas so they can watch you submit then apologize to me for trying to encroach on my territory. Then I’m going to let them snap each of your betas’ necks, so they die knowing their deaths were in vain, and completely your fault. Then I’m going to let you go so you’ll end up an omega, and the guilt of destroying your own pack haunts you until you can no longer stand it and decide to put a wolfsbane bullet in your own head."

"I would never submit to you. I would never submit to a Hale. Especially not when I have your mate."

"What the hell are you talking about, Roman? It’s late. I’m exhausted. Get to the point please."

"I just did. I have your mate."

"You can’t have my mate, Roman. Because I don’t have a mate." Derek did have a mate, but only he and the boy knew that. And it matter not at all, given he hadn’t claimed him and made him his. The boy belonged to someone else.

"You don’t?"

"No."

"Is there not a human in your pack? A mouthy, loud one with copper-brown eyes and sweet, pink lips?"

Derek’s blood runs cold and his heart speeds up. His eyes flash red and fangs extend.

"Thought so," Roman says smugly.
"Stiles," Malia asks, worried and confused.

"You don’t have him. If you did I’d be able to smell him."

"Not if I gave him ‘Midnight Shade’."  

Derek’s anger turns to fierce worry. He’s seen what ‘Midnight Shade’ does to wolves, and humans. It’s potent, and the shuttering sickness that cripples a human body from it masks their scent with the smell of tar, burnt wood, and pond water. Which is all Derek can smell now.

Malia tries to lunge for Roman, but Derek holds her back!

"Oooo... She seems particularly upset. He did smell an awful lot like her when I grabbed him. I don’t think your mate’s being faithful to you, Hale."

Malia continues to try and make her way toward Roman, but Derek is a solid block of muscle; a wall she can’t move past. "I told you: he’s not my mate. He’s hers."

"It’s hard to tell if you’re lying."

"I’m not. Scott." Scott grabs Malia, holding her back so Derek can talk properly to Roman. "Bring him out here. I want to see him."

"Thought he wasn’t your mate."

"But he is a member of my pack."

"Pathetic. This is why humans don’t make good betas, Hale. They’re weak, making them a liability. You should know this."

"Go. Get. Him."

Roman smirks at Derek. "Of course." He gestures to one of his male betas. The beta retreats through a door off to the side.

Roman’s eyes find Erica in the tense silence. "Hey." He winks at her and smiles. "Want to move to Fresno?"

"Ugh. God. Really?" Roman’s female beta rolls her eyes at him. Seems Roman’s gross form of flirting isn’t just only irritating to Erica.

"Hey, ponytail," Jackson says, "Can we not fill the silence with your sloppy come ons with my pack-sister? I’d hate to kill you before my Alpha’s say-so."

Roman scoffs. "Right."

The male beta returns, practically dragging a sickly-looking Stiles. He’s barefoot and even paler than usual; sweaty, with dark circles around his eyes. His cheek is bruised, no doubt from a slug to the face, and his bottom lip is busted from an assumed second punch.

The beta drops him before Derek. Stiles tries to sit up, but ends up coughing up clots of blood on the dusty floor. Derek means to touch him, to bring his head up to look at him, but--
"I wouldn’t if I were you. You haven’t had the remedy. All he has to do is cough on you and your dead."

"Give me the Fae blood."

"Give me Fresno."

"Derek... Don’t..." Stiles manages weakly.

"I want the blood first. He’s dying."

"NO," Malia screams at the very real situation of Stiles dying.

"You’re right. He is." Roman takes a small vial of blood from his pocket and shows it to Derek. "Just this tiny bit of blood is worth 1/3 of your territory. This sad, little human is worth that much. Wonder what other territories I can squeeze from y--" Roman’s words are cut off by an arrow sticking straight into his heart!

And it all happens at once:

Roman falls to his knees, trying to pull out the arrow, but the wolfsbane dusted on it makes his hands burn!

Derek grabs the Fae’s blood and pulls Stiles into his arms. Derek doesn’t even bother unscrewing the cap, he snaps the vial in two, letting the red plasma fall into Stiles’ mouth.

Erica, Jackson and Malia rush toward Roman’s betas and attack!

Scott moves toward Roman. He’s spitting and sputtering black goo from his mouth. Scott extends his claws--

"Don’t. Let him suffer," Derek tells him.

Scott retracts his claws.

Roman goes into convulsions. Scott watches as black goo bleeds from his every orifice: ears, eyes, nose, mouth. Scott gags then covers his nose. "Christ."

Roman’s shaking turns into sporadic jerks...then a twitch...until he’s lying still. Quiet. Lifeless.

Derek continues to hold Stiles in his arms. The two of them and Scott stare at Roman’s dead body, oozing black blood and smelling of rot.

"So that’s Midnight Shade," Scott says reflectively.

"We...should get some...of that. Deaton...might have it." He’s recovering, but still exhausted, out-of-breath.

"I don’t think I could ever poison someone with it after seeing this."

"You’ll...get over it."

"That’s Allison’s arrow," Derek remarks.
Scott’s eyes widen. He takes a closer look at it protruding from Roman’s dead body. “It is.”

Derek and Scott turn to Stiles with questioning stares. "We might have to give that girl a second chance."

Derek helps Stiles sit all the way up.

"Idiots forgot to take my cellphone. I hid it in my pants. They were too afraid to touch me once they made me swallow that junk, before they had the remedy. By the way, we should get you salt water before the poison sets in you." Stiles is still weak. He grips Derek’s shoulders, trying to steady himself. Derek’s hands find Stiles’ waist, steadying the dizzy boy.

"Salt water," Scott asks.

"Fae’s blood is only a temporary antidote for werewolves against Midnight Shade. Pretty sure these dickheads didn’t know that. Salt water makes wolves puke, so all the poison will come out."

"You and Lydia scare me with what you do and don’t know."

"Thank you." Stiles groans in pain. Still hurting a bit from the poison. Derek holds him close. Stiles notices the black veins on Derek’s arms as a warm flood fills him. "Don’t!" Stiles grabs Derek’s arm. "It’ll move the poison through you quicker." Derek stops. Stiles still holds onto Derek’s arm. They share a moment. Looking at one another with so many questions, yet so relieved by the other. They want. They want to do the thing that people who were exhausted with worry, but then braced by gratitude do. They want to tell each other without spoken words of the comfort they now feel.

"Why’d you call Allison," Scott interrupts.

"I didn’t. She was calling me. She wanted to talk so I told her to meet me at the coffeeshop near the Berkley campus. Was kind of running late on account of me being kidnapped. She must have been calling--"

"To find out why you were late. You put her on speakerphone. She heard everything," Derek figures out.

Stiles nods. He sees the need in Scott’s face and the shuffling of his feet back and forth as his eyes dart toward the door. "Go get her. Please. I want to say ‘Thank you’." And with that, Scott is out the door in a flash.

"You clever idiot."

"Me? You’re the one that showed up with only four of your betas and didn’t know your human was kidnapped."

The corner of Derek’s mouth turns up a bit at Stiles’ teasing.

"Were you really going to give up Fresno for me?"

"...Yes."

"Why?"

"You know why."
Derek loves him. He’s told him that already. Twice. That and so much more, but Stiles had kept pulling away every time Derek revealed more and more of his feelings for him. Derek’s capacity to love him, in such a short amount of time, scares him. Stiles is a romantic, but of substance and depth. He prefers to take the long, paved road instead of the short, bumpy one. Uneven shortcuts are for the lazy and stupid. He’s a friends-to-lovers kind of guy. So the immediate tornado that is Derek Hale, sweeping into his life and stealing his heart in a matter of moments makes him weary and forces him to push back. That quick, hot like fire, burning passion, is not what love is to Stiles. It has its ups and downs, but for the most part it’s two people feeling each other out, finding out what makes the other tick, what makes them smile or cry, and the deep secrets they’ve buried for so long and have wanted to tell the right person. That’s love to Stiles, getting past the surface and swimming into the abyss that is this other person.

But it’s not like that with Derek, and he’s terrified. It scares the hell out of him that there’s this man he barely knows, who barely knows him, but yet he feels as though he knows all of Stiles’ secrets without him ever uttering a word.

Stiles likes to solve the riddle, to put the puzzle pieces together, and with Derek he feels they’ve already done that with each other. That they know each other. They’re familiar. They’ve met before, through time and space. Another life. And they’re meeting again. Such a devastating storm, picking him up and wrecking such havoc on his heart and mind, is too much. He can’t comprehend. He can’t give in. It’s new and intimidating and not how love goes. Not how he wants it to go.

But in this exact moment, Stiles wants to be swept away in the Derek Hale-cyclone. Derek Hale was ready to give up a third of his empire, territory that has been in his family for generations, for Stiles. So Stiles could live. And yet, Stiles didn’t want him to. He tried to tell him but all that came out was a bleeding name and a plea of “don’t.” He couldn’t let Derek’s pack crumble. He couldn’t let Derek look like a weak Alpha, especially not for him. But Derek would’ve. He would’ve in a heartbeat. For Stiles. And Stiles knows in this moment that that is what love is.

Stiles leans in, and kisses him. And Derek-- without thinking-- kisses him right back.

It’s not the first time their lips have met. They’ve kissed once before. That kiss was needy, urgent, and full of aching lust. This one, this one has the same need, but it’s close. Intimate. Like they’ve done it a million times before. And probably have, in past lives as other people, but with the same souls. With the same devoted kiss.

"Stiles?"

Stiles and Derek break apart, having forgot the three betas fighting the good fight against Roman’s trio. Erica, Jackson, and Malia’s hands are covered in blood. Their shirts, too. Erica’s mouth drips with it, having rip out a throat with her teeth.

But only one of them wears a look of confusion. Hurt. Anger. It’s a wash blend of emotion on the coyote’s trembling face. "Derek...?"

Derek can’t meet her eyes. But Stiles does, and he has nothing but shame in his own.

"Knew it."

"Shut up, Jackson," Erica snaps.

Stiles tries to stand with difficulty. It’s still a little hard with the Fae’s blood taking it’s time to work effectively. Derek finally moves, and helps him to his feet. "Malia..."
"I don’t understand."

Scott and Allison come through the door just then; Allison holding her bow and arrow. "Is everyone okay?"

No one says a word. Not knowing how to answer such a question at the moment.

Derek dry heaves interrupting the awkward silence!

"Derek," Stiles shouts.

Derek vomits clots of black blood.

"Erica. Jackson. Get him out of here and to a grocery store now! He needs salt water. And make sure you drink some, too." Erica and Jackson quickly grab Derek! "Malia--"

Malia, with tears in her eyes, shifts into her beta form and takes off out the open door, not bothering to look back.

Peter sits at the foot of the bed looking at his daughter. She’s wrought with sorrow as she stares blankly at the wall, curled into a tight ball with her knees pulled to her chest. A tray of food sits on the nightstand beside her head, untouched.

"Malia, you’re not 14 years old. You have to eat something."

She doesn’t move. Speak. Or blink for that matter.

"Malia, this is ridiculous. It’s been nine years. You have got to get over Stiles."

She finally moves. But only her glossy, wet eyes. As they glance at Peter then close tight. Her face strains a bit, as though she’s trying her best to not let the tears fall from her eyes. She sniffs, then opens her eyes. Her eyelashes glisten with bitter, hurt tears.

Peter lays a gentle hand on her arm. He’s been here, lying on the bed, thinking of nothing but the hurt. Of the stinging, burning feeling at the back of his throat from all the sobbing. He’s been here, paralyzed by sadness, unable to move. Knowing it’ll hurt to even more to close his eyes, because then he might sleep. Then he might sleep, and wake up the next morning, and in the briefest of moments forget what had hurt so bad. Why his chest feels heavy and cheeks and jaw are sore from the wails and cries and sobs. He forgets, but only for a moment, and then he remembers, and has to start the day all over again, torn from the inside/out over the loss of the thing he clung to the most-- love.

He’s only ever loved twice. In his whole life. The first was a boy, shrouded in mystery and secrecy. Their clandestine affair creating such sweltering passion, Peter revealed himself in only 5 weeks of their first kiss. The boy was scared and ran from him, but came back the next day full of apologies and love confessions. They weren’t mates, but they could have been. They could have been if the stars had aligned and connected their souls, but they didn’t. And they weren’t. They were just two boys, a werewolf and a hunter, who found each other’s secrets and kept them locked in their hearts. “We were kids that didn’t know better.” That’s what the hunter told him after Peter confessed to still being in love after all those years apart. He should have known he’d still be so scared, even as a grown man. It was the very thing that drew them further and further away. So
Peter stopped trying. He stopped trying to recapture a youthful love that seemed to only exist in fairytales. He had memories, and kept secrets. Maybe that was enough.

His second love was a coyote. A curvy woman with golden hair and wild ways. Peter was immediately drawn to her and her knack for trouble. She was open and free and he liked that. But it should have been his first clue as to why she wasn’t right for him. Such an untamed spirit can’t be tied down. It has to roam. It has to fly. It has to paddle through. It has to dance. Peter knew that, but he ignored it. He ignored the flashing red lights that told him to ‘stop’ and think this through. And typically those lights looked an awful lot like Talia Hale. But he was in love. He was in love and wanted to keep the wildling. He wanted the coyote to stay and be his and he told her as much.

The coyote smiled a slick grin a gave herself to the cunning wolf. And it was good. They were happy.

But then the coyote was pregnant and motherhood was never apart of the plan. It was the wolf’s plan, but never the coyote’s. She needed to run through the deserts of Nevada and Arizona and New Mexico, with the hot sun beating against her skin. She needed to cool in the rivers and streams. She needed to hunt and trap and trick in the wild terrains. A baby would have ruined all that.

Yet, she loved the wolf. She loved Peter with her whole spirit, and for him, she’d try. She’d try to be the wife and mother he wanted, even though she knew she really couldn’t.

The open air and blistering sun called out to her. Just like the full moon calls to him. And one night, as he slept, she slipped from his hold and into the darkness to answer the call. Leaving behind a note with the words: “I’m sorry, Peter” beside the bed and their sleeping daughter in her crib.

For Peter there were no mates. Just desperate loves, filling his heart with hope, only to break it. And now it was his daughter’s turn to know the loss of love, and the pain of never really being over it. He wished for nothing more than for her to never have known such disappointment, because it will only leave her bitter, and antagonizing. It will turn her into him, and Peter’s never wanted anyone to be like him.

A soft knock on the door draws Peter’s attention. Stiles. He can smell him and the sticky sweetness radiating from his pores through the door.

He crosses the room and opens the door. Stiles.

"Let me talk to her."

"She won’t say anything."

"It’s okay. She doesn’t have to."

Peter is visibly weary of letting the source of his daughter’s emotional torment talk to her in such a fragile state.

"Just a few minutes."

"Is this for her, or your conscious?"

"Her."

"Your heartbeat sounded weird. I couldn’t tell if you were lying or not."
Stiles learned a long time ago how to trick a werewolf into believing his lie by telling a half-truth instead. "10 minutes, Peter. If I’m even 5 seconds over my limit you can come and yank me out of here."

Peter glances back at Malia lying on the bed, still unmoved. "10 minutes."

"Thank you."

Peter comes out of the room as Stiles walks in. "Jesus. It’s like you bathed in maple syrup," Peter yawps in regards to Stiles’ pregnancy smell.

Stiles closes the door in Peter’s face and locks it.

He grabs the desk chair and puts it in front of Malia’s face. As soon as he sits, she rolls over, turning her back to him.

"I’m not going to tell you I’m sorry. I’ve said it too many times over the years and now it has no meaning. They’re just words that sound more and more pathetic with each apology. And I can’t keep apologizing, Malia. Especially if I’m not forgiven, but just made to look as though I am. And the more I apologize to you, the more it feels like I’m ashamed of Derek and what I have with him, and I’m not. I will never be ashamed of meeting him. Of marrying him. Of being his mate. And of carrying his child, Malia. I love him. He means everything to me. And yes, in a way you never did. Which is why you need to get over me. You need to let how I hurt you go. I’m not worth this. No one that breaks your heart is worth the anguish afterward, because if they were, they’d have never broken it in the first place."

"Why didn’t you love me? I loved you so much."

"I did love you, Malia. I’ve told you that. And I meant it every time I said it."

"Then why?"

"You’re asking questions you already know the answers to. Derek’s my mate. We’re made for each other. It’s fixed in my brain, my DNA. I am hardwired to love that man and want to spend the rest of my life with him. And he’s the same with me. He owns my soul, Malia. I know that sounds grotesquely overdramatic and Harlequin, but it’s true. It’s the best description I can give you of how he makes me feel. This is about me and Derek. It wasn’t you. You were not inadequate. You didn’t do anything wrong. I didn’t hate you. I didn’t want to hurt you. You were enough. More than enough. It was me. I couldn’t give you what you wanted, or what you needed. I couldn’t measure up to the desires of this beautiful girl because I was too busy being selfish and lusting after her cousin. You keep think it’s you, Malia. That’s why you can’t let this go. You keep thinking every milestone I hit with Derek is a dig at you. That if you somehow did this or that right, had you been different, it would be you I married. It would be you having our child. And that’s not the case. We’re not fated for one another. So at some point, our relationship would have ended. I wish it had on better terms, but it didn’t. And that’s my doing. But I can’t apologize for it anymore. I’ve said it too much and too often. The words are hollow now."

Stiles waits. He sees her reflection in the wall mirror. Her eyes are open, darting around in her head, thinking; taking in all he just said and looking for a response. "Malia. I would never want you to leave the pack, but if you need to find another home somewhere else to do it, then you have my support."

Malia bolts upright, turning to Stiles with shocked yellow eyes.
Stiles remains cool, even.

"You’re throwing out of the pack?!"

"I want you to stay. You’re a Hale; you should stay, but if me being your Alpha’s mate is too much, if me having his baby is too much and you need to break free, then I understand. And I will always keep a place for you here, in this pack, with your family."

"I don’t want to leave. Despite all this between us-- you, me, and Derek-- I love this family. I love this pack. Where would I go? If I left, I’d be an omega. Is that what you want?"

"No. Never. I was thinking we’d try and find your mom, and you could stay with her for a while."

"If she wanted me to be apart of her life, she would have stuck around. I don’t need her."

"Now say that about me."

Automatically, her lips purse together in a thin, tight line.

He sits on the bed beside her. "Tell me all the things you’ve ever wanted to say to me."

"No."

"Fine. I’ll start. I’m an asshole. I’m a selfish dick who only looks like he goes above and beyond for the people he loves, but that’s not true. Because I loved you and I hurt you. Badly. I kissed your cousin while we were dating and wanted to do more, but he stopped me. He felt guilty and knew it wasn’t right, but I tried to persuade him anyway. So that makes me a slut on top of being a selfish dick. You going to join in? I can do this by myself all day."

She worries her bottom lip between her teeth.

"Come on. I see you itching to say something..."

"You’re... You’re a liar. You’re honest with everyone but me. You didn’t tell me you had feelings for my cousin, my Alpha. You didn’t tell me you kissed him. You didn’t tell me you were the one that went after him. That makes you a coward, too."

"Which is fitting considering I’m a human."

"And you’re weak. I think it’s weird that an Alpha is mated to a human, or at least one he hasn’t turned yet."

"I don’t want to be turned."

"So you’re stupid, too."

"Of course I am. I hurt a really lovely girl, who deserves a hell of a lot more than me and my empty apologies and half-assed regrets at her feet."

Her eyes fill with tears again.

"You’re going to wake up one day, and it’s not going to hurt anymore. I’ll just be this skinny, pale kid you used to date when you were in high school. And the only reason you even know me still is
because Peter brings you back home for Christmas every year. Other than that, you’re living the open-air dream in Wyoming with your three cubs and were-husband in his pack."

Tears fall down her face at Stiles’ nice description of the life he hopes she leads in the future. "You want that for me?"

"I want you to know that I am not the end of your life. That love for you did not stop with a spastic, big-mouthed kid that married your cousin. I want you to know what real, hardcore true love is, and it gratefully wasn’t me. I would have been no good to you, Malia, as a mate. But I can be a good Alpha-mate, a good pack mom, and tell you so. All roads don’t end at Stiles. They keep going until you find what you’re looking for. What you’re supposed to have."

"And it’s not you." It’s not a question. Nor is it an epiphany. Just a small glimmer of a realization.

"It’s not."

She nods, letting it sink in a bit.

Stiles stands, making his way toward the door--

"Stiles. Say you’re sorry. One more time."

"I’m sorry I hurt you, Malia. I never meant to."

"Your apology is accepted. But my forgiveness will take time."

"I appreciate that. Thank you."

Stiles opens the door and slips from the room.
"Want To See How Weak I Can Make You...?"

Chapter Summary

Boyd and Valerie accompany Derek to his meeting with Edmund.

Chapter Notes

I really enjoyed writing this chapter. Especially the flashback scene :)

I have a close friend named 'Stephanie', but her name is spelled 'STEFANI' which I thought would make a cool vampiress name, thus...

See the end of the chapter for more notes

M.I.A.’s “Y.A.L.A.” bumps throughout the club at nearly sonic levels. The whole place is lit by blue laser lights and blue LED lights giving everything a sapphire tint.

Derek, Boyd, and Valerie follow a stunning blonde woman in stilettos and smokey eye make up down a long corridor.

They exit the corridor and are brought to the center of the club. The dance floor is packed as the DJ bumbs the party tune.

Beautiful waitresses in short, black dresses with bright, red lipstick work the bottle service area as they playfully flirt with unattractive men on black, velvet sectionals while pouring them stemless glasses of thick, red liquid. Blood. Vampire blood.

Their hostess maneuvers them through the crowd of dancing, sweaty patrons. Go-go dancers mirror each other on either side of the DJ booth, sliding down silver poles, slow and enticing. They make their way to a tufted, leather door with a port hole window. Their hostess knocks on the door twice as she smiles seductively at Derek. He ignores the arousal radiating from her as her fangs extend in a vixen smile.

The door opens and a very, good-looking man in a dark suit holding a 9mm by his side stands in the doorframe. They step through. The music is muffled now as they pass through a carpeted hallway aligned with numbered doors.

They turn the corner to a lobby area with one elevator, guarded by two burly men in suits wearing dark sunglasses holding semi-automatic weapons.

Their hostess removes a gold key card from her cleavage and presses it to card reader. The elevator doors open and they step inside. The doors close. She presses the button for the 5th floor. Their hostess, Stefani, turns to Derek: "So nice seeing you again."

"Is it?"
"I think so." She runs her red painted finger down his tie.

"Please don’t. I’d like to remain civil."

"There’s no fun in that." She winks at him.

"Not here for fun."

"Shame." The doors open on their floor. "Because I think you and me could have a lot of fun. I like wolves."

"So does my husband."

"He can watch... Or I could."

"No. Thank you."

"Wolves. So monogamous." She exits the elevators. The werewolves follow. They enter a large, windowless office with modern decor of black, cream and bright white. The floor is a shiny, taupe-colored linoleum that bounces their reflections like a mirror. They approach the desk made of black glass. "Have a seat. I’ll get Edmund." Stefani disappears through a side door.

"I think she likes you, D," Valerie teases. Derek rolls his eyes at his sister. "God, I hope we’re not here long. Vamps and their overt sex vibes irritate me."

"Truly," Boyd adds.

"Really," Derek asks his No.2.

"It’s like being in a room with 20 Ericas. I can barely handle the one at times," Boyd says with a straight face.

Derek and Valerie can’t help but snicker. It’s true.

The side door opens and Stefani comes out. Followed by a gorgeous, blonde-haired man in a black suit sans tie, Edmund. "My apologies. I was eating."

Stefani taps her chin at him. He grabs a tissue off his desk and wipes the blood from his face.

"My apologies again."

He finally gives them more than a passing glance, and his eyes fall right on Boyd. They widen as he stutters a bit. Taken aback at the muscled, chocolate-colored man sitting to Derek’s right. "Hello," he smiles sultrily to Boyd.

Boyd merely nods.

"And what’s your name?"

Boyd’s eyes narrow at him quizzically. "Boyd."

"First or last?"
"Last."

Edmund takes a seat at his desk. "You not going to tell me the whole thing?"

"Vernon Boyd."

"Can I call you ‘Vernon’?"

"Everyone calls me Boyd."

"What if I don’t want to be ‘everyone’?"

Boyd sighs. Not in the mood to be hit on by the sexy vampire. Derek saves him: "Edmund. You asked me here for a reason."

"Are we skipping pleasantries," the vampire asks.

"You already did."

"Not with Vernon." Edmund flashes Boyd a sexy, million dollar smile.

"Edmund," Derek grits.

"Right. Brass tacks. Two of your betas have been nosing around my club. Or at least they were."

"Had nothing to do with you."

"It’s my club. Has everything to do with me."

"I meant not you directly."

"I’d still like an explanation."

"They were tailing someone for me. The person they were looking for frequents your club."

"You could have asked me about them instead."

"The situation is delicate."

"How delicate?"

"And private."

Edmund leans back in his chair. "I thought you and I came to an understanding."

"We have."

"A mutual trust."

"We do."

"Yet secrecy abounds."
"I’m sure there are things you do in my territory that I don’t know about."

"Nothing that would make our trust wavier. Such as baby wolves roaming around my nightclub."

"They said they couldn’t get in."

"Exclusive club. You need a member key. Not to mention they were underdressed."

"You have a dress code," Valerie asks, incredulously.

"It’s an upscale club, not a house party. Or did you not notice," he addresses Valerie. He turns back to Derek. "What if I sent Stefani here to snoop around your bordello? Would you like that? Would you like it if I told you it was none of your business when you asked me about it afterward?"

Derek glowers.

"Thought so."

Derek looks at Boyd. Boyd gives a slight nod, encouraging him to explain everything to Edmund.

"Agent Haigh," Derek says.

"What about him?"

"He’s collecting intel on my pack. I want to know more about him than he knows about us. One of the things I do know is that he comes here. A lot. And spends an awful lot of money."

"He does."

"On vamp blood? A girl? Or both?"

Edmund sighs. "Well. This is disappointing."

"Meaning?"

"Had it been anyone else I’d gladly give you all the dirt you’d like."

"But?"

"Haigh is my rat. He’s my eyes on the inside of the bureau. And he owes me a lot of money. I need to keep him under thumb, and squeeze him when I can. I can’t have the both of us pinching him. He’ll panic and do something stupid. Like flee. Or tell the truth. I’m 300 years old, and not once have I seen the inside of an interrogation room. I’d like it to remain that way. You’ll just have to find another way to get the FBI off your backs." He smiles seductively at Boyd. "Or we can trade my information...for something else."

"No, thank you. I’m not gay. Nor am I into vampires," Boyd tells him.

"Austere."

"Direct," Boyd counters.
"All honesty is. I appreciate it."

"Good. I’d like for you to respect it as well," Boyd tells him.

"Fair enough." Edmund smiles to himself. "You look and sound just like him. It’s staggering."

"Who," Boyd can't help but to ask.

"A boy I used to know. And love," Edmund tells him.

"Are we done with the trip down memory lane," Valerie asks, annoyed.

"You always bring a sassy one. The redhead, then the skinny boy with the stunning eyes. Now her," Edmund smiles at Derek.

"My sister, Valerie," the Alpha informs him.

"You’re just as beautiful as Derek," Edmund beams at her.

"Does everything out of vampires’ mouths have to be an invitation for sex," Valerie groans.

Edmund laughs. "That was merely a compliment. Come ons are reserved for boys that look like long lost loves."

Boyd rolls his eyes at Edmund.

"Edmund," Derek says sternly.

"I can’t help you with Haigh, Derek," Edmund responds, getting back on track with their conversation. "But I can assist with any other plan you come up with. I’m sure that sassy boy you brought last time will inspire something brilliant."

"My husband. Stiles."

"Smart and adorable. Good choice."

"Anything else you wanted to discuss?"

"You will respect our truce, won’t you?"

"Yes. We’re better allies if we both do."

"I agree."

Derek stands. Boyd and Valerie follow suit.

"I think this is the most civil we’ve ever been with one another," Edmund says. He stands. "I like it. Much better than us fighting."

"Much," Derek agrees.

Stefani approaches Derek and hands him two gold key cards. Member keys.
"If you ever care for a good night of debauchery," Edmund says.

"Not much for debauchery. Can I give them to my betas," Derek asks.

"If they promise not to spy."

Derek nods his promise to Edmund. They shake hands.

Stefani leads the wolves toward the elevator. The doors open as soon as they approach.

"Hope to see you again, Vernon," the vampire smiles.

Boyd catches a soft, hopefully look on Edmund’s face just as the elevator doors close.

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October 2016

A minimalist, masculine Pacific Heights apartment. The room is bathed in soft, fire light from the fireplace. Derek sits on his sofa reading Wuthering Heights by the fire light.

He’s interrupted by the sound of the front door opening and closing. Derek puts down his book. He can’t smell the intruder. His eyes flash red.

Footsteps approaching...

He stands, claws extended, ready to take on the "unfamiliar" who dared to come into his home unannounced. A low growl erupts from his chest.

Stiles steps into the entry way. "It’s me. Sorry."

Derek’s claws recede. Fangs gone. Red eyes turn to soft, green ones with flecks of gold in them.

"I should have knocked."

"How’d you get in?"

Stiles throws a set of keys to Derek from across the room. Derek catches them with one hand, not taking his eyes of Stiles who leans against the wall with his hands in his pockets. He bites his bottom lip, finding the wood floor interesting suddenly. "I found your spare key and made a copy a couple weeks ago."

"Why?"

"Somebody should have a key to the Alpha’s place. In case something happens."

Derek looks at the two house keys in his hand. Still warm from Stiles touch. He’s right. He should have given someone a pair. He’s been embarrassingly locked out of his apartment before, with his spare set sitting on his desk and his usual ones dropped somewhere between the farmer’s market and his house. He tosses them back to Stiles. "Keep them."

Stiles puts them back into his jacket pocket.
Derek looks at him again: shoulders hunched up, hands in pockets, eyes focused anywhere but on Derek, leaning from foot-to-foot, worrying his bottom lip. He’s so small and insecure.

"Stiles. What’s wrong?"

Stiles’ eyes finally find Derek’s. "...I’m tired of playing games, Derek."

Before Derek can formulate a response, Stiles is across the room, hands cupped on Derek’s face, kissing him.

Derek gives in, opening his mouth. Stiles’ tongue slides in Derek’s mouth and it’s electric. It races through Derek like a currant and makes him grab a fist full of Stiles’ jacket, pulling him closer.

Stiles is pushing. Moving them both. Backing Derek to the sofa. Their lips never parting. Not even as Derek falls back onto the cushions with Stiles stuck to him like Velcro.

Stiles turns the kiss hungry, his fingers running madly through Derek’s hair. Derek meets his salaciousness with his own.

Stiles moans filthily into Derek’s mouth. He keeps one hand in Derek’s jet black hair, while the other lifts the hem of Derek’s shirt and crawls under it, running teasingly up and down his abs.

Derek suddenly breaks their kiss, slightly out of breath.

Stiles leans in to continue, but Derek keeps him at bay, pushing him back with his hand.

"What’s the matter," Stiles asks.

"I can’t do this with you," Derek tells him.

"Why? I want to."

"I know you do."

"I know you want to, too."

"I do...but with my Stiles."

For a split second, Stiles looks ready to protest, but then his eyes narrow close at Derek and the corner of his mouth turns up in a wicked grin. The fire light was giving him a false, warm glow but now as that evil, little grin peers into Derek, he can clearly see how pale and translucent Stiles’ skin is, and the deep, black circles under his eyes.

"How’d you know?"

"I know the difference between kissing Stiles and kissing someone that isn’t."

"But you enjoyed it."

"Moment of weakness."

"Want to see how weak I can make you?" He grinds on Derek’s lap.

Derek grabs his hips. "Stop that."
"Why? You like it?"

"...Yes."

"Then let me keep doing it."

"I can’t."

"Why?"

"You’re not Stiles."

"Jesus. You’re such a boy scout."

"You obviously don’t know me well. So I know you’re definitely not Stiles."

"But I could be." He plants a soft kiss on Derek’s lips. "I look just like him--"

"Because you took his body--"

"Sound just like him--"

"Again, because you took his body."

"Bet I taste like him, too."

"No. You don’t. Remember? That’s how I can tell."

"I didn’t mean my mouth." Stiles drags his fingernails gently along the back of Derek’s head, making him shudder a bit. "Does the big bad Alpha like that?"

"Stop... Please..."

"Oooo... Begging. I like begging." He does it again, dragging his fingernails along Derek’s scalp. "God, you’re sexy." Stiles nuzzles Derek’s neck.

"...You, too."

"Yeah? Really? I’ve been in cuter boys."

"Stiles is very sexy."

"How sexy? Do you wake up hard every morning thinking about him in your dreams?" He kisses Derek’s neck, turning the Alpha into a puddle.

"...Yes."

Stiles continues leaving light kisses along Derek’s neck.

"Are they wet dreams?"
"...Sometimes."

"Do you take care of it later? In the shower?"

"Yes."

Stiles finds the hem of Derek’s shirt again. "When you do, do you jerk off, or finger yourself?" He pinches Derek’s nipple.

"I don’t know. Both. Sometimes."

Stiles bites his lip with a naughty ache on Derek’s face. "I would love to see you finger yourself." He nips at Derek’s chin.

"I’d rather watch you do it."

"Yeah? With your name tucked in my mouth, ready to scream it out when I come?"

Stiles gives Derek a slow, sensual kiss.

Derek growls. "You have to stop."

"You’re hard."

Derek can hardly breathe he’s trying with all his might to resists this, but failing.

"So am I. Touch it."

"No."

Stiles bounces on Derek’s lap. "Please."

Derek’s grip returns to Stiles’ hips, stilling him. "No."

Stiles grazes his lips lightly against Derek’s own. "Please, Derek. I want you to touch it. You have my permission."

"No. Stop it. Now."

"Don’t you want me? I want you. I want you so bad, Derek. I feel it in my skin. I’m so hard for you." Stiles leans into Derek’s ear: "I want to get on my knees and you to fuck my mouth until I can’t talk. Until I’m drooling and gagging and my jaw is sore."

Derek throws Stiles off his lap and onto the other end of the sofa! He sees out of the corner of his eye, Stiles’ attempt at moving closer to him. "Stay," he snarls.

Stiles gives a fake pout before laughing outright at Derek. "You are so wrecked over me. Fuck, man."

Derek leans forward with his elbows on his knees, forehead on his hands, eyes closed. He needs to breathe. Breathe. He can’t let this thing, this not-Stiles, break him down.

"You’re such this big, bad Alpha, tearing apart your enemies literally, but when it comes to some scrawny kid with moles, you lose your shit." S
"You’re not a succubus," Derek acknowledges.

"In your case I’d be an incubus, but still, no, I’m not."

"You’re not a sprite, or nymph."

"How do you know?"

"They can’t possess. Give me a little credit."

"Which means...?"

"Which means, you’re either a daemon, or Sin Eater."

"Hmm."

"Either way, you’re feeding off something in Stiles."

"Like?"

"...Lust."

"For you, big guy. And only you." He rubs his palm against his crotch. Derek grabs his wrist, forcing him to stop. But Stiles just looks at him with a smile. "Those red eyes really are just the sexiest things ever."

"You sound like someone told you they were."

"Someone did. Stiles. I can access every thought and feeling he’s ever had for you. And most are really the Not Safe For Work kind."

"He likes my Alpha eyes?"

"You’re a 14 year old girl. Yes. He does. It’s the thing that turns him on the most. Gets him hard and leaking. His likes the wolf in you. That hard commanding voice, the brutality, the violence. Couple that with looking like a Grecian god and you’ve got yourself a hot-and-bothered emissary."

"He’s not my emissary. Laura is."

"Oh, please. You treat him like he is regardless. Plus, faeries and druids make better emissaries. You know that. And isn’t Stiles part Fae?"

"So is that all I am to Stiles? A dom kink that looks good with his shirt off?"

"No. But I don’t feed off love and romance, so I leave that box alone. Besides, that’s private."

"Telling me all the sexual fantasies and thoughts he has isn’t?"

"It is. But a girl’s got to eat. He’s got one of those, too, by the way."

"One of what?"

Derek raises his eyebrows. His mouth has suddenly gone dry. "What?"

"Well, it’s more like a Little Red Riding Hood thing."

Derek’s ears turn red. His heartbeat thumbs so hard and fast it sounds like it might burst through his chest and bleed onto the floor.

"I’m not a wolf, but I can hear that." Stiles puts his hand on Derek’s chest, right where his heart is. "And I can smell you, too."

Derek grabs Stiles and puts a hard, brutal kiss on his lips! "Stiles" gives back just as hard. Just as brutal. Just as needy.

Derek pulls Stiles into his lap. Stiles tears of his jacket.

Derek stands with him; Stiles legs wrap around his waist. "I am so goddamn hungry for you," he tells the werewolf.

"Open your mouth."

He does. Derek’s lips graze Stiles’ parted ones. Derek slowly and searing, slides his tongue inside Stiles’ mouth. And licks. Stiles whimpers, bringing a mischievous smile to Derek’s face. "You like that?"

Stiles nods like a wanton. "Do it again."

He does. Stiles is melting in Derek’s arms, but Derek holds him there in his muscular grip. "You need it that bad?"

"I’ll kill you if you don’t give it to me."

"Ask nicely."

"Derek, will you please take me to your bedroom and fuck me?"

"Since you asked nicely..."

Stiles kisses Derek with as much force as he can. Derek lets him take possession of his lips, biting them red and raw as he makes his way to the bedroom.

Derek drops Stiles on the bed with a bounce. Stiles immediately kicks his shoes off. Nothing but lust in his eyes while he stares up at Derek.

Derek takes his shirt off. Stiles swallows hard at the sight before him. He gets on all fours and crawls to the end of the bed. He licks Derek, in one long, filthy swipe, from his navel to his collarbone. "Come here. I can’t wait."

Derek hovers over Stiles as they inch up the bed. Stiles can’t keep his lips off of Derek, desperately kissing him on every inch of exposed skin. "

"Look at me."
Stiles obeys.

Derek rests a gentle hand on Stiles’ face, cupping his cheek. He looks down at the younger man, bathed in shadows cast from the fireplace in the other room and street lights from the curtain-less window. Derek runs his thumb along Stiles’ lips. “You’re so beautiful.”

“So are you.”

“Tell me you love me. I need to hear it.”

Stiles sits up on his elbows, eyes boring into Derek’s mint and gold-colored ones. “I love you. I love you so much. Make love to me.” Stiles unzips Derek’s jeans. “Please.”

Stiles surges upward to kiss Derek. Derek pulls back teasingly. He smirks when Stiles whimpers. He leans down, giving Stiles a chaste kiss on his lips. Stiles moans.

Derek’s lips move to Stiles’ neck, sucking, biting, and licking lightly on his pulse. Stiles keens, digging the pads of his fingers into Derek’s shoulders. “Derek... Mark me.”

Derek lifts up, grabs Stiles’ wrists, and pins them above his head. “You want me to mark you?”

Stiles nods. “Yes. Please.”

Derek’s eyes flash red.

“That really is hot as fuck.”

Derek kisses him. It’s merciless, indecent and full of everything he’s been fighting until now. It’s lust and love and crazy with need. They’re both hungry. Derek’s wanted this since meeting Stiles two years ago. He’s done nothing but think of this. Of he and Stiles in his bed filling the cold silence of his apartment with hard groans, breathy moans, and dirty whispers.

Derek abruptly stops their intense kiss.

“What? What’s wrong? What’s the matter,” the daemon asks.

“I’m sorry.” Derek sits up and slides off the bed.

“Derek. Derek, what’s--” Stiles is cut off by the feel of cold metal against his wrists holding him in place. He looks above his head: he’s handcuffed to the headboard!

Derek stands and puts his shirt back on.

“Derek?” Stiles yanks on the handcuffs. “Derek! I like a little kink but this isn’t funny! Stop it now. Uncuff me please.”

Derek turns on the light. “I can’t do that.”

“Why not?”

Derek doesn’t answer. He simply walks out of the room.

“Derek! Derek!! Why can’t you?!! Come back here!”
Derek comes back into the room with his cellphone on his ear. "Yeah... No... I don’t think he’s a Sin Eater. Probably a lechery daemon..."

"Who are you talking to?"

"No, he’s not hurt... I’m not... He’s okay... Yeah... Yeah... Okay... Thanks, Deaton." Derek hangs up.

"Who’s Deaton? I like threesomes but not handcuffs. Let me out, baby, please."

"Don’t call me ‘baby’.

"Why? You like it?"

Derek doesn’t respond.

"Oh, I get it. You want only the boy to call you that. Well, maybe it’ll happen. One day. When he finally gets his head out of his ass and listens to his soppy feelings for you. But for now, we can play. Just take the cuffs off."

"Can you sit up?"

Stiles has enough slack to maneuver himself upward on his knees. "You going to take these off now, big and sexy?"

"No. I just wanted to know how restricted your movements were."

"Derek, what are you doing? I thought we were having fun."

"We were. Too much fun. I almost lost control."

"That’s what sex is. It’s losing control to another person. In another person."

"I know that."

"But you only want to do that with him? Pathetic. You’re the whiniest prey I’ve ever had."

"Prey?"

"Yes. I feed off his lust to get in the body, and I feed off yours to make sure I stay there a little longer."

"So if I did fuck you, you’d be here permanently?"

"...I think I’ve said too much."

Derek scoffs.

"What does it matter? I have his face, his body, his voice, his mannerisms, and all his memories."

"But you’re not him. The deep down parts that really make him. You don’t have that and never will. Without it you’re just a security guard looking after a bank vault."
"Ouch. That stung." He looks genuinely hurt by Derek’s analogy.

Derek rounds the bed and sits at the head by not-Stiles. "Look, as far as daemons go, I’d take you any day of the week over everything else that’s out there. This is by far the simplest thing I’ve ever had to deal with, but you’re not him. And as much as I want to cave and give us both what we want, it’ll never be real."

"Well, tell me what you need and I’ll be that for you."

"And why would you do that?"

"...Because I like you. I like what he likes about you."

Derek really doesn’t want to be touched by the daemon’s confession, but he can’t help the slight uptick in his heartbeat at it. "I’m pretty sure you’ve liked all your prey."

"Not true! There are some real scary assholes out there."

"A daemon scared of a few measly humans?"

"Some of the stuff that gets people off makes them more demonic than me. I’ve been doing this for thousands of years. I’ve seen some sick shit."

"Then don’t go blindly possessing people!"

"I don’t anymore! I stopped doing that centuries ago! I watch them first now!"

"Is that how you found Stiles?"

"I saw him at the library. I walked by and he was daydreaming. A dirty fantasy. I could smell it on him. He was practically vibrating. So I watched him for a few days. Then I saw him talk to you. And you both smelled amazing. So I knew you wanted each other. I just couldn’t figure out why you two weren’t all over each other. I certainly wanted to climb you like a tree when I saw you."

"It’s complicated."

Stiles yanks on his handcuffs for emphasis. "You don’t seem to be letting me go soon so..."

Derek concedes. "He was dating my cousin. She dumped him when she saw us kissing."

"Wow. You two don’t seem like cheaters."

"We aren’t. We just..."

"The pull was too strong."

"You ever prey on mates before?"

"Yes."

"It all feels wrong to him. Or weird rather."
"He’s not exactly ‘in the closet’, so what is it that’s weird?"

"He’s scared. The last person he loved unconditionally left him forever."

"Who?"

"His mother. They were really close."

"Is that how it felt with you when you met him? Was it unconditional and instant?"

Derek smiles fondly, remembering meeting Stiles for the first time. "...Yes. It was like the whole world collapsed, and we were the only two standing. Everything else faded away and there was just us. And I just knew."

"Knew what?"

"That he was mine."

"Wow. No wonder you can’t fuck me."

"I can most definitely fuck you. I just won’t."

"I know you’re turned on by me. It’s like you get right there, then pull back. Tell me what it is. I’ll fix it."

"You can’t."

"I’ll try. What is it?"

"You don’t smell like him."

"I can fix that! What cologne does he wear?"

"None. I mean his smell. The way he, as a person, smells. His feelings and memories and thoughts. His essence. They smell through him."

"Oh."

"I’m sorry. Scent is very important to wolves. It’s how we react and how we show emotions. Stiles eyes turn up at Derek. They’re child-like and nervous. "What do I smell like?"

Derek shrugs. "Nothing. You don’t have a smell."

"Nothing? I don’t smell like anything? Even in his clothes?"

"Well, you smell a little like me. But, you know...we’ve been kind of, um, drying humping since you got here, so..."

Stiles snorts. "You’re adorable. Come here. Kiss me."

"That’s not a good idea."
"You made it clear you’re not going to fuck me-- which disappoints me for numerous reasons-- but there’s no harm in kissing."

"Tell that to my heartbroken cousin."

"She’ll get over it in time. Is her name ‘Malia’?"

"Yes. Why?"

"He’s got a fantasy or two in here about her. They’re pretty basic and boring. Blowjobs and reverse cowgirl. Neither of them have any build-up. Just go right into it and then it’s over."

"Anybody else he thinks about?"

Stiles raises an eyebrow at Derek. "Like...?"

Derek shrugs. "Danny."

"Yes. Just a hot shower make out session. They don’t even touch. Just kiss."

"Anybody else? Scott, Lydia, Jackson, Isaac, Boyd, Peter, Laura, Cora?"

"Is this your pack?"

"Yes."

"There’s an old dusty box with Lydia’s name on it, but that’s it. Looks like it hasn’t been touched in a while."

"He used to be in love with her, before he met Malia. They’re just friends now."

"There’s boxes and boxes with those peoples’ names on them, but they’re not fantasies. Mostly memories and facts. And a lot of mothering type stuff. Like remembering to get Lydia’s birthday cake from the bakery she likes downtown, or that Boyd asked him to get stuff to make s’mores for the next pack meeting."

Derek smiles. "Yeah. That’s him. His thoughts. Stiles’ memories and thoughts are in boxes?"

"In his mind’s eye it looks like the storage room at an old library."

Derek chuckles at the thought of it. Of course Stiles’ mind looks like that. Controlled chaos surrounded by knowledgeable books stuffed with facts and trivia and volumes of detailed research. "You really love him."

"Yes," Derek says.

"Do you want me to tell you how he feels about you?"

Derek shakes his head. "You’d rather hear it from him."
"Yes," Derek says.

"You do bad things, but you still manage to be a good guy. How does that work?"

"I'm not so sure I'm a good guy."

"Yes, you are. You probably call your mom twice a week and never forget her birthday."

Derek blushes.

"Knew it. I bet you want kids, too, huh?"

"Of course I want kids," Derek responds.

"A lot?"

"Four. Maybe five."

"That's a lot!"

"I like big families. Lots of noise. Always someone around."

"That's just the wolf in you."

"No. I think if I was completely human I'd want all that still."

"Kids seem great, but they sometimes ruin marriages."

"That's a horrible thing to say!"

"It's true! Do you know how many married people I've possessed and then they go and cheat on their spouse?! And it's always when the kids and the nagging or the neglect get to be too much."

"That's because you're the little devil inside pushing them along."

"True. But I can only enter the body if the desire is already there. They want to cheat. They're already making plans to. I show up to just set the plan in motion."

"I feel like that's a half-truth."

"Maybe." Stiles smirks and Derek's fighting to keep from kissing him. "You want to kiss me?"

"...Yes," The Alpha admits.

"You know I'd let you. You don't even have to ask." Stiles licks his lips. Derek tracks the movement of his wet tongue.

"You're a menace."

"Who's really, really good in bed."
“I have no doubt that you are.

Heat. It’s almost visible between them. Derek’s hand grips the comforter on the bed, poking claw marks into it. Stiles lets out a ragged breath.

“I was with this werewolf once. I possessed his mate on their wedding night. They waited. We went at it all night, and into the morning. He marked and claimed me so hard that I couldn’t get out of bed for two days. I get the feeling you can do better.”

A primal growl erupts from Derek.

Stiles inches as close as he can toward Derek. “Do that thing again.”

“What thing?”

“The thing with your tongue. That was hot. It made me whine.”

“I know.”

“Cocky-wolf.”

Derek gives. He leans in. His lips just a hair’s breath from Stiles’ own wanting lips. “Open your mouth.”

Stiles obeys.

Their lips touch, but just a light graze. Derek’s tongue just barely leaves his mouth for Stiles’ wet one.

“Derek... Don’t tease... Please...”

Derek smiles smugly, loving that he can hear the pleading in the daemon’s voice. “Since you said ‘please’.” Derek’s hot, wet tongue just nearly glides into Stiles’ mouth before--

“Derek!”

Derek pulls back.

“Get rid of them!”

“I can’t. I’m sorry.” Derek walks out of the room.

A moment later Derek returns with Deaton.

Stiles sniffs the air, his nose pointed in Deaton’s direction. "A druid? A druid! Derek!" Stiles starts to panic. Derek goes to him, calming hands on his shoulders as Stiles tries to yank himself free from the handcuffs. "Hey, hey, hey."

“You’re going to kill me!”

“No. I’m not. I swear.”

“You’re lying. Why is the druid here then?” Tears sting in Stiles’ eyes.
“Stiles. Stiles!” Stiles stops yanking on the handcuffs at Derek’s ‘Alpha voice’. "First, I don’t want to hurt you. You didn’t attack me, so there’s no reason to attack you. Second, by hurting you I’d hurt Stiles. I don’t want to do that. Okay?”

"W-W-What are you going to do then?"

"I’m going to expel you from Stiles’ body,” Deaton tells him.

"Then what?"

"Then we’ll send you back home."

"I don’t have a home."

"Where do you stay at," Derek asks.

"I jump from body to body. I live wherever my host lives."

"Don’t you have a physical body?"

"Yes...but it’s hideous. I’m a daemon, remember? I don’t want you to see my like that."

"It’s okay," Derek tries to reassure him.

"No, it’s not. You like this. This body. I’m a monster without it."

"I’m kind of a monster, too."

"But you’re still hot. I look like afterbirth."

Derek chuckles. "Well, that’s a pretty image."

"I told you, I like you. No one’s been this nice to me in 30 years."

"Maybe because most people don’t know a lechery daemon is possessing them."

"Regardless..."

Derek leaves the bedroom and quickly returns with a throw blanket in his hand. "Deaton’s going to exorcise you from Stiles’ body, then when you’re out, you run under this blanket. Deaton will scoop you up in the blanket, and I won’t see. I’m assuming you’re a little guy in order for this to work by the way."

"In my own body I’m probably no bigger than a 3 year old."

"Perfect."

"And you won’t look?"
"I won’t look."

"You promise?"

"I promise. I’ll close my eyes."

"And you’ll kiss me ‘goodbye’?" Sneaky, little daemon...

"Stiles."

"Please. Just one innocent kiss."

Derek looks to Deaton, his ears turning pink. Deaton is his usual, stoic self. "One kiss. One innocent kiss. Understand?" Derek can’t help but smile a little at Stiles’ face lighting up like a Christmas tree at the promise of kissing him.

He takes a seat beside Stiles again. He glances at Deaton. Deaton gets the hint and turns his head away from them.

"Um, Derek."

"Yes."

"I know we didn’t get a chance to have sex, but we kissed a couple times and it was really nice."

"We did a little more than kiss, but yes, it was nice."

"I wish I was your Stiles."

Derek’s knuckles tenderly rub his cheek.

"Not that many people are so loving when they lust after someone. You two are. It’s nice. Sweet."

"What’s your name," Derek asks.

"I don’t have one."

"Really? How about I call you...Lux?"

"Short for luxuria. Latin for ‘lust’."

"You like it?"

**Lux** nods.

Derek leans in, eyes closed. Lux meets him halfway. Their lips touch. And it’s innocent and chaste, just like Lux promised... But then cold air brushes against Lux’s moist lips. He whimpers lowly at the loss of Derek’s mouth on his.

Derek moves to stand beside Deaton at the foot of the bed.

"Are you ready, Alpha Hale?"
"Yes."

"And you, Mr. Lux," Deaton asks.

Lux looks sorrowful at Derek, but nods.

"Is this going to hurt Stiles, or Lux," Derek has to ask.

"Mr. Stilinski will be exhausted and dizzy, but that should be all. Mr. Lux has been doing this for a very long time. He’ll be fine."

"Guess I should lay down." Lux adjust himself to lie on his back, hands above his head, still cuffed to the headboard. Derek opens the throw blanket and lays it across Stiles’ knees. "Why did you want me to tell you that I love you?"

"...I wanted to hear it in his voice. And I wanted to remind myself that it wasn’t really him."

"To make it easier to resist me?"

"Yes."

"God, you’re sneaky."

"You like it."

"I do."

"You’re going to need new bedsheets, Alpha Hale," Deaton informs Derek, interrupting his flirting with Lux. Deaton then throws a pint’s worth of what looks like blue dirt atop Lux, which causes him to go into a sneezing fit. He then pulls a potion bottle from his pocket. He grabs Lux’s face, forcing his mouth to open, and dumps the entire contents of the potion bottle into Lux’s mouth. He pinches Lux’s nose, forcing him to swallow the smelly liquid.

Derek watches as Deaton uses a silver dagger to slice open his palm. He turns his hand into a fist and lets the blood drip right into Lux’s eyes.

Lux begins to convulse and scream in agony!

Deaton senses Derek’s worry. "It’s all very normal, Alpha Hale."

Lux goes still. Stiff as a board. His mouth opens and a swarm of flies fly out in a blueish-tint smog, then dissipate into thin air.

"The key to your handcuffs, Alpha Hale."

Derek grabs the key from the top drawer of his dresser right away and hands it to Deaton. Deaton un cuffs the unconscious Lux from the headboard. Lux’s eyes open and turn jet black and he screams loud and long!

"Now would be the time to keep the promise you made to Mr. Lux, Alpha Hale."

Derek nods. He turns his back from the scene.
Stiles leans over the bed and vomits violently!

Derek remains with his back turned. He closes his eyes. Knowing he’ll be tempted to watch their reflections through the window in front of him.

Stiles stops puking.

Derek keeps his eyes closed when he hears an feral snarl in the corner of the room!

Deaton whispers something in a foreign language Derek doesn’t recognize, then there’s the sound of something slumped to the floor...

"Alpha Hale."

"Yes?"

"I have Lux."

Derek turns around to see Deaton holding the blanket with something scooped inside, completely bundled. A small whine escapes from the shape inside.

"Stiles is resting atop the bed. He needs hygienic attention, especially oral hygiene. Then he should rest for the next couple of days. It may be difficult for him to keep anything down, so plenty of liquids."

"Alright," Derek nods.

"Be sure to not move him. His body is very sore, and weak."

"Okay. Where are you taking Lux?"

"Beacon Hills. To my office. We’ll figure something out on the way there."

"He’s not hurting anyone. It’s just..."

"What he does," Stiles finishes for Derek. His voice frail and low. Their eyes fall to Stiles on the bed. "I feel like shit run over twice."

"Alpha Hale will take care of you now, Mr. Stilinski. I apologize about you being possessed."

"Thank you, Deaton. I know you were on vacation. I’m sorry I bothered you," Derek tells the druid.

"I wasn’t vacationing in the city. I was at a druid convention, strengthening my contacts. It was lovely. I had a good time, but this was much more fun."

"Well, uh, I’m glad I made your day better. Once again, thank you." Derek looks sadly at the lumpy blanket in Deaton’s arms.

"I know you’d like to say ‘goodbye’ to Mr. Lux, but you did promise him."

"I know." Reluctantly, Derek nods, giving Deaton the okay to take Lux away. Deaton leaves the room. Derek listens to the front door open, then close. He turns to the bed, and kneels beside Stiles’ side. "How do you feel?"
"Like I just puked up a tiny daemon."

Derek chuckles. "You didn't puke him up. You vomited the energy he used to possess you."

"Oh. Is that all?" Stiles swallows hard; his mouth dry. "And how are you?"

"Better. Now that you're no longer possessed." Derek runs a gentle hand through Stiles' sweat-soaked hair. Regardless, of the very nice daemon that took over Stiles' body, he's more than happy to have the real Stiles back. Despite the awkward heartache he's been going through with him as of late.

"Derek?"

"Yes?"

"I need a glass of water."

"Okay." Derek stands.

"Derek?"

"Yes?"

"Why do you own a pair of handcuffs?"

Stiles has his cellphone to his ear while sitting in front of his laptop in the library. "Did you do this?" He clicks through photos of his gorgeous home emailed to him from Derek.

"No. Scott and Erica got their 'minions' to put the house back together when they were here during their probation."

"I am going to squeeze the life out of those two puppies with the biggest hug!"

Derek laughs. "I didn’t know until I got here. I called Laura and she said it was all Scott and Erica because they knew how upset you were about the FBI turning our house upside down."

"I wasn’t upset. I was furious. Like the burning intensity of a thousand fiery suns kind of furious."

"I know. I was there. Apparently, they stayed here, too, while we were on lockdown."

"Probably needed the smell of pack. I’m not even a wolf and I can still pick up on their lingering scents in certain spots of the house."

"I know. Me, too."

Stiles keeps clicking through the photos.

He sniffs. His eyes are burning and filling with salty water. He’s crying. He can’t help it. It just happened all of a sudden. His mind hopscotched to the first pack dinner he made in the kitchen, to Lydia and Erica fighting over allotted bathroom time, to Scott and Jackson competing to see who's
the best swimmer in the pool, to he and Derek curled up on the couch watching old movies every Sunday night, and then his eyes filled with water.

"Stiles?"

"I’m sorry."

"Are you crying?"

"No." Stiles snifffles again. Tears are running down his face.

"Yes, you are. I can hear you. What’s wrong?"

"Nothing. I don’t know. I just started..."

"I’ll be home soon, baby. I swear."

"I know. It’s not that. It’s just... You’re home. You’re at home and I’m not there with you. I miss my kitchen and our bed."

"I’ll be home tomorrow and then we’ll all come back home together."

"I know. I’m sorry. I’m an idiot."

"You’re not. Are you sure you’re okay?"

"Yeah. Just being sentimental and stupid. I just miss you. And our house. I miss you in our house."

"Tomorrow, baby. I promise. We’re just getting some rest until we have to get back on the road. We’ll be there in the morning. I love you."

"I love you, too. Bye."

"Bye."

They hang up with each other. Stiles wraps his arms around his mid section. "Emotional outburst already, little one. You’re going to give me away to your daddy before I have the chance to tell him."

Stiles’ head tilts up toward the ceiling at the sound of expensive heels hurriedly clacking along the second floor. He listens as they get louder and closer--

Lydia runs into the library in a panic! "What’s wrong?! What’s the matter?! Derek just text me!"

Stiles laughs. "See?"

Chapter End Notes

One more chapter before Derek finds out in chapter 21!!!
Kids At Heart

Chapter Summary

Scott's birthday. And Stiles' hormones are starting to kick in a bit.

Chapter Notes

Sorry, I haven't posted anything in two days. Was working on PART 2, and the BF was sick and required some TLC :)

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The entire pack takes up eight whole bowling lanes. Including John, Deaton, and Melissa. Even Theo came with to join in Scott's birthday festivities. The place is pretty busy, but what else is expected in a town as small as Beacon Hills on a Wednesday night?

Scott and Allison sit at the first lane, drinking beers. Lydia and Kira approach with two large pizzas and a pitcher of beer from the concession stand. "I can not believe you wanted to have your 28th birthday here, McCall," Lydia says, shaking her head.

"What are you talking about? This place is as awesome as ever! Wait until they turn out the lights for 'galactic bowl'."

"Is that when this place starts to suck a little less. Big Al's Bowl-A-Rama was never awesome, Scott. Never. Couldn’t we have gone to Greenbrerg’s?"

"I hate fancy places like that. I get uncomfortable and start feeling itchy."

"He got a real bad rash when I took him to Strip House in Vegas for Valentine’s Day," Allison confirms.

"Let’s spare each other the details of Scott’s dermatology irritations please," Kira says.

"Please," Lydia agrees.

Stiles approaches from the arcade area. He spent nearly 20 bucks in quarters competing against Star for the highest Ms. Pac-Man score... She won. He drops Scott’s birthday presents he got at Target on the overflowing 'gifts table' behind his friends' lane and takes a seat beside Lydia. "Star Hale-Pryce is an arcade goddess."

"She beat your high score in Ms. Pac-Man," Scott asked.

"I held on to that glory for nearly 14 years, and just now, I watched as it crumbled before my eyes in the hands of an 11 year old girl. Life no longer has meaning."
Scott and Kira laugh while Allison gives him a mock sad face. Lydia shakes her head and tries hard to hide the smile on her red lips.

"In other soul-stopping shenanigans, Theo Hale is bowling. I can not be the only entranced by this."

They all shake their heads simultaneously. Theo has such a royal presence, it's hard for anyone who's met him to even dream he'd do something so juvenile as bowling. But low-and-behold, the werelion just picked up a spare.

"He's good."

"Despite the leg," Kira says.

"The leg's not really a hindrance. Just uncomfortable for him to be on for long periods of time," Stiles tells them.

"Must be why he never goes running with you guys," Allison assumes.

"He must go running alone. He has to when the full moon is out. Can’t imagine any wolf staying inside when it’s bright and open like that," Lydia says curiously.

"Ooo! Pizza," Stiles acknowledges happily.

Scott, Lydia, Allison, and Kira all smack his hand reaching for a slice of pepperoni.

"Ow!"

"No! Salad," Lydia tells him. She hands him a bowl of very unappetizing lettuce.

"Is this a salad, or did it used to be a salad?"

"What do you expect from a bowling alley. Had we gone to Greenberg’s..."

Scott merely rolls his eyes at the redhead. He drops his half-bitten slice and grabs his bowling ball, ready for his turn.

Lydia leans in close to Stiles. "Don’t think I didn’t notice you changing the subject when we were talking about Theo."

Stiles swallows hard. God, Lydia can be scary. And annoying. Does she have to always notice everything? "What are you talking about?"

"Don’t insult me."

"Really, Lydia. I don’t know what you’re talking about."

"The more you deny, the angrier I get, and the angrier I get, the deeper I’m going to dig."

He knows how to take care of this. It’s sneaky and underhanded, but he has to stop her line of questioning. Because he knows himself. He knows she’ll dig and dig and dig. Then he’ll cave and tell her, even though she more than likely will figure it out weeks before he spills his guts. She likes to torture. So, he has to, too. "You’re upsetting me." His hand moving to his stomach as
though her prying is causing his unborn child harm.

Lydia turns ghostly white. "I’m-I’m I’m s-s-sorry, Stiles."

"It’s okay. Just made me feel a little uneasy for a second."

"I didn’t mean to. I promise you."

"I know. It’s okay. Really." He gently touches her shoulder. He can't milk it too much. If so, she'll catch on and call his bluff, making her even more pissed, and even more curious as to what it is about Theo he's trying to avoid discussing.

She nods, stiff and slow. He knows she's still thinking about her inquiry "upsetting" Stiles.

"Lyds. It’s your turn," Scott calls.

She's in a silent fog; mind wandering, wrecked with guilt. Stiles pokes her. "Lydia."

"Huh?"

"It’s your turn."

"Oh, yeah. Right." She stands, approaching the ball return.

It was dirty. And low. But Stiles had to. He’d do anything to protect the biggest secret he’s ever known. And he’d never want anything he did to cause Theo harm.

He’ll make it up to her. He’ll tell her something detailed and juicy about him and Derek. Maybe he’ll tell her about Derek’s panty kink...

Stiles comes in through the front door looking exhausted as ever. John follows right behind him. "You sure you didn’t want to go out with the rest of pack?"

Stiles collapses on his father's couch. The house is still the same, but a little more accented with brighter colors and a slight woman's touch, à la Melissa McCall. Both Stiles and Derek had offered to buy the sheriff a new house several times, but he had always refused, claiming he had to remain at Stiles' childhood home for appearances. Had he suddenly been living in a bigger, more expensive home, 'voters' would get suspicious and question his association with the Hales even more than they already do. But Stiles knew the real answer, the unspoken one: his father couldn't bear the thought of abandoning the house he shared with Claudia, his mother. He understood that, once he figured it out, because he, too, felt as though her memory would be lost and gone forever had John moved out, or sold it. They'd no longer smell her in every room, see the horrible wallpaper she picked out on the bathroom walls, or touch the crescent-shaped groove in the banister she made, trying to move her giant work desk down the hall herself.

She was everywhere, even though she wasn't. Ridding themselves of the house, meant ridding themselves of her, and neither Stiles, nor his father was quite ready to do that. So Stiles stopped offering his father a new house. "They’re going to a bar. I’m so not interested in that right now. And even if I were, I can’t exactly drink."

"Just thought you would be, given it’s Scott’s birthday."
"I’ve spend the last 22 birthdays with Scott McCall, doing whatever his werewolf heart desires. I think I can cut out of this one a little early."

John smiles. "You look exhausted, kiddo."

"I am. I’m not even a month into this thing and already he’s wearing me down." John laughs. "Don’t laugh. I fell asleep in the middle of brushing my teeth this morning."

John takes a seat in his favorite armchair, an ugly, brown Lazboy recliner that in no way, shape, or form, went with the rest of the decor in the house. "I’m surprised the rest of the pack let you out of their sight. They were all buzzing around you like bees."

"It’s a werewolf thing. Enhanced by it being the Alpha’s baby I’m carrying." John's right. No one wanted to let Stiles out of their sights, even when he told them he was going home with his father. Without Derek around, everyone was felt even more compelled to hover, and touch and protect. Isaac went so far as to follow him into the bathroom until Stiles snapped at him to wait outside, later apologizing to the wounded puppy. But Lydia was by far the worst. After having made her feel guilty about asking questions about Theo, she spent the rest of the night at his beck-and-call, and apologizing to him every 5 minutes. He couldn't endure anymore of that for the rest of the night. His exhaustion kicked in and he told them all he was spending the night at his dad's house. Alone. He had to be clear on that point when he caught Lydia grabbing her purse to come with him when he announced he was leaving.

"Well, I’ll let you get some sleep." John pushes himself from his chair.

"No. Please, don’t. Stay. I haven't been home in forever and I miss you. Your company."

"I’m not going to be much of it if you're going to just knock out."

"Doesn’t matter. I like that you’re near. Stay. Please."

John smiles. He likes when Stiles is near, too. He sits back down.

Stiles tosses his dad the remote control for the TV. John turns on the TV while Stiles gets comfy on the couch. He yawns big as he grabs the throw blanket neatly folded on the back of the couch. He stretches out then drapes the blanket over him.

John channel surfs for a minute, before settling on a rerun of *Seinfeld*. He glances over at his son, who’s already fast asleep.

"I don’t give two fucks, Derek!" Stiles shouts into his cellphone, standing in his old room, now turned into a guest room with light yellow walls and plain, boring curtains on the window.

"I’m just a little behind schedule, Stiles! I’ll still be in Beacon Hills by six!"

"But you said morning! It's fucking morning!"

"I know what I said, Stiles! I had some business to take care of while I was home!"
"We’ll be back home in three fucking days! It couldn’t wait until then?!

"Yes, but there’d be no point letting it wait because I was already here! It’s just a few hours, Stiles! Calm down!"

"Don’t tell me to calm down! I can shout if I want to, goddamnit!"

"Yes, you can, Stiles. Just like I can hang up on you." And with that, the line goes dead.


Stiles’ cellphone shatters, then crumbles into small pieces that scatter under the bed and behind the nightstand! There’s even a little dent in the wall from the impact!

Not knowing what else to do, aside from boil with rage, Stiles sits on his bed. And cries.

A soft knock on the open door draws Stiles attention. John. "You okay, kiddo?"

"Fucking hormones are kicking my ass."

John comes further into the room. He sits besides Stiles who immediately wraps himself around his father and sobs into his shoulder. "Man, this first trimester is going to be a circus," John says jokingly.

"I know." Stiles continues sobbing. John’s arms hold him close. "I just wanted him home in time to watch the fireworks with me tonight."

"Well, what time did he say he’d be here?"

"Six."

"Fireworks don’t start until eight."

Stiles head draws up so quickly it should have snapped off his neck. "That’s not the point, dad!"

_Could have sworn it was...? "Okay. Okay. I’m sorry. I misunderstood." John heard the venom in Stiles’ voice, and the last thing he wants to be is the target of his son’s pregnancy hormones.

"You’ll watch the fireworks with me, right?"

"Of course. I do every year, don’t I?" Stiles nods. He buries his face in John’s shoulder again, this time without the sobs. John holds him, rubbing Stiles’ back in slow, soft circles.

And again, Stiles starts to cry.

John’s eyes look upward in a silent plea to his deceased wife. Stiles is going to be a nightmare during his pregnancy. Hell. On. Wheels. _God help Derek Hale._

Chapter End Notes
Next chapter-- Derek finds out ;)

Every year since Stiles and Derek have been married, the entire pack spends the Fourth of July on the coast at the Hale beach house. The encompassing beach house is almost as big as Hale House in Beacon Hills, and the Laura and Cora's favorite piece of Hale property. Valerie had always favored the brownstone in New York City, while Derek loved their cabin in Colorado, where he proposed to Stiles. Stiles, like Talia, had always thought Hale House in Beacon Hills was sufficient enough, but with 25 people cooped up in one singular space together for so long, a change of scenery was necessary. So, 4th of July festivities in Padre's Shore at the illustrious Hale beach house was not only tradition this year, it was essential to their well-being.

They spent the late morning attending the parade in town, watching the local first responders, school clubs, bands, and athletics, and local politicians march down the street happily under the hot July sun. Stiles had several times to obtain a cone of cotton candy, but was thwarted each time by a glaring Talia, and snatchy-hands Lydia. Eventually they relented and allowed him a large bag of popcorn that was both salt-less and butter-less, which he gladly ate, happy to have some semblance of junk food, despite it's bland taste.

Afterward, they split off when the festival got underway:

Talia and Theo left to have afternoon tea with the mayor and a few town council members, who Stiles has a sneaking suspicion were werewolves as well.

Erica and Malia went cruising for “hot guys,” while Laura and Jason found themselves dragged on every rickety carney ride their daughters could force them to buy tickets for.

Deaton ended up conversing with the attractive woman running the petting zoo, ultimately getting her phone number and a date next Friday night.

While Scott and Allison continued to be the picture of vomit-inducing cuteness as they ate candy apples and made out atop the ferris wheel.

Kira and Ethan cheated at carney games, winning arms-full of prizes and tickets which they gladly handed over to Laura and Jason’s daughters.

John and Melissa went horseback riding.

Jackson entered every food-eating contest, and dominated of course, winning a total of three hundred bucks.

Peter and Thomas plastered themselves at a beer/wine/moonshine tasting booth, much to Laura’s dismay.
While Isaac, Danny, and Cora managed to disappear with a handful of firefighters who briefly mentioned something about a private lake and skinny-dipping with it being so hot out as Stiles walked by casually.

Lydia, on the other hand, had decided to plaster herself to Stiles’ side since they left Beacon Hills this morning. Ordinarily, Stiles would be agitated, but he welcomed her presence, seeing as how the heat had gotten to him, and was making him feel light-headed. Add to that the heavy, various smells of the townspeople, food, farm animals, and the slick lubricant of penetrating oil coming off the old, carnival rides and Stiles was not only light-headed, but a bit nauseous. Lydia pulled a thermos of cool, ice water from her bag when Stiles slumped into a picnic table at the dizzying feeling. "Drink."

Stiles did as told. The cold water was a relief from the summer sun and wave of smells. "Thank you."

"You need to lie down."

"I am all for lying down."

"Alright. I’ll go get everyone."

"No!"

Lydia stops.

"Everyone’s having a good time. I don’t want to spoil it. Nor do I want everyone fawning over me like an old lady that fell down the stairs. Just take me back to the house then text Talia and Theo where we are and that I’m fine."

"Okay."

"Do you need to get the keys from Jackson?"

"Like I’d ever hand over keys to something I’m responsible for to Jackson. I gave him a cactus in high school as an experiment. He killed it."

"What was the experiment?"

"I wanted to see if he’d make a good, nurturing father, so I gave him something living that needed care."

"That stupid egg-baby we had to do in health class wasn’t enough?"

"Did you hear the question you just raised? Even you know that it wasn’t. Besides, I saw him kill it by putting it in his protein shake then go to the store and buy a whole carton for a new egg-baby."

"That story almost makes me think you two deserve each other."

"He should be so lucky. Come." Stiles takes her hand and stands. They walk gingerly to the dirt lot full of cars.
As soon Stiles and Lydia returned to the beach house, Stiles collapsed on the couch in the living room and fell asleep. Lydia stayed with him for a while, watching bad daytime TV, until Stiles stirred awake, hungry. She grabbed one of the pre-made meals Talia made for him and gave it to him, along with a large bottle of Poland Spring Water.

Her hovering was beginning to make his skin itch, but luckily he and Lydia had an 'honesty-is-the-best-policy' clause in their ‘friendship agreement’. "You’re underfoot and annoying me."

"Too bad."

"Go away, Lyds."

"Nope."

"Ugh!"

"Eloquent."

"Just to the beach. Please."

"No. Too far."

"It’s 125 feet away!"

"My nail polish is starting to chip," she said, purposely ignoring him.

"The deck. I’ll open the patio doors and stay right here while you tan that beautiful, porcelain skin." She opens her mouth to protest, but then immediately closes it, thinking about his offer... "I’m sure you have some new bathing suit you’d like to break in and make all the bored, rich housewives out here jealous with."

"I do."

"Then go. Now. Please."

Her eyes narrow threateningly at him. "You will not move from this spot unless you have to pee."

"Agreed."

And with that, Lydia climbs the stairs to her shared room with Danny and Cora for her bathing suit and beach towel.

"Thank God." Stiles lies back down, and turns the TV to HBO, happy to be alone. If only for a little while.

Everyone eventually makes it back the beach house and immediately crowds around Stiles after being told by Talia that Stiles left the festival because he wasn’t feeling well. Their care and concern is endearing, and warms Stiles’ insides, but then the hovering and personal space violations become too much, very quickly, when he finds himself engulfed by six werewolves and a banshee on the 3-seater couch. How they managed to squeeze themselves onto it with Stiles in the center was beyond him...
The sun is setting, casting a warm, inviting orange glow on all it touches. It’s beyond serene. It’s tranquil. Peaceful. Nirvana.

A pleasant smile grows on Stiles’ face as he watches the sun cast its brilliance on the soft sand and blue water out the open patio doors that lead to the open deck. Stiles’ hand finds his belly. “I wish you could see this. It’s beautiful. I can’t wait to watch a sunset with you. But don’t listen to your daddy. He thinks sunrises are better than sunsets. He’s a morning person, and it’s so annoying.”

“It’s good you’re talking to him.” Stiles turns to see Laura standing behind him. She steps further into the room and flops down on the couch adjacent to him.

“I do it so much now, that I hardly know when I’m doing it at all.”

She smiles at him. A fond, loving smile that’s so full of love she could burst into tears at any moment.

“Not you, too. You and Lydia are supposed to be my gangsters. My hardcore girls. She ran off crying this morning watching me eat vegan pancakes. Which are a fucking abomination by the way. Your mother is one more radish and leek salad away from being fired as my pregnancy chef.”

Laura laughs. “Like she’d let you fire her, let alone like you would. You’re scared of her.”

“How do you know?”

“Because everyone is. Like you.”

“No one is afraid of me.”

“Are you kidding, Stiles? You’re terrifying. Those betas may cower at Derek’s roar, but they piss themselves at your glare.” Stiles smirks. He knows she’s right. He can be downright frightening. And he likes it. He just wanted to hear her say it. “That kid isn’t getting away with anything.”

“With Derek? Come on. He’s such a secret marshmallow it’s hilarious. All you Hales are with your kids.”

“Not Val. Or mom.”

“That’s because their mates are their anchors. Theo and Jason are their weaknesses.”

“You’re Derek’s.”

“Until this little guy shows up. Then I’m kicked out of the anchor club.”

“You nervous about telling him?”

“Not as nervous as you lot! My God! You should all be having seizures you’re vibrating so much!”

“Life is always a rich and steady time when you are waiting for something to happen or to hatch.’ We’re excited, Stiles!”
"And creating tension. I broke up a fight before breakfast between Erica and Allison, that turned even uglier when Isaac and Scott jumped in. Lydia slapped Jackson who dumped his oatmeal in her lap-- the revenge Lydia has planned over that incident has WWIII written all over it-- Malia’s been doing nothing but pacing around the beach house for the last 2 hours. Peter locked himself in his room and won’t come out. Cora and Kira have been drinking since noon. Ethan’s bit his nails down to his knuckles. And Talia keeps asking me if I’m okay every 5 minutes. And the only sane people-- the humans, and your dad-- went back into town to buy sparklers with the girls."

"And what am I doing that’s driving you nuts?"

"Asking me what’s driving me nuts."

She laughs. She leans over and kisses the top of his head. "I can’t imagine you not being apart of this family."

Neither can he. "Go for a swim before the sun sets, and stay out of my hair please."

"Of course."

She kisses his head again. "Got to get my towel."

"The laundry room. I washed them all."

"Does my mother know you were doing household chores?"

"I told her if she didn’t at least let me do the laundry I was going to name the baby after me. Real name and all. She backed away like I was strapped with a bomb."

"Well, when you think about it..." She winks at him. He smiles. Laura’s always good for a talk. He watches her skip to the laundry room.

Stiles’ phone chimes. Text message. From Derek.

DEREK: Traffic is a bitch!
DEREK: According to the GPS, we won’t get to the beach house until 830pm. I’ll miss the fireworks. I’m so sorry, baby.
DEREK: Please don’t be mad. I’ll get there as fast as I can.

Strangely, Stiles wasn’t angry. Nor was he sad. Truth be told, he was getting really nervous about telling Derek. It was close to six, and Stiles was on edge. Which, in all fairness, was probably the reason for everyone else going crazy; they sensed it flowing off his skin, in his smell, making them stressed and hostile.

Now he has more time. Two and a half hours of time to try and relax enough to tell his mate the most important news of their lives. Thank you, west coast holiday traffic. Much appreciated.

STILES: I’m not. I just want you guys to get here safely.
STILES: I’ll just watch the fireworks with my dad and the rest of the pack.

DEREK: Are you really okay?

STILES: Of course. Please be safe. No speeding!
STILES: I love you.
DEREK: I love you, too. See you soon.

Laura reenters the room with a large beach towel in her hand. "You smell relieved."

"Derek’s stuck in traffic."

"At some point you’ll have to tell him he’s going to be a father."

"Not for another two hours I don’t."

"I don’t know why you’re so nervous. Derek’s going to be ecstatic."

"I don’t know. We were waiting, you know..."

"Do I really need to stand here and reassure you about my brother’s love for you, and his crazy desire to start a family with you, or are you going to let me soak up this last bit of sun with a good swim?"

Stiles smiles. Reason #307 of why he loves Laura Hale. She’s the sister he’s always wanted. "Thought I told you to get out of my hair."

She does a curtsey, mockingly thanking him for his “permission,” before rushing out of the patio doors.

Stiles watches her hop down the steps from the deck, that meld into the sand, ripping her T-shirt off as she goes.

The entire pack is spread out on the beach in front of the Hale beachfront property, watching the dark sky light up with fireworks.

Other beach house owners along the shore are in the sand as well, staring up at the sky as bright colors pop in the night air.

Stiles sits with Jason and his girls. Cee sits in his lap, eyes bright and wide, mesmerized by the lit sky full of loud bombs of sparkling color.

Melissa catches a tear in John’s eye as he watches Stiles hold his niece, amazed in wonder right along with her. She touches his arm affectionately, gaining his attention.

"He’s going to be a great father."

"Just like you."

"Hopefully he’s better."

"I bet if anything he’s hoping he’s just as good as you."

"Only because he doesn’t know better."

"You’re a great father to Stiles...and to Scott. If we’re being truthful here.” He smiles, flattered. She pecks his cheek.
Stiles and Scott catch each other’s eye. Scott nods toward their parents. Stiles looks over: John has his arm around Melissa as they stare up at the fireworks display. They share child-like, excited eye communication, already mentally planning their parents’ wedding as they give one another a thumbs-up.

The fireworks end with a rapid session of red, white, and blue lights peppering the distant air above them that lasts a good, full minute. Followed by one, gigantic boom of bright, dazzling white light that seems to coat the entire sky. The entire beach gives a resounding hoot and enthusiastic clap.

After a minute, a few head into their luxury homes. Some stay on the beach, huddled around a bonfire, or horseplaying in the water.

Stiles helps Laura light sparklers for his nieces. The young ladies take off down the beach, running with their tiny fireworks. "Stay where we can see you," Thomas says to them. He says it in his normal tone of voice. Had his girls not been werewolves, they never would have heard him, too far down the shore.

Stiles watches Isaac, Danny, Cora, and Malia happily talk with one another as they sit on a large beach blanket. They look like a beer commercial, he thinks, chuckling to himself.

Across from him, Scott and Allison are wrapped in a blanket, making out. Of course.

Ethan is laughing at a joke Erica tells him, while Lydia and Deaton seem to be having a serious conversation.

Peter and Kira share a blanket. Their hands fumbling beneath it, then Kira brings something to her lips and licks it before fumbling with it under the blanket again. A joint.

Stiles rolls his eyes. He’s never seen the point of pot. It just makes you goofy and hungry. He’s already both of those things all the time. He doesn’t need pot to enhance those qualities. Not to mention, pot’s always made him less focused, and Stiles likes to be in control and aware at all times.

Melissa’s laugh knocks him out of his thoughts. She’s genuinely laughing at his father. John’s smile is bright and wide, reaching all the way up to his blue eyes. Stiles likes seeing his father so free and able to let go of all the stress and worry. And with Melissa McCall no less, which makes his heart beat faster with joy.

He's so wrapped up in watching the flirty moment with his father, that he nearly jumps out of his skin at the pair of strong hands clasped on his shoulders. He turns around. Derek. Squatting behind him with a bright smile on his face.

"A dollar for your thoughts."

Stiles stutters, unable to find the words and still reeling a bit from having the shit scared out of him. Derek leans down and kisses his trembling lips. He pulls back. "You smell nervous. I’m sorry. I didn’t mean to scare you."

"Y-You didn’t."

"I missed the fireworks show. I’m sorry."

"It’s okay. I get it. Traffic."
"I completely understand road rage now. It’s a real thing."

"Tell me you didn’t wolf-out on someone on the freeway."

"No, but I came close several hundred times. Once with Val. And yes, I did apologize to her. I just wanted to get here. I wanted to see you. You didn’t sound good on the phone a couple days ago."

"I was overreacting. I’m sorry. I didn’t mean to worry you."

Derek stands at his full height. He extends a hand to Stiles. Stiles takes it and stands as well. Derek pulls him close. "It’s okay." They kiss. "God, you smell so good." Derek nuzzles Stiles’ neck and plants a light kiss on his pulse point.

"Like sunflowers, and snow and honey?"

"Yeah. Exactly like that. Wait. Did Peter tell you that?"

"No. Scott."

Derek’s brow furrows, confused as to why Scott would be telling Stiles how he smelled.

Stiles’ wandering eyes catch the whole pack standing still and staring at he and Derek. Stiles can hear them all mentally screaming. Lydia’s hands are shaking. She clenches her fist open and closed to stop them from doing so, but it’s of no use. Erica shifts from foot to foot like she has to pee. Scott looks green, swallowing hard, trying so hard to keep from blurting out the big secret that he’s about to vomit. They’re all buzzing with anticipation, like they’re just one numerical ball short of finding out if they won the lottery.

Stiles can’t help but smile.

"What?"

"Let’s take a walk."

Stiles takes his hand, pulling him toward the shore.

They walk along the shore. Derek now barefoot, with his pant legs rolled up as soft waves rise up and fall back on his feet. Stiles leans into him, their fingers laced together.

They near a cathedral-shaped cave by a secluded cove. "What’s with the betas?"

"They’re excited."

"About what?"

"Your surprise."

"I almost forgot you told me you had a surprise."

"First, tell me about meeting with Edmund."
"No. No pack business right now, please."

"Why not?"

"Because I’m here. With you. Right now."

"Derek, I’m fine. More than fine."

They stop walking. "You didn’t sound fine on the phone." Derek pulls him close. "I’m sorry I hung up on you."

"I was being a brat. I would’ve hung up on me, too," Stiles laughs, forgetting all about that this morning.

"You’ve been...off, since I left. There’s something wrong. I know you. Tell me."

Stiles rests his forehead against Derek’s and closes his eyes. He listens to the peaceful sound of the waves rolling onto shore. He wants to remember everything about this moment: the smell of the ocean, the feel of wet sand on his bare feet, the sound of crashing waves, and how close he held Derek when he told him...

"Stiles?"

"I love you. You know that, right?" Stiles opens his eyes and looks into Derek’s curious ones.

"Yes."

"I only want to make you happy."

"You’re either divorcing me, or you initiated a pack war. Which is it?"

_I start one pack war, one time, on accident, and he never lets it go..."Neither." Stiles takes Derek’s hand and places it on his belly. "But I am having a baby."

Derek stands frozen. Only his eyes move, darting over Stiles’ face, waiting for him to tell him he’s only kidding and that he’s really met someone else and he’s leaving Derek in the morning. "St-St-Stiles...are...are you joking?"

"No."

Derek listens to Stiles’ heartbeat. He’s not joking. He’s telling the truth.

He’s pregnant.

Stiles is pregnant.

He’s going to have a baby.

Their baby.

Derek’s going to be a father.

Derek lets out the crushing breath he’s been holding since Stiles said he was having a baby. He grabs Stiles, pressing their mouths together in a powerful kiss. Derek’s pushing every thing he
could possibly feel in this moment onto Stiles’ lips. Stiles happily returns the wrought emotion with his own.

Derek’s happy. He’s more than happy. That’s all Stiles wanted. That’s all he ever wants. And he feels it in Derek’s kiss and the wet drops of tears hitting his cheeks. They aren’t his, but Derek’s; so full of indescribable joy he’s crying while giving Stiles the kiss of a lifetime.

Derek clutches on to Stiles as he brings them to sand at the mouth of the cave. Without a word, Derek breaks their kiss to take off his shirt. Stiles mimics with his own clothing until their both completely naked and in each other’s arms again.

Derek’s kiss shifts from blinding gaiety to serene, and romantic. Stiles knows right away what to expect. And he wants it. He’s missed it, because it’s not that often that they make love.

They fuck like rabbits, and can get at it for hours on end, or quickly in public, or in the shower before their day starts, or angrily after a fight, but making love was something rare that happened between them. They like to tear at each other, clawing to get inside the other, as though they were try to dig out the other’s orgasm from the inside. Wanting to leave one other a quaking mess atop sweat-soaked sheets and wet spots. But when they did make love, when they did look into each other’s eyes and hold each other a little more softly than usual, everything else seemed to fall away. Nothing could break through the moment of just them, caressing and kissing and whispering quiet ‘I love yous’ into each other’s skin.

So Derek kissed him tenderly. And Stiles ran his fingers through Derek’s wet hair. Derek kissed ‘thank yous’ into Stiles’ neck while Stiles ran his hand down Derek’s back. Then Derek’s lips tasted the saltwater on Stiles’ chest, stomach-- where their baby hid-- inner thighs, and knees. Stiles surged up, changing their position, and took the time to worship Derek’s body, as Derek and done to him.

Stiles mouth took in Derek’s hard cock, but Derek pulled at Stiles, urging him up, and kissed him achingly slow then put him on his back. Derek slid down Stiles’ body and took Stiles in his mouth. He sucked him with a pace so patient it felt like a tease. Stiles withered and wiggled in pleasure as Derek kept it up.

Derek knew Stiles was close to coming. He didn’t want him like this. He wanted Stiles’ orgasm to hit him like lightening while Derek worked himself into him appreciatively. He pulled off Stiles’ hard cock and glided up his body. Stiles wrapped his legs around Derek’s thighs. He reached down, wanting to touch Derek’s cock, but Derek took his hand and kissed each of his fingertips.

Derek’s thumb traced Stiles lips. Stiles parted his lips and sucked Derek’s digit into his warm mouth.

He guided himself into Stiles and watched the shuddering look on his mate’s face at Derek being inside him.

His pace was even at first, nervous about hurting Stiles or the baby. But Stiles squeezed his ass, urging him to go a little faster.

Derek brought their bodies closer and quickened his pace a little more. Just perfect enough to hit Stiles’ prostate repeatedly.

Stiles’ hand found Derek’s hair again, and Derek held him close, working him over at a passionate
pace that quaked through Stiles with everything Derek was trying to tell him he felt at the moment; of all the love, gratitude, and devotion that broke out of him and was seeping into Stiles.

This is how they made love. On the beach. At the mouth of a sea cave. In the sand, while waves crashed over their joined bodies, and the moon hung above them. After Stiles gave Derek the best surprise he’d ever gotten.

Chapter End Notes

Initially, I wanted it to be comedic, like Derek fainting or something, but then I remembered how it has to hark back to the end of chapter 8 and thought a sweet, loving ending was better. Hope you liked it :)
Was

Chapter Summary

Stiles and Derek finally tell their parents, and Deaton, about Stiles’ eyes changing color like a wolf’s.

Chapter Notes

Loved writing the flashbacks in this chapter. Hope you love them, too! xoxoxo

See the end of the chapter for more notes

They’re all losing their shit:

Lydia paces nervously up and down the room.

John’s leg shakes as he tries-- and fails-- to not look at the clock on the mantle.

Jackson cracks his knuckles.

Ethan is practically eating his hand, biting at his nails.

Cora and Kira each guzzle an entire glass of white wine.

Isaac lets out tiny whines that can only be heard by werewolves ears.

Erica drums her red painted nails loudly on an end table, while Scott beside her, squeezes the life out of Allison’s hand.

Suddenly, all the wolves perk up, standing, with their eyes on the patio doors. They sense them.

Lydia stops pacing taking note of the statued wolves.

They’re all so on edge they could topple over with anxiousness.

Stiles and Derek are visible now through the glass doors as they approach the beach house. Allison takes in a deep breath the moment, Derek’s hand touches the door handle. He swings it open for Stiles who steps inside first; he and Derek are damp from their love making on the beach. They look around the room full of anticipating eyes boring into them.

Derek takes Stiles’ hand into his. "Every single person in this room is family. Is pack. All of you. My dad is right. We may not all be connected by blood, but we are connected by love. Stiles and I love each and every one of you here. We love the family that’s built here. And we love, more than anything, that it’s this family, that we’ve created together, that’ll be the one our child is apart of."

"Thank you. To all of you. I couldn’t-- I wouldn’t-- want to raise a child with any other pack but this one."
There’s not a dry eye in the room. Even Peter has to wipe away a stubborn tear.

"Fuck this crying bullshit! Can I hug you guys now," Erica blurts out. She doesn’t wait for an answer and runs over to her Alphas and embraces them both! The entire room follows her lead, and Stiles and Derek find themselves in the crushing center of a pack pile. Even Theo and Talia participate, trying to touch. To satisfy their happy wolf with the sense of family.

"Somebody is choking me," Stiles lets out through a strained breath. They all back up, horrified that one of them could be hurting Stiles. "Oh, thank God. That’s better." Stiles takes a breath. "Okay, so, uh, first things first, Derek and I want to talk to Deaton, our parents, and Lydia. Privately, in the study. And Lydia please bring your ‘Stiles Pregnancy Guide’ binder. Don’t try to deny that you don't have one because I know you probably do."

Stiles and Derek head off to the study. Their parents and Deaton follow.

Lydia enters the room and closes the door behind her. And sure enough, in her hands, is a paisley, three-ring binder with Stiles’ name stenciled on the front in big, bold letters.

The rest of them are already situated around the room, waiting for Lydia.

Lydia’s never been in a private pack meeting before. She’s a captain, not an underboss like Laura, Valerie, and Peter. Private discussions are only for the most senior pack members and John, who serves as outside help, with the added bonus of being Stiles’ father and the sheriff of their home territory.

Deaton grabs the other office chair and rolls it beside Theo who sits in an armchair adjacent to Stiles, Derek, and John on the cushy sofa.

She’s nervous, but in true Lydia fashion, refuses to show it. She flicks her red, wavy hair from her shoulder then proudly takes her seat with a ‘thank you’ to Deaton.

Stiles smiles affectionately at her, noting the binder.

"Okay. Derek and I have something we need to share with you guys, and please, for the love of God, Deaton, try to give us straight answers if you know anything, because the last thing I ever want to do, is put my baby’s life in danger."

John leans forward, eyes on Stiles intently. The thought of his grandchild in danger over secrets makes him even more interested in the direction of this conversation.

"Something is happening to me. Or it has been for the last 8 years."

"And you’re telling us now," John snaps at his son.

"We didn’t know what to make of it! And it didn’t hurt me or anything, but now with the baby, I need to know what it is exactly!"

"What is it, Stiles," Theo asks.

"My eyes have been changing color...like a werewolf."

"And when they do, he’s strong like a werewolf, too," Derek adds.
Silence befalls the room, and every head turns to Deaton...

"Complete. Informative. Sentences, Deaton," Talia demands of her former emissary.

Deaton nods. "How many times has it happened, Alpha-mate Hale?"

"Four."

"What were you doing when it happened each time?"

"The first time, we were fighting," Derek tells him.

"What about exactly?"

"Somebody being an idiot," Stiles grumbles under his breath.

Derek scowls at him. "I’d gotten hurt," he tries to continue, before--

"Almost killed by Edmund and his vampire army because he decided to go charging in--"

"I did not go 'charging in'!"

"Then how the hell did you get cut to fucking ribbons, Derek?! Lydia, you were there! What was the plan? Did Derek stick to it?"

"Don’t drag her into this, Stiles!"

John whistles, quieting them! "Is this the time or the place?"

It’s not. Which is why they both keep quiet, embarrassed.

"I thought so. Derek, you were saying."

"...It was before my agreement with Edmund. When we were fighting over territory downtown in San Francisco. Stiles did have a plan, and I did deviate from it, and ended up getting hurt. The betas took me to Marin to stitch me up."

*September 2016*

Derek lies on an exam table unconscious. He’s shirtless, with almost his entire upper body wrapped in bandages.

Stiles, Scott, Lydia, Jackson, Erica, and Boyd are in the room as well. The wolves are covered in blood and dirt from head to toe. Their clothes are slashed and ripped.

Lydia is dripping wet and barefoot, holding her expensive shoes in her hands.

Stiles has a giant bruise on his left cheek and one on his chin. Stiles stares at the linoleum, eyes fixed and focused, with his hand covering his mouth. He’s not there. He’s somewhere else in his head. Somewhere that causes him to clasp a hand over his mouth to keep the words from spewing out like a geyser.
But no one notices, as they face Dr. "Marin" Morrell, wearing a white lab coat. She tosses bloody latex gloves into the waste container. "I reset his rib cage, but it was a bitch to restart his heart. He’ll be fine after some rest; his wolf is pretty wounded, so his recovery will take a little longer."

They nod, the nervous looks on their faces gradually exchanged for relief that their Alpha will recover.

"I’m assuming since you all are here, then you won whatever battle ensued," Marin says.

"We were taking on Edmund’s colony. For territory," Scott tells her.

"Takes a lot to make vamps retreat. Especially ones as old as Edmund."

"Might have something to do with us surprising them just an hour before sunrise," Lydia brags.

"Good strategy."

"Stiles’ idea."

"It got a little out of hand though," Scott’s tone in regards to Derek's current state of being.

"I see. Knowing Edmund, revenge is on it’s way. He doesn’t like to lose."

"Who does," Jackson asks rhetorically.

"We sure as hell don’t," Derek answers out of nowhere.

Wide eyes at their conscious Alpha.

Derek tries, with difficulty, to sit up. Marin tries to stop him, but Derek waves him off. Erica hugs him, careful of his condition. Her Alpha nearly died. She needs to touch, to be assured he’s alright. "I’ll be fine. Okay?"

She nods, tears in her eyes.

"He’ll be coming for you. So you should get to a safe house to heal in peace, properly. Before your war starts up again."

"The battle was to make sure a war never happens," Boyd tells Marin.

"Well, good luck with that. Don't think Edmund will see it that way."

"We have a safe house," Derek says.

"Several," Lydia boasts.

"Good. How are the rest of you?"

"We’re fine. We’re healed. They didn’t have time to use wolfsbane, or mountain ash," Erica says.

"Good news again. What about you, Stiles? Stiles...?"

Stiles’ head is down, hand still covering his mouth. But his eyes are closed, and he’s trembling.
Literally shaking as deep, strained breaths expel from him.

Scott’s nose crinkles at the smell of him. He’s radiating something potent. Not vile, but strong. Like sulfur. Smoke. Fire. It’s like standing near a rumbling volcano. "S-Stiles?" Scott carefully moves a hand toward Stiles’ shoulder, but before he can even make contact, Stiles’ eyes flick toward him--

"Get. Out." The intensity of Stiles’ voice makes them all flinch, and without a second thought, the betas and Lydia, flee from the room. Stiles’ eyes dart to Marin. She gets the hint and vanishes out the door, too.

"St--" Is all Derek can get out before Stiles has him pinned against the far wall! The force causes a spider crack to surface through the plaster at Derek’s back! Derek groans in pain! Stiles’ forearm is pressed against Derek’s throat, keeping him in place! And lifting him 3 inches from the floor! He tries to wretch himself from Stiles’ hold but he can’t! Stiles is overpowering him! "Stiles." Derek’s eyes find the human’s, and they’re a deep orange, burning into Derek with so much anger he shudders.

"I. Am. Done. Do you hear me? I. Am. Done. This was the very last time I will ever watch you nearly die. This was the very last time I will watch you nearly get yourself killed with your bullshit heroics. You want to be a martyr, you do it without me. I am no longer a member of your pack."

Derek blinks. A hurt washing over him from the inside. The physical pain Stiles is putting him through at the moment is forgotten for the turmoil rushing through Derek at his words. "Stiles--"

"You had your chance. I’m through with you, and this pack. You. Almost. Died. Tonight." Stiles’ forearm pushes a little more on Derek’s throat. Derek grips Stiles’ arm, choking. "I should kill you now, since you’re so eager to end your life."

Derek lets out a strained breath.

Stiles pulls his arm away from Derek’s neck. Derek instantly falls to his knees, gasping for breath. He clutches his neck, shocked, and yet relieved.

"But I won’t. I’ll just leave you."

Derek growls. His hands turn to fists. His head turns up at Stiles, eyes bleeding red as a snarl sounds toward the human boy.

Stiles’ portland-colored eyes meet Derek’s crimson ones.

Derek leaps toward Stiles, but Stiles pushes him back, both hands on Derek’s chest, landing Derek against the wall again!

Derek holds his side, his ribs feeling even more bruised now under his bandages. He winces, trying to sit up. His eyes rise to Stiles standing at his feet. Stiles’ ability to hurt him physically, to suddenly have the strength of two Alphas, isn’t what’s on his mind as he looks at the tall, lean boy in the black and white checkered Vans. What’s on his mind is the truthfulness in Stiles’ heartbeat he heard when he said he was done.

Stiles is done.

He’s done with pack.

He’s done with Derek.
He said as much. And that concept, that idea, that sudden hole growing in Derek’s chest, makes him ill. Makes him taste the bile at the back of his throat. It makes the broken ribs and stopped heart he had, being carried into Marin’s clinic by Boyd and Jackson, seem small and unimportant.

He needs to fix this. He’s needs to apologize. To beg. To whine, and whimper, and cry.

He needs Stiles.

But Stiles sees it. He sees the pleas escaping Derek’s lips before the wolf can even utter a syllable as his eyes return to their sweet, hazelnut color and fill with tears. “You told me you loved me. But you don’t act like it. And I can’t anymore. I just can’t, Derek,” he says, his voice breaking.

And with that, Stiles slams out of the room, not looking back.

The room is quiet. All eyes on Stiles and Derek.

Lydia breaks the silence. "That’s why you left the pack? You said you were scared."

"I was. But not for me." Stiles takes Derek’s hand and squeezes it.

"Were you aware your eyes had changed color," Deaton asks.

"No. Derek told me later."

"When was that?"

"After the second time."

"When was that?"

"Wait a minute. You pushed Derek into a wall? Twice," John asks, stunned.

Stiles nods.

"How did you feel at that moment," Deaton asks.

"I was pissed. Beyond pissed. Like, boiling, hot anger. It was almost like a panic attack. I couldn’t calm down, no matter how much I tried."

"Your voice, when you told us to leave, it was absolutely frightening, Stiles. And there was something in me, something that told me to obey. Like I had to listen," Lydia tells him.

"Something possessive," Theo asks.

"No. It was more like... It was like how everyone listens to Derek and does what he says because he’s the Alpha. It felt like that. I didn’t even have to think about. He said to, so I did. It was like obeying a command from Derek."

"Were you angry the second time it happened?"

Stiles and Derek exchange nervous glances. Derek’s ears flush pink. "Uh, well, sort of..."
"Meaning," John asks, wanting a more refined answer than the one given.

"Oh, God. I should have really thought this through before discussing it in front of you all."

Lydia snickers because she’s already got it figured out what it is Stiles wants to avoid and what’s got Derek flushing right beside the sheriff.

"We need to know, Stiles. It’s alright. I think you can attest all these years as part of our family, that we’re pretty open and understanding about such things," Theo reminds him.

"What things," John asks, clueless.

"Sex, I assume," Talia states bluntly.

"If it weren’t for the child I’m carrying, I’d beg for someone to shoot me now."

"Were you and Alpha Hale having intercourse the second time your eyes changed colors," Deaton asks, expressionless and awkward as ever.

"Hot, angry gay intercourse," Lydia answers with a cheeky smile.

"Oh, Christ...." John groans.

"Thank you, Lydia," Stiles says sarcastically.

March 2017

"I’m trying to help you, asshole," Stiles shouts at Derek.

"You can’t help me by being jealous!"

"Jealous?! Jealous?! Is that what you just fucking said to me?!"

"Why else are you here?! You don’t give a shit about me!"

"Why? Because I decided to not be apart of your little monster squad anymore?!"

"Is that what we are to you?! Freaks and monsters?!"

"Are you kidding me, Derek?! No!"

"You know what? Get the fuck out. I don’t need you here, and I definitely don’t want you here. I have no clue as to why you even decided to show up here with your bullsh*t."

"It’s not bullsh*t! Jennifer is dangerous and bad fucking news, Derek!"

"Then prove it!"

"I can’t yet! Just trust me!"
"I DID, THEN YOU LEFT!"

"I HAD TO LEAVE! YOU WERE FUCKING EVERYTHING UP!"

Derek goes still. Eyes burning red and digging a hole right through the center of Stiles. But Stiles has never been one to back down from a fight. He’s made out of insolence and blinding pride.

Derek steps closer, right in Stiles’ personal space. Stiles doesn’t blink, pissing Derek off even more. "What did you say?"

"I said you were fucking up."

A low snarl escapes Derek.

"You--" Stiles pokes Derek’s chest. Derek’s eyes flick to the spindly finger on his broad chest, "--were doing everything wrong, and it was going to cost lives. Especially yours. Then where the hell would your betas be without their Alpha? As a True Alpha, you should have known better."

"Are you challenging me?"

"I’m pointing out the obvious."

"That you think I’m a terrible Alpha?"

"That you could be better than what I’ve seen so far that made me want to leave."

Derek stares hard at Stiles a moment. Stiles stares right back, with just as much venom in his glare.

With the quickest reflex, Derek grabs Stiles wrist-- the one poking his chest-- and twist it behind Stiles’ back! Stiles wants to yelp in pain, but he refuses to give Derek the satisfaction.

"Go now. While you still can." Derek releases Stiles from his grip with a hard shove. Stiles lands on his ass on the floor.

"I’m trying to help you!"

"You’ve said that. And you can. By leaving. And never letting me see your face again."

It was like a car collision, sudden and blindsiding. Stiles felt a tear in his chest at Derek’s words. At Derek telling him he never wants to see him. The same Derek who had confessed to him twice already how much he loved Stiles and wanted him. That same Derek was pushed too far, and now he was gone, replaced by this new wolf who was angry and abrupt. Who said mean and hurtful things.

Well, so could Stiles.

"‘Never?’ You never want to see me again? Last time I checked, you said we were destined to spend our whole lives together. That I was yours, and belonged to you. Forever. And now ‘never’?"

"Didn’t seem to matter too much to you either. Seeing as how you left."

"Maybe if you were a better Alpha I would have stayed."
Derek clinches and unclenches his tight fists.

"Maybe if you knew what the fuck you were doing, I wouldn’t have rejected you." Stiles stands. He approaches Derek, close, face-to-face. "And maybe if you had a clue, we’d be together, instead of you fucking whatever the hell Jennifer is."

Derek smiles a devious, smug smile. "That bother you? You a little angry that I’m sharing my bed with someone, when all we’ve ever done is kiss like a couple of stupid teenagers?"

Stiles’ jaw tightens.

"It does, doesn’t it? It rips through you like an open wound that I’d rather fuck Jen, than even consider letting you back into this pack, doesn’t it? You keep thinking you’re the one that’s rejected me, when it’s the other way around. I thought I needed you. Turns out I don’t. Even worse: Scott and Lydia don’t need you, either. They’re still here, with me. You’re all alone. Which is how it should have been the whole time. You were the weakest link. The thing dragging us down. The human we always had to stop and check for. And now you’re not."

Angry tears flood Stiles’ eyes. His fist tighten so hard they turn blue.

"I did love you. And now I love someone else. Someone better."

Stiles forces himself to take a deep breath at that last dig.

"I was wrong. We’re not mates. We’re not even friends."

Stiles’ eyes bleed into the burnt orange color they had that night at the clinic.

"Stiles, your eyes--" Derek’s words are cut off by a hard right hook to the jaw! Derek falls to the floor, on his back, and immediately, Stiles is there on top of him, punching him repeatedly in the face!

Derek pushes Stiles off him with so much force, Stiles flies over the couch and lands on the coffee table, breaking it! Derek’s on his feet. Stiles scrambles to his. He grabs the decorative bowl he landed on and throws it at Derek! Derek ducks and misses the furnishing being chucked at his head!

Derek’s eyes bleed red. In one swift move, he pushes the couch without difficulty to the side and charges at Stiles! He has Stiles by his arms, pinned against the wall! Stiles kicks Derek’s shin, causing the wolf to groan in pain! He grabs Stiles and slams him on the floor! Stiles punches him in the face again! Derek grabs Stiles’ wrists and pins them above his head! Stiles tries to maneuver his way out of Derek’s hold, but he can’t. "ENOUGH!"

"FUCK YOU! I’M NOT YOURS!"

Derek’s insides rattle. Stiles words make his wolf snarl at the lie. He doesn’t like it. Doesn’t believe it. And wants Derek’s human to be just as angry at the hurtful declaration. So he claws at Derek’s chest, digging and scraping. Howling in pain, and loss. Because what Stiles said hurt, and to the wolf, it feels like dying.

Derek’s fangs extend and scarlet eyes turn to fire at Stiles’ saffron-colored ones. "Mine!" Derek kisses Stiles. Stiles tries to push Derek off of him, but it’s no use. He may have the strength to do so at the moment, but not the resilience. He’s furious. He’s overflowing with an anger so singular it’s pure. Yet, it’s still no match for the feel of Derek’s lips on his. Stiles pours every bit of outrage he
has into their kiss, making it hard. Vulgar. And ruthless.

Derek lets go of Stiles’ wrists. Stiles seizes the opportunity to run a hand through Derek’s hair and pull, making the Alpha groan in a lewd moan.

Derek pulls himself from Stiles’ lips, breathless. Stiles’ bottom lip bleeds, running down his chin from Derek’s sharp fangs and their rancorous/voracious kiss. Derek licks Stiles’ mouth, tasting the blood there. Stiles suppresses a whimper, still just as irate as he is turned on.

Stiles grabs Derek by his shirt and pushes them both up from the floor and against the wall! Stiles’ lips find Derek’s neck and leaves a trail of biting kisses all along his throat. Derek’s skin is hot and flushing red against Stiles’ lips. He grinds hard against Derek, pressing their erections together. Derek presses back. Stiles forgets his white, hot anger for a moment, shuddering at Derek’s equal salaciousness. Their lips meet again with the same wild kissing.

Derek’s claws slash at Stiles’ hoodie, ripping it to shreds, off his body. Stiles could care less. He grabs the collar of Derek’s white henley and pulls, tearing it down the middle, exposing Derek’s tan abs, and hairy, muscular chest.

Derek’s wolf pants at the spiked smell in Stiles’ arousal at Derek being partially shirtless. He forces Stiles to his knees. He unzips his jeans--

"Aaaaaand we’ll stop right there. Thank you, Lydia."

"I was nowhere near the good part."

Stiles, Derek, and John give her a resounding and stern ‘Thank you, Lydia’, desperate for her graphic details of Stiles and Derek’s first time together to end.

Derek leans in to Stiles and whispers, "You and I have to have a serious talk about you and Lydia and boundaries." Stiles rolls his eyes, annoyed. He knows Derek is serious and doesn’t look forward to the future discussion...for the fifth time.

"Alright. So that was the second time. The third time. What happened then," John asks.

December 2018

The bathroom door opens and a waft of steam floats out. As does the sound of two people giggling with one another in between cooing whispers.

The bellow of steam clears and Derek steps from the bathroom dripping wet with a towel wrapped around his waist. The smile he had on his face a second ago is gone and replaced with a stunted look of shock.

Braeden comes out of the bathroom finally, clutching a towel wrapped around her naked form; her hair in a messy bun atop her head. She stumbles into Derek’s big frame as he stands numb outside the door, eyes fixed on something. Stiles. Sitting on the edge of the bed with his elbows on his knees. He and Derek don’t break eye contact as Stiles’ eyes pulsate with that bright familiar orange.

"Stiles, what are you doing here," Braeden yelps, shocked, and hiding behind Derek.
Stiles eyes don’t leave Derek’s nervous ones. “Why don’t you two get dressed. The three of us need
to have a talk,” he says seriously, with a stern glare. He calmly walks out of the bedroom.

“Derek. He can’t just come in here like that--" 

"Get dressed." Derek whips the towel from his waist, using it to dry himself hurriedly.

"Are-Are you serious?"

Derek stops drying his hair and tosses the towel on the bed. "He wants to talk."

"Yes, but... Derek, you’re the Alpha." Derek takes a pair of jeans out of the bottom drawer of his
tallest dresser and slips them on. "Stiles can’t just come into your den and command a
conversation... Can he?"

Derek pulls a plain, grey tee over his head. "Yes. Please get dressed."

The large, expansive windows tell that it’s cold and grey out. Perfect weather for staying indoors
under the blankets with hot tea. There’s a decent-sized Christmas tree in the corner with a handful
of gifts in generic wrapping paper under the lit tree.

Stiles sits in an armchair, eyes focused and unblinking into space. A scowl lays permanent on his
face; eyes still orange.

His deep, enraged thoughts are interrupted by Derek hesitantly entering the room with Braeden.
He keeps a slight distance from her, puzzling her even more when he takes the armchair adjacent
to Stiles instead of sitting beside her on the couch. Derek wrings his hands nervously. He’s on edge.
He fucked up, and is unsure of what happens next. Because he knows something most people who
know Stiles don’t know. Stiles can be terrifying. He possesses a hidden, elaborate violence that
stays buried deep until it becomes too much for Stiles to bear, and that covered brutality surfaces
in such remarkable ways it's frightening. Derek's seen it. It was only a glimpse, but he saw it. He
saw it in the few seconds of Jennifer's death. When Stiles grabbed her by her hair, tilting her head
back, and dragged the business end of his father's old combat knife along her throat; his eyes on
Derek the entire time, unblinking and emotionless.

But Stiles was scarier like this. Calm. Even. With a bitter hostility behind his tone. And his eyes.
Whenever Stiles’ eyes turned colors, Derek felt crippled with anxiousness. And it's Derek's
brittleness that keeps him from initiating the conversation.

Stiles is too busy glaring at Braeden to open his mouth...

Just as Braeden feels brave enough to start, Stiles speaks: "This thing between the two of you is
going to end. As of right now."

Braeden chuckles wryly, thrown by Stiles’ audacity, and the certainty in his tone of voice. "Stiles, I
don’t think you can--"

"You don’t want me to sit here and list all the things I can and can not do. It might surprise you
that the ‘can do’ list is exceedingly long." He fixes her with a cold, icy orange glare. Stiles has
spent the last month pouring over any information he could find on werewolf mates, and having
ridiculous, round-and-round conversations with Deaton on the phone about the subject until he
gave up, tired of the emissary's evasiveness, and decided to converse with a werewolf emissary
whose blog he found online.
He needed to know. He needed details. Derek had only given him the Cliff's Notes version of mates and what exactly that meant. He researched it before, after Derek told him that's what they were, but never to the extent he had in the last couple weeks. He wanted to understand everything and get it right. He wanted to know if he could. If he had the right. Because he felt cheated on, and lied to, and through his research, he found that technically he had been. In the were community, this--Derek and Braeden--was fine-print 'adultery'. And that's all Stiles needed to know to make sure it ended between them. "This has nothing to do with you. You seem like a very nice, sweet girl. But Derek isn’t yours, and I will not let you have him."

Braeden realizes just how serious Stiles is, and that Derek hasn’t said a word. She turns to him with wide, pleading eyes, asking for help with his demanding and intrusive human.

"She seems clueless, Derek. Why don’t you fill her in. Tell Braeden who I am."

Braeden turns to Derek with worry in her eyes. Stiles is being authoritative and off-putting, and Derek is quiet and tense. "Derek...?"

"...Stiles is my mate."

"What?"

"I claimed him and marked him before he went to London last year."

Braeden stops breathing. Her eyes flick between Derek, then Stiles, trying to comprehend the ton of bricks just dropped in her lap. "You... You can’t be mates."

"Oh, but we are." Stiles reaches into his coat pocket and pulls out an impressive bundle of open letters tied with a red ribbon. He tosses them onto the coffee table between them. "That’s every single letter your 'boyfriend' has written me since I left for London last year. And if I have those, you can bet that somewhere hidden in this apartment are my letters to him."

She takes a shuddering breath, eyes fallen on Derek, who stares back at her with nothing but an apology in his own.

"When I met Derek I instantly fell in love with him. It’s an all-consuming, end-of-the-world, life-or-death type love. And it scares the shit out of me, because it’s that type of love I’ve always wanted. I’ve always wanted nothing more than to give my complete self over to another person, and have them do the same for me. To share, and explore, and discover one another. And here it is, I have it, but I’m ashamed to admit that the irony is I’ve done nothing but run from it over the last 3 years. Because someone very important to me, left me when I was young. I didn’t take it so well. It still hurts every morning when I wake up and remember they’re gone."

Braeden can’t help but be curious. "Who?"

"My mother. She meant everything to me. When you’re that young, your world is very small. So it makes the people in it very large. And important. I used Malia as an excuse not to act on my feelings for Derek because if he’d ever left me, like my mother had... I knew I’d do more than fall apart. So I tried to keep my distance, romantically at least. I tried to make us friends. But we’ll never be friends. We’ll be in love with each other until it kills us. I was too stubborn to know that then, which is why I think him falling under Jennifer’s spell was so easy."

"Who’s Jennifer?"
"A darach who’s throat I cut open when she fucked my mate."

Derek avoids Braeden’s glance, knowing she’d want confirmation from him if what Stiles just confessed was true. Derek thinks Stiles’ disaffected tone is confirmation enough.

"What do you know about mates, Braeden?"

"...Not much."

"Did you know there are three parts to mating? First, there’s ‘Declaration and Acknowledgement’. When your mate is recognized by your soul-- which is none to subtle, given it literally bowls you over in pain for 30 seconds--the dominant in the pair declares the other as their mate, to the other party and outsiders. Then, the dominant claims their mate."

"'Claims'?"

"Fucks," Stiles says bluntly, in an attempt to shock her, and make her uncomfortable. It works. She appears a little taken aback at Stiles’ harsh delivery. "The need to claim is so strong that some wolves don’t even ask for permission," Stiles continues. "They just take. Derek didn’t though. He waited. For two years he let that need build up inside him. His wolf, clawing at him. And when we were close, alone, I could hear it. I could hear how bad his wolf wanted me because that’s how bad I wanted him, too. Which is why we tore each other apart when he did claim me. And mark me." Stiles rips off his winter scarf and shows Braeden the healed bite marks along his neck.

Braeden scowls, noticing Derek’s eyes turn cherry red at Stiles marked and bared neck. "I thought once a mate was claimed, then the mates were inseparable. You’ve been gone a whole year," she digs at him with a superior tone.

"Derek, enlighten her," Stiles says, annoyed with Braeden’s attempt at a ‘dress down’.

"The third part of mating is 'Submission'. Stiles has to submit to me. He has to bare his neck and accept himself as mine." There’s a sharp tone in Derek’s voice, not even looking at Braeden when he answers. Stiles’ eyes brighten at him in response.

"If you’re mates, why not submit?"

"Good question," Derek glares at Stiles. Clearly a point of contention between them two.

"Submitting to your mate is a sacred and devout experience to weres, especially wolves. A marriage joins two people. A submission, joins two souls."

"That doesn’t answer my question."

"You’re under the misguided impression that I should."

"Then answer mine," Derek bites out. "Why not submit? Why run away?"

Stiles turns to Derek, their eyes meeting intently. "Because I was a coward who was too afraid of getting what he always wanted, then losing it," he answers with a brutal honesty.

"Was?"

"Was."
Derek hears it in Stiles’ voice. In his heartbeat. Sees it in his mandarin-colored eyes. Smells it perfume off his skin and feels it land heavy and loud in the whole room. The truth. Stiles is telling him the truth. The only truth he’s ever wanted to hear from him. The truth they’ve both known all along, but Stiles was too scared to succumb to. Too scared to give himself over to because he was afraid of losing Derek, then losing himself. That’s how much he loved Derek: so much that he knew he’d abandon all hope of living if he should ever lose him. The loss of Claudia Stilinski drove her husband and young son into pits of despair and took many years of recovery to bring them back to even a functioning state of existing before settling comfortably into where they were now.

Derek knew that type of pain. He had it after Paige. After Kate. Both a loss, but in different ways. He knew what he was like after Paige’s death. He carried around a magnitude of shame and blame that it let Kate Argent wiggle her way into his open wounds and bury herself there with sex and lies and ulterior motives. He knew that type of loss, and understood why Stiles had always hesitated, or pulled back.

Yet, when Stiles left, when he left to study abroad for a year in London, Derek was beside himself. He didn’t want to hold Stiles back from wanting more out of life, and furthering his education, but he knew Stiles, and knew he was running scared. Scared of Derek who pleaded with him to submit and make their relationship official, binding themselves together after he had claimed him.

But Stiles left anyway. Derek driving him to the airport and hugging him so tight Stiles couldn’t breathe. Derek slipped his first letter into Stiles’ carry on when he wasn’t looking. He stayed up all night writing it, wanting Stiles to know he still loved him, wanted him to do well, but come back home as soon as he could.

At least once a week they wrote one another, true and truthful. Then Derek met Braeden. Who was smart, quick, direct, and stunning. But most of all there. She didn’t run from him, or her feelings for him, and he liked that. Liked her. So the letters to Stiles stopped. He had given up. Stiles ran from him. He couldn’t tell Derek how he felt. He didn’t give Derek permission to touch him again after that first time, making his wolf howl and claw and snarl and growl until he exhausted himself with sadness.

Stiles called and text, but Derek didn’t answer. He was tired. Tired of fighting for Stiles. He did all the fighting for the last 3 years and was done. It was Stiles’ turn. It was the human’s turn to whine and cry and whimper at the varying types of distance their mate put them through. So-- not proudly-- Derek used Braeden. He used her to send Stiles an unspoken message: ‘You want me? Fight for me. Earn me. I can’t be the only one’.

Derek knew either Scott or Lydia or both would eventually tell Stiles why Derek cut off all communication from him. Why there was just radio silence on Derek’s end. And Stiles was on a plane to San Francisco quicker than Derek had assumed. He came straight to Derek’s, banging on the door and screaming at him. Then he asked. He asked Derek of the “rumor” he heard from Scott and Lydia. He asked if Derek was seeing someone. A girl. A druid and mercenary that was well-liked by all in his pack. Derek was honest and told him “yes.”

Then he lied and said he was in love with her.

Stiles said not a word, frozen in silence, then fled from Derek’s apartment with tears in his eyes. It nearly broke Derek in half being so callous, but he had to be. He needed Stiles to stop being so afraid and take a chance. To stop pretending that they weren’t made for each other and open himself up to Derek and the soul-crushing love they had for one another.

So here he is, 4 months from that night, sitting across from Braeden, sneering, and telling Derek he was no longer afraid. He was ready. He was here. That he loved him. Only Derek. And that this--
Derek-- was all he wanted.

"Our relationship is over, Braeden. I’m sorry."

Braeden chuckles wryly at Derek’s flat tone. He doesn’t even bother looking at her. Just keeps his eyes glued to Stiles. "Are you joking?! Just like that?!"

He finally looks at her. This time his face is sullen, eyes sad and regretful. "I’m sor--"

She slaps the shit out of him across his face! Stiles stands defensively.

She clinches and unclinches her stinging hand. "Yeah. You’ve said that already." She grabs her purse and jacket. "Fuck you, Derek!" And storms out, slamming the door behind her!

Derek’s eyes find Stiles’, still that brilliant color of sunset orange. Braeden, in this moment, is merely a gust of wind that slammed out of his apartment. Because it’s just he and Stiles, looking at each other with an intensity that could bend steel and melt glaciers. "Say it."

"I love you. I’m in love with you."

Derek breaks from his chair and rushes at Stiles, all red-eyed and primal, but Stiles side-steps him and scowls at the wolf, leaving him angry, and confused.

"Get back in that shower and wash that girl’s stench off you first. Then, I’ll submit to you, and you can fuck me like the world’s coming to an end." Stiles’ tone is stern and absolute. Derek can’t help but simper. It’s territorial, possessive and so wolf-like that it turns him on.

"Fine." Derek takes off his shirt and jeans, standing bare-ass naked in front of Stiles.

He walks into the bedroom, pleased with himself when he smells the air turn a bit minty, like eucalyptus, at Stiles’ arousal.

"That’s how you broke up with Braeden?! Stiles using his Alpha-mate authority and threatening the poor girl," John spits out at his son and son-in-law.

"So amazing," Lydia compliments Stiles, loving any display of brutal dominance on another person.

"No. Not really. I taught you to treat people better than that, Stiles."

"You did, dad, but Braeden had to fucking go."

"And according to Peter, Braeden’s doing fine in Fresno as his Emissary, John."

"You asked about Braeden," Stiles asks, turning to his husband.

"Oh, shit. Here we go," Lydia says under her breath.

"Of course I did, Stiles. She’s a member of our pack now."

"So a conversation later."
Derek rolls his eyes at the idea of being mated and married to Stiles, but still having talks about old girlfriends.

"Let’s get back on track," Talia interrupts. "The last time, Stiles. When was the last time?"

"The night we fought the Argents, after everything. We were in the woods... you know--"

"Fucking," Lydia finishes for him.

"I’m going to take away your talking privileges for the rest of this meeting." Derek and John look as though that may not be such a bad idea. Lydia readies to protest, but thinks the better of it. No sense in making trouble and getting herself banned from future senior pack meetings. "But yes. I think the other three wolves here can already fill in the blanks of what happens after a fight."

"So it happened then," Deaton asks.

"Yes. And he bit me. Like *bit me*," Derek adds.

"I think I was trying to mark him. I just remember feeling this urge to...dominant him, and was angry he wouldn’t let me."

"So you bit, Alpha Hale," Deaton asks.

Stiles nods.

"But the bite, it took a while to heal. And I have a scar now."

"Stiles, you told me you tried to mark Derek. You didn’t say it didn't heal right away," Talia says, surprised.

"Does that mean something? Does any of this? Am I turning into a wolf? I wasn’t bitten by Derek, or any other Alpha. What the hell is going on?" Derek puts his hand on the back of Stiles’ neck, calming him.

"It’s alright, Stiles. I think I know what’s happening to you."

Stiles gradually calms down.

"It’s nothing hurtful. I promise."

"What is it, Deaton," Theo asks.

"It’s very rare, and only with mates of True Alphas, which you also know is rare, but Stiles is becoming a wolf...sort of."

"What do you mean 'sort of'," John asks.

"You're not fully a werewolf, but can exhibit werewolf-like traits in certain situations. I'm assuming most of which occurred before you submitted to Alpha Hale was in regards to the nature of your relationship being stressful at the time; you both knew you were mated, but hadn't accomplished the mating ritual entirely, leaving your bond with each other incomplete. Your souls were unsatisfied. As for the night you and Alpha Hale engaged in coitus in the woods, I believe your changing eye color and marking of Alpha Hale may simply have been a hormonal change in you
due to your pregnancy. Your bond with a True Alpha allows you to adopt his wolf temporarily if in his presence, and in particular circumstances. In your case, it is when you are very angry."

"Oh, my God! So I’m like The Incredible Hulk of werewolves?!"

"Ugh, I knew you’d take it there," Lydia says with an eye roll.

"Me, too," Derek frowns.

"Haters."

"Well, yes. I think it may be relative to your comic book hero."

Derek and Lydia literally face palm, knowing what’s coming.

"Whoa. Deaton. The Incredible Hulk is not my hero. If you know anything about me, please know this: Batman is God."

Deaton merely looks at Stiles with a tight, stoic expression before he responds with a simple: "Okay."

"Thank you."

"And thank you for sparing us the impending geek diatribe, Stiles," Lydia says with a tight-lipped smile.

"He got it; didn’t need to rant."

"So is that it? Stiles just acts like a werewolf when he’s pissed?"

"Extremely pissed," Stiles corrects his father.

"And turned on."

"Second warning, Lydia."

"Like I said, it is rare, but in those rare cases, very normal."

"So the baby is fine,' Stiles asks, worried.

"Yes. Your baby will be fine."

Stiles takes a deep, relieved breath. Lydia lets a relieved smile pass on her face as well as she writes down bullet points of Deaton’s explanation in her binder.

"Well, I’m glad that’s cleared up. And don’t you two ever keep a secret from us for years on end again," John tells the couple.

"I share John’s sentiment. Are we understood," Theo glares at the two of them.

Stiles and Derek nod like scolded children.

"Good. I hope that's all you two would like to talk about tonight," Talia asks.
"No, unfortunately... We need to discuss the elephant in the room," Stiles says.

They all grow quiet. They know exactly what Stiles is referring to.

"We have to go home at some point, guys. I mean, this-- Beacon Hills-- is home, but it’s not where the operation is. Or our bed, my kitchen, the Camaro. We know how important it is to all of you to be close to the baby, but we can’t stay here."

John, Talia, Theo, and even Deaton look crestfallen. Stiles is right. He and Derek need to be in their own home, prepping for their baby. And their parents need to stay in Beacon Hills, watching over their ‘home territory’. Derek and Stiles had the betas. They’ll look after them most definitely. But they were the adults. The adult-adults. The parents that had fathered them and mothered them, and were rewarded with a grandchild for all their years of hard work, dedication, and love. They wanted to be there for it all. And it saddened them that they might not be.

"So we need to come up with a plan, so you guys can be there with us, hovering and giving pushy, passive-aggressive advice."

A small brightness elevates some of the tension in the room at Stiles' optimistic forethought.

"We'll come up with something, Stiles. Trust us. Because if you think I'm going to miss a minute of any of this--"

"Then you're sadly mistaken," Theo finishes for John.

John smiles amiably. "Exactly."

Chapter End Notes

First, I don't know why, but for some reason, every time I pictured Gordon, all I could see was Jeff Goldblum... Wish I could explain it.

Secondly, I'm a little mean to Braeden in this chapter, (which is surprising given I like her A LOT more than I do Malia) but I make up for it in PART TWO, which I've already started writing.

Thirdly, two more chapters to go until it's all pregnant!Stiles all the time! :D

And lastly-- and WAY OFF TOPIC-- today was the midterm elections around the US. Hope you exercised your right to vote like I did! :)
Valerie and Jason clear some things up, and Stiles figures something out.

Valerie lies on the bed in one of Jason’s old T-shirts. She watches him change into his night clothes.

"I love this house, and the beach, but I’ll be so glad when we go back home and sleep in our own bed."

"I want to tell the girls I’m a werewolf. I want to tell them everything."

Jason freezes, stunted by her abrupt declaration.

"Jason. They need to know, and not telling them makes me feel like I’m ashamed, and hiding who I am. Who my family, my pack, are. It’s sheltering them. We can protect them, but we can’t coddle them. Not anymore." She sits up. "I’m not talking about what I do in the pack, but just what I am. Who I am. They should know their mother is a wolf and proud to be so. They should also know their father loves their mother who is a wolf. That’d he’d do anything and everything for her because of that love, and she’d do the same. Mommy is no different from all the other mommies. Just a little wild during the full moon."

"I’d say more than a little."

A small smile sweeps across her face, glad he can at least joke in the middle of her nervous utterance of a serious subject between them. "And she can lift a bus with her pinky."

"Can you?"

"No, Jason! I’m a werewolf, not Superwoman!"

"I say differently."

She blushed at his compliment. He always has a way of turning her into molten lava with the simplest comment. "Jason. Please, at least think about it. I don’t know how long I want to do this. They need to know, and I want to tell them."

"Well, you can’t."

A sharp pain jabs at Valerie’s center and a crack surfaces along her heart. She’s crippled at three little words of hurt from the person she loves most in this world.

"Because Star and Luna already told them."

Valerie takes a pitched breath, knocked out of her internal gloom spiral, hearing, but not comprehending what Jason said. "What?"
"Rose told me today that she and Cee 'know about mommy, and Uncle Derek, and grandmother, and granddad'."

"Since when?"

"Oh, since Isaac and Jackson decided a werewolf brawl in front of our children would be a good idea."

"That long?!"

"Soleil had asked them not to say anything because Star and Luna would get into trouble with Thomas for telling them. Apparently, the girls had some questions about why Isaac and Jackson were so strong and their faces changed like a dog’s when they were fighting. So Star and Luna told them. Cee was skeptical for a bit, but one must factor in all the adult-conversations behind closed doors, Laura’s girls running through the preserve with their parents and Derek at dawn, and all of you disappearing into the woods to kill psychopathic hunters and you’ve officially ended the curiosity of a 6 year old girl."

"I should get Derek and Dad. We should go to them and answer any other questions they might have. Or Star and Luna got wrong."

"Not now, darling. In the morning. Now, I want to apologize to you. I want to say I’m sorry for making you hide the beautiful creature you are from our daughters. I want to apologize for being so much of a coward that I forced you to lie to our children about you and your family. I was silly, and overprotective.” He runs his knuckles gently down her face. "I want to apologize for making you think you weren’t beautiful, when you’re the most gorgeous woman I’ve ever met. I want to apologize for underestimating the intelligence of our little Rose and Cee, for believing they couldn’t handle the idea of being apart of such a large, close family. For denying them a chance to learn so much about where they come from and who their mother is.” His hands hold her face, tilting her head up, as he looks deep into her green eyes. "I apologize for being a twat. A complete and utter twat. I’m so sorry, my darling."

Valerie had never considered their agreement to not tell Rose and Cee that she was a wolf as something that needed apologizing for, but hearing Jason’s heartfelt, earnest regret settles something in her she didn’t know was disturbed. A heavy weight is lifted off her chest and she feels light, but stronger. Secrets keep a family from growing, tear a marriage apart, and make a powerful woman feel weak. And now, they no longer have any. "You’re forgiven."

Jason’s hand fall at the back of her knees and pulls them apart. He reaches under her shirt and slides her panties off, dropping them on the floor.

He drops to his knees, in front of her open legs, and buries his face between them, making a hot, breathy moan escape from Valerie’s mouth.

Stiles lies on the bed, his head at the foot of the bed. His shirt is tucked up, exposing his belly, with Derek’s hand pressed on it. "Can you feel him?"

"You think it’s a ‘him’?"

"I don’t know. Maybe. Just feels right calling the baby a ‘him’. Would you rather I called him an
‘It’?
Derek glowers.

"Thought so. Can you though?"

"Yes."

"Really?"

"Yeah. Not a lot, but there’s a little something there."

Stiles beams, bringing a smile to Derek’s face. "Nine months seems like an eternity. I want to meet this little guy now."

"I know. Me, too."

A thoughtful look crawls on Stiles’ face.

"What is it?"

"I’ll be a good dad, right? Like our dads?"

"Stiles, you’ll be an amazing dad. You’re already the best mother there is."

"First, I’m nowhere near as good a mom as our own and Melissa. Second, I’m ‘mother’ to nine-- asterisk twelve-- twentysomethings who I have to scream at half the time in order to knock some sense into them."

"And do they not cower in fear when you do? Do they not listen and understand and come to you to apologize and ask your advice and cry on your shoulder? Hell, I think Lydia loves you more than her own mother, and Allison and Isaac don’t know any other mother but you. Those kids, our betas, love you, Stiles. And for a good reason." He runs his hand over Stiles’ buzzed hair. "But no one loves you more than me. Especially right now. I wish I knew how to tell you how happy I am."

Stiles eyes swim with tears. "You just did." He surges up to meet Derek’s lips in a kiss.

Their kiss is interrupted by a knock on their door. Derek climbs off the bed and toward the door. He opens it to find his betas-- all his betas, including Kira, Malia, and Ethan-- on the other side, each with a pillow and blanket in their arms.

"Hey, so, we were, uh, wondering if we could, um, sleep in here tonight...with you guys," Kira says.

"In here? With us?"

"Yeah, we, uh, kind of feel like we need to," Scott tells the Alpha.

"Like when Laura told us she was pregnant with Soleil and we wanted to sleep in the same bed with her," Cora reminds her brother.

"I forgot about that," he remembers with a smile.
"Derek, let the pups in. I feel like I need them, too," Stiles calls to him.

With that, Lydia and Erica charge inside, not waiting for Derek to side step. The rest of them trail inside after them.

The betas are tucked into blankets and crowded around the bed as close as they can, practically on top of one another.

Derek and Stiles are in the middle of the California King-size bed. Stiles tucked up under Derek’s arm. Scott, Lydia, and Cora won out over the other beats, fighting them to share the bed with their Alpha and Alpha-mate.

Derek’s heavy eyes are just about to close when:

"This was the thing."

"What?"

"The thing you gave me that keeps you with me if I ever lose you."

"What do I do?"

"What do you mean?"

"What do I do if I lose you? I don’t have any power. I don’t have anything I could do to save you. To bring you back. To keep you."

Derek simply stares at Stiles.

"What," confused and curious by Derek’s staring. Stiles does have something powerful. He does have something that will always keep Derek with him. He’s had it the moment Derek met the younger man and knew instantly that they were mates. He has something that could save them both from falling into pits of despair. Derek just needs to help him with it.

Derek lifts Stiles up; his feet coming off the floor with his legs wrapped around Derek’s waist. Derek walks them toward the bedroom...

Derek takes Stiles hand and kisses his fingertips.

"You poke a hole in the condom that night, did you?"

"This is how you keep me with you, Stiles. Even if I can’t actually be with you anymore. Are you upset?"

"About what?"

"About me doing it on purpose. Once the thought came into my head I had to. Just those few seconds of thinking about it... The idea of you having a baby, my baby, and never being alone... I
wanted to give you that. I needed to."

Stiles twist as much as he can to look at Derek’s face. "How can I be upset about you giving me
the one thing I’ve wanted since I met you? We’re building a future, right? Well, it starts with this
baby. And all the ones after it."

"Thinking about more kids already, huh?"

"Of course. They’d be half of you, wouldn’t they?"

Derek kisses the palm of Stiles’ hand. Stiles settles comfortable back into Derek and they both
finally close their eyes...

"You guys are such saps it’s gross. And I thought me and Scott were bad," Allison announces,
interrupting the quiet.

"Seriously," Jackson adds.

"The truth, dude," Scott says.

"Challenge Accepted..."

Chapter Summary

The pack says 'goodbye' to Hale House and Beacon Hills as they head back to the Bay Area with a pregnant Alpha-mate in tow.

Chapter Notes

Well, here we are folks, the end of PART ONE...

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Nearly the entire pack-- minus the children-- are in the room. All eyes are fixed on the large television turned to the local news:

The mangled body of a woman was found in a gorge at the bottom of Hermanas Cliffs early morning yesterday. She has been identified as Katherine Argent of Beacon Hills.

The news station displays a picture of Kate with a cheery smile on her face.

"Where's Allison," Stiles asks.

"Upstairs in the attic room, playing with the girls and Jason," Jackson answers.

"Make sure she stays there please."

Jackson leaves the rec room for the third floor.

Katherine, or "Kate," as know by her friends--

"She had some of those," Laura says bitterly, earning a smile from Stiles.

--was forty years old and a respected FBI agent with it's San Francisco division, specializing in Supernatural Crime, along with her older brother, Christopher Argent. Kate and Christopher's mother, Edith Argent was killed by an omega werewolf, when they were children. But there are some questionable. bizarre twist and turns to what some are calling 'mysterious death' of Katherine Argent. For one, Kate's sister-in-law, Victoria, disappeared without a trace nearly 20 years ago, leaving behind Kate's grief-stricken brother and their young daughter, Allison.

Allison's high school graduation picture takes up the screen.

"She hates that picture," Scott says.

Allison is a third generation hunter within the Argent family. The Argents' roots as a
supernatural hunting clan reaches as far back as 400 years ago, and supposedly spent many of those years as the chief rivals against the Hale Pack, a werewolf family and supernatural crime syndicate based in Beacon Hills. It is rumored that Kate's niece, Allison, was estranged from the family and living in San Francisco with a boyfriend who is a high-ranking member in the Hale Pack. Although, media attempted to capture photographs of members of the Hale Pack they've been thwarted each time, especially earlier this spring when FBI officials, including brother and sister Chris and Kate Argent, supposedly arrested nearly every high-ranking member of the pack.

Footage from the pack's arrest is shown, but all of them have their faces covered or shielded as news crews and reporters bombard FBI transport vehicles with cameras.

The FBI declined to comment. What makes Katherine Argent's death so 'interesting' is her association, more or less, with the ruthless Hale Pack. Kate's body was found just a mile from her father's cabin that was burned to the ground due to faulty electrical wiring. Although, some are screaming 'foul play'. KX77-News reached out to the county's sheriff department with questions, and the following statement was issued by Sheriff John Stilinski: "After reviewing all evidence several times, we have ruled the death of Katherine Argent a tragic accident. Her untimely death is unfortunate, but has not connection to the desecration on her father's vacation home at the moment. The fire marshal and insurance companies believe the fire was caused by faulty wiring and not arson. Katherine was an accomplished woman, well-versed in her career, a respected hunter, and good citizen. We have no motive as to why anyone would want to hurt her, therefore, do not believe claims of murder as justified."

When reached for comment, Chris Argent stated that his "family has suffered another tragic loss, and would like the media to respect his and his daughter's wishes to be lief to grieve in peace," when pressed about the suspicious circumstances surrounding his sister and father's disappearance, or any connection to the Hale Pack, he stated that "the coroner's office declared Kate's death and accident," and that he had "fully faith and trust in them and their decision." Details of Kate's funeral service were not given to KX77-News, but is closed to all media. This is Kara Simmons for KX77 Evening News. Back to you Sean.

Derek turns the television off.

"Should we be worried," Valerie asks.

"We should always be worried. But as of right now, no. Not really," Stiles says.

"It's all a bunch of speculation and sounds like internet trolls creating conspiracies that local news got interested in."

"But nothing can be traced back to us," Peter says. "We covered our tracks thoroughly."

" Doesn't mean we don't stay on our p's and q's. Deaton, keep your ear to ground for any rumbling," Stiles says. "Laura, you and Thomas keep an eye out on Chris Argent, and stay as far away from Kate's funeral as you can."

"Like I'd step food near her unholy grave."

"And dad--"
"I'll try and quell any noisemakers making trouble," John tells his son. "We're on it, Stiles. You don't need to worry about this on top of what's already going on," John says, pointing to Stiles' stomach.

"Or Agent Haigh. I'll take care of it," Derek says, squeezing Stiles' hand. Stiles gives him a light, reassuring smile. He doesn't mean it though. The smile was just to make his Alpha feel better, because Stiles couldn't help it. He can't help but worry. That was his job. His role. Laura's daughters were right, he worried about everything and everyone, doing so helped him figure things out. The more time he spent in his head, plotting things out, jotting them down and staring at his computer, the better he felt because typically it meant he was close to a solution. An answer. So the worrying could stop and he could move on to the next problem and fix that one, too.

It was just in his nature, they way he did things, especially after his mother died. Her death brought about his desire to have those he did have left closer. To ease their pain and make better whatever had them in knots. To fret and mull over the things he knew didn't plague them, but would make things a bit easier for them and himself. It started with his dad, then Scott and Lydia, then as his friendship circle grew his 'mothering' lorded over others he cared about and made him a better pack mom and emissary. It made him a better mate to Derek. So, attempting to tamper it down was not only hard for him, but hard because it felt like an insult. As though everyone was pushing him aside, telling him they didn't need him and his 'anxiety' and 'henpecking' any longer.

He knew that's not what they were saying, but it's how he felt...

It’s crowded chaos as everyone-- everyone-- hugs and says their ‘goodbyes’ to each other.

Scott and Allison pull up to the house just in time-- having come form Chris’ house-- to see off Jason, Valerie and their daughters as they’re the first to leave.

Star and Rose hug each other tearfully beside Derek and Valerie.

"They remind me a little of Stiles and Scott," Valerie says of her daughter and niece.

Derek laughs lightly. "Yeah. A little. Star and Rose might be more mature about it though."

Valerie laughs with her whole body. "You might be right."

"Hey. You're just as important to me as Laura and Cora. I'm sorry I've never made you feel like you were. I love you, Val," Derek tells Valerie. She tries to be cool, brushing him off with a flippant smile, but Derek can hear her heartbeat, and knows it means the world to her not only that he said it, but that he meant it as well. He scent marks her and tears well in her eyes. She pushes him away, not wanting him to see her cry, and moves to hug Stiles. Yeah, she's the rebellious, tough one after all.

Jason shakes Derek's hand. "I'm sorry if I misjudged you. All of you. I was wrong. My daughters are lucky to have you as their uncle. And their Alpha."

"Thank you, Jason. And I'm glad you guys decided to tell the girls."

"I feel better, having done so. But of course now they want to be werewolves," he chuckles.

"They're not old enough for 'the bite', and even if they were, I'd never do it without discussing it with you first. You and Val."
"I know. Thank you."

Jason turns to Theo, "Theo, I--"

"We've spoken plenty and said enough apologies while you were here. I just hope it was all worth it. I hope it meant something," Theo tells his son-in-law.

"It was. It did."

"Then that's all I need to know." Theo pulls Jason into an embrace as Derek scent marks Rose and Cee. Despite not being werewolves, they imitate it back, creating a warm smile on his face.

Valerie and Jason give one last hug 'goodbye' to everyone before descending the front steps toward Jason's rental car.

Everyone waves to them as they roll through the gate and toward the center of town.

Peter, Kira, Malia, and Ethan are next. Peter gives Derek a manly handshake with a nod of understanding. Derek feels they may be on a clean path with each other since their talk...until Peter gives Lydia a dirty wink and tries to give Stiles a parting kiss on his lips. Luckily, Stiles turns his head at the right moment.

Kira and Allison shake hands. Allison knows Kira can’t stand to hear anymore of her apologies, but she can’t help it, and practically uses Morose Code with her eyes to convey how apologetic she is for splitting up her and Scott.

Kira sees it in her fellow warrior’s eyes and drops her hand to move in for a hug. Kira’s past it. Has been for a while. They’re powerful supes in one of the most notorious packs in the world, not teenagers anymore; kids no longer. It’s about time they moved forward and act like it.

Allison brings her arms up over Kira’s back, grateful to be forgiven. In ten years, they’ll look back and laugh at this and all their silly entanglements when they were young and stupid.

Kira and Allison break apart. She moves to Scott and pecks his cheek. He smiles his usual, adorable smile, and it expresses everything that needs to be said between them. They don’t need to talk about it all anymore. It’s the past, and Derek and Stiles’ baby is their pack’s future.

Malia hugs both Stiles and Derek as Peter look on. She whispers how happy she is for them in Derek’s ear and pecks his cheek. He scent marks her, rubbing their cheeks together.

She moves to Stiles. "Wyoming, huh?"

"I don’t know. For some reason I’ve always pictured you there."

"I read about the whole state on Wikipedia last night. I can see me there, too. Might take a trip their next summer with Kira and Braeden."

"Sounds like fun."

"Maybe. More of a desert air kind of girl. Like my mom. According to my dad. But still, all that open space and clean air... Looks amazing."

"Go. Go see Wyoming. Go see the entire world, Malia. Beacon Hills and Fresno are just tiny pockets compared to the rest."
She nods with a smile, then kisses his cheek. Stiles and Derek watch her climb into the front passenger seat of Peter’s car. Kira already in the back.

Danny and Ethan hug. Ethan kisses Danny’s cheek. Danny tries to break apart, but Ethan holds on just a little bit longer, and a little bit tighter.

He finally let’s Danny go. "You can email me. If you want."

"Yeah. Sure."

"And visit. I’d like for you to come and stay for a few days."

"Yeah... Uh, when I get some time."

Ethan knows Danny won’t. That his response was non-committal at best. He also knows he deserves Danny evasiveness. Danny’s long past his feelings and hurt over Ethan. Fooling around in laundry rooms, and hot sex after a fight are simply just that. He’s not in love with him. He doesn’t want him. They were just “having fun.” Ethan knows that, despite wanting more. And despite knowing Danny doesn’t. But it won't stop him from hoping he can change that. "Okay."

Ethan climbs into Peter’s car beside Kira.

Peter gives his sister one last, long hug. "Please behave yourself, Peter. You worry me sometimes."

"You'd worry about me if I lived on a cloud surrounded by every thing I've ever wanted."

"Peter Hale with everything his heart desires...? Yes. I'd definitely worry about that," she says. She leans into his ear, "Don't let me be the only person that knows you. really knows you. Try to not keep people at bay. They might surprise you." She scent marks him.

Their embrace falls apart. Peter puts on his sunglasses. "Believe it or not, there are always people that manage to surprise me." He gives her a wicked grin before getting in the driver’s seat and turning the engine over.

Kira, Malia, and Ethan wave one last time before they too disappear through the iron gate.

Derek hugs Thomas. Then Laura. "Watch out for the old folks. Make sure they don’t get into any trouble."

"I heard that, you little smart-ass," Talia scowls at her son.

Derek and Laura grin like sneaky schoolchildren. "I'll be up to talk about our agent problem. And coo over Stiles being preggers," she tells him.

Derek nods. He turns to Thomas, "Watch out for my sister. She's a handful."

"Ah. That's what she wants you to think. She's really a marshmallow." Thomas' arm drapes around Laura, who squeezes into it.
"He's right. I am."

He and Laura scent mark each other. Then he gives each of his nieces a big kiss before shaking hands with Deaton, and hugging John and Melissa. Talia and Theo pull him in for a three-way hug. They nuzzle their son and he squeezes them tighter.

Stiles and John hug one another with the same fierce grip. They’re each other’s lifelines, and Stiles is bringing another Stilinski into the world. There’s nothing but love and hope between them. They don’t talk. They never do. Because then that would be ‘goodbye’. And they don’t do ‘goodbyes’ well...

Melissa peppers kisses all over Scott, then Allison’s face. "Mi hijo no lo merecen es afortunado de tenerte."

"Gracias, Sra McCall."

"Usted es español es aún mejor que la suya."

"Mi español está bien, mamá," Scott frowns at Melissa.

"Manténgase alejado de los problemas ... si puedes."

"Lo haré. Te amo."

"Te quiero, también, hijo mío."

He kisses her cheek. "No trabaje tan duro. Sobre todo porque yo envío dinero."

"Tengo que mantener las apariencias. De lo contrario la gente se sospechosa."

"Estoy bastante seguro de que todos Beacon Hills sabe que su hijo y futuras hija-en-ley son los miembros de la manada Hale."

"Espero que no, de lo contrario usted no está haciendo un buen trabajo en ser discreto."

Scott chuckles. "We are, mom. Promise."

Melissa blows Scott and Allison a kiss as they climb into the second rental car.

"Mama-wolf."

Talia smiles and hugs Stiles. "Thank you for giving my son the best gift he could have ever have possibly wanted."

"Pretty sure he’s the one who gave me a gift."

"And that’s why you were made for him. For each other." She scent marks Stiles before giving him another big hug.

Stiles moves to Theo as his betas make their way to Talia. Theo leans into Stiles’ ear and whispers:
"One day, I’ll let you see me shift."

Stiles pulls back with a gasp and child-like wonder on his face. "That...would...be so badass. If I weren’t already consistently in awe of you, I would be now."

Theo smiles at Stiles’ flattering. "I am never disappointed you a part of this family."

"Me, neither."

"Good." Theo hugs Stiles, then scent marks him before Erica approaches the werelion.

Boyd and Jackson swoop over and grab Stiles’ duffel bag and backpack, refusing to allow him to carry it to the car. Stiles rolls his eyes. Laura purposely bumps into his shoulder, "The smothering stops eventually. I swear. But until then, if I were you, I'd milk this for all it's worth." She winks at him.

Stiles smiles. "You know, I'm ashamed to admit it, but I never realize how much I miss you until I can't see you every day."

She snorts. "I don't even think Thomas can stand me 'everyday'."

"Then he needs a CAT scan." He pulls her close in an embrace. "I ever tell you that I wish I had a big sister like you?"

"At your wedding, every Christmas, when you're drunk, and just general conversation...like this."

Stiles laughs. "As long as you know..." Stiles skips to Derek's rental car and climbs into the front passenger seat. The rest of their betas climb into their respective cars. Derek slides into the driver's side beside Stiles; Cora and Lydia are in the backseat having delegated Issac to the second car.

"We want phone calls right after your first doctor's visit," John calls to Stiles and Derek. Talia and Theo agree wholeheartedly.

"Of course," Stiles reassures his demanding parents.

"And daily updates until we figure this thing out," John adds.

Stiles' gaze finds Laura who gives him a smirk with an 'I-Told-You-So' tilt to her head. "Daily updates it is, father."

John nods, accepting Stiles' unspoken promise.

Derek turns the engine over. John, Melissa, Laura, Thomas and their daughters, along with Talia and Theo stand on the steps watching as the trio of cars pull from the warm, loving house and toward the black, wrought-iron gate.

As they pass through the gate, Stiles' eyes peer through the rearview mirror, watching as their parents and Laura remain on the front steps watching them disappear down the road toward town. And a tinge of sadness breezes over him. Missing them all already... Derek's hand leaves the steering wheel, moving to Stiles' stomach, eyes still on the road. Stiles places his hand over Derek's, his thoughts turning to something more pleasant.

"Boy or girl," Stiles asks.
"Doesn't matter."
"Fine. Werewolf or human?"
"I feel answering that question could be very dangerous as far as you're concerned."
"You know me too well, Derek Hale. Too well."
"Then you're just going to have to come up with new ways to surprise me."
Stiles smirks. "Challenge accepted."
"Just remember you asked for it, Hale," Lydia says.
Derek smiles at fondly at Stiles. "I know."

Chapter End Notes

Please check out the continuation in PART TWO-- To Build A Home. Will post the
first chapter tomorrow night :) It'll be 10 chapters focusing solely on Stiles' pregnancy
with a few side stories.
I hope you like reading PART ONE just as much as I liked reading it. Can't wait to
continue with other Sterek fics, and expandingg this one further. Thank you all. I'm so
appreciative of you reading, your kudos, and comments. THANK YOU THANK YOU
THANK YOU xoxoxoxoxoxoxoxoxoxoxoxoxoxoxoxoxoxoxoxoxo...
xoxoxoxoxoxoxoxo... A few more xoxoxoxoxoxoxo There we go ;)
p.s.-- I changed GORDON in the chapter 'Was' to MARIN MORRELL instead :)

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!

